
The Outrider

MAY 2002

The View From Above The Close

Bubbles and Joy...

When I was a student at Virginia Theological Seminary, there was an inscription above the window that was behind the Chapel altar. It was a quote from the Easter gospel from Matthew: *HE IS NOT HERE, HE IS RISEN!*

We students always marveled at the irony of a message in the Seminary Chapel telling us, "*He is not here...*" We could laugh about that even as we found **he was there** in the rich spirituality of our community's worship life. Irony and humor, it seems to me, must always be a part of our faith and worship and celebration. Without great good humor and laughter and serendipity, Christian worship can become a rather "teeth-gritting" experience.

As I write this, Palestinian soldiers, along with both Muslim and Christian civilians and a group of priests and nuns are taking *sanctuary*—in the most literal sense—in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Manger Square, the area outside that oldest Christian Church in Israel, is occupied by Israeli tanks. It is a strange and troubling image—the forces of war marshaled during Easter Week outside the birthplace of the Prince of Peace. Yet more troubling is the specter of the standoff involving all three of the great world faiths that trace their beginnings back to Abraham. Christians, Jews and Muslims share more in common than any other faiths in the world: they spring from the same soil, they acknowledge the same prophets, they worship the same God. Yahweh, Allah and the One Jesus called "Abba" are One-in-the-Same God. All three religions agree on that; yet, that agreement has come to this sorrowful scene. As never before, the call to *pray for the Peace of Jerusalem* rings with profound urgency.

The unspeakable horror and tragedy of September 11 has been compounded by the suffering our government's response has inflicted on innocent civilians in Afghanistan and by the abuses of the Constitution that have been committed in the name of "security." Let me speak plainly: I believe the United States had the *moral right* to respond to the crimes committed against our citizens and others within our borders on 9/11. However, I believe what was called for was "law enforcement" actions rather than all-out war and threats of war against sovereign nations. Afghanistan, Iraq, Northern Korea and dozens of other nations around the world are an offense to all who believe in freedom. That, I think, must be obvious to free and reasonable people. But a nation and people who believe, first and foremost, in the "rule of law" should be morally bound by our own laws when dealing with individuals and by international law when dealing with other governments. The longer we tolerate violations of the human rights of citizens and prisoners and our country's unilateral aggression (as opposed to using diplomatic and covert methods to bring terrorists to justice) the more we become like those who attacked us. Because we are a nation of "Law" and the only "super-power", we are bound by a higher moral law than

those who seek to destroy us. What we seek to defend and preserve—the “rule of law” and constitutional democracy—must not be sacrificed in the name of *security*. The only true “security” comes from modeling justice and a commitment to “moral superiority” for the rest of the world. We, as a nation, have exhausted our *moral capital* on revenge. If we are to assist a negotiated peace in Israel, we cannot be involved in the same kind of military aggression we seek to end in the Holy Land.

(In the midst of all the problems of the world, two bubble machines sent bubbles soaring above the chancel which then floated down into the midst of our Easter worship services. Bubbles could be seen as frivolous or trivial when God’s world is so torn by war and violence. Yet, those who worshipped at the Easter Vigil laughed and rejoiced in the wonder and humor of bubbles falling on their heads; at the 8 a.m. Eucharist, Pauline came up to dance in the bubbles—a dance all of us would have joined if we followed our hearts; and after the 10:15 Eucharist, dozens of children spontaneously came to the chancel to play and spin and reach up to touch the bubbles cascading down from above.)

Here’s a brief “theology” of bubbles: the Resurrection is awesome, holy, challenging and unbelievable. Our minds cannot contain it. Only our hearts can embrace and touch the miracle of resurrection. And bubbles, bunny ears, balloons, confetti, trombones and organ music engage our hearts and open them to receive the astonishing gifts of Life in all abundance and Joy unspeakable. At Easter, our liturgy and worship must engage the profound irony of it all.

He is not here. He is risen!

Bring in the bubbles....Welcome to the dance....Open your hearts to the possibility of true peace....

Shalom,

Jim

DISCERNMENT UPDATE



In my annual report to the parish, I declared 2002 to be a year of "discernment" to begin the creation of a *Future that wouldn't happen anyway*. There are only two futures – the one that will happen if we just "wait" for it and the one that will happen the way we create it and form it. It is a question of being attentive and active in forming how the future will look for the parish.

Discernment is a "process" rather than a "product". The process of discerning God's will for our future will lead us in certain directions rather than others, but that will be the logical extension of our discernment rather than things to do to get somewhere. (I realize the very language I use to talk about "discernment" seems strained and artificial – it is intentional on my part. I want to talk about "discernment" in a way that forces us to pay much more attention to our words than we normally do. I want to force us to be self-conscious about what we say and how we say it. I want to use words in ways that may sometimes puzzle or confuse. For example: I will talk about "our conversation" when I mean **everything we do in our discernment**. I don't just mean "talking to each other" when I say "conversation"; I refer to the whole context of seeking to create a future together.

We've started. We started on the day of the Annual Meeting by dividing into small groups for a significant part of the meeting. Small groups and opportunities to get everyone involved are two of the "tools", if you will, of discernment. We now begin Vestry Meetings with small group Bible study – that, too, is not an "end" but a "means" – a way of building community and sharing about the scripture and feeling safe in talking about our personal spiritual journeys. I've even asked our Junior Warden, Bill Garretson, to see it as his "job" to be always aware of opportunities to build community and invite discernment of the future.

There are lots of pieces and tools of the Year of Discernment. The most obvious is the Discernment Group that Bill Garretson and Mary Gates and I have invited to spend six consecutive Tuesday evenings engaged in the "conversation". The list of those folks is below. We "gather" rather than "meet" and we always begin with sharing food. Besides the starting time and the finishing time, there is little "set in stone" about our gatherings. It is a process of making the space we share both sacred and safe and then encountering each other in that space.

The next **Outrider** will contain reflections by some of the members of the Discernment Group. One of the things they will seek to do is to "make the circle bigger" to include all of you in our process and "conversation".

(It may sound a tad vague – that's because it isn't a "linear process" with a set beginning and end...like putting together a bookshelf that came unassembled. It's more like designing the room we want to put the bookshelf in – and 'that room' doesn't exist yet!)

More later – talk to the Group members about the process..join the Conversation...

Shalom,

Jim

The members of our Discernment Group are: Pam Behrman, Jeffrey Brown, Diane Caggiano, Stan Chesnas, Pinki Chillemi, Barbara Curry, Evanson Dover, Gregory Emmens, Bill Garretson, Mary Gates, Richard Lee, Karen Minkler, Marilyn Mitchell, Tom Nelson, Dorothy Raleigh, Andrew Skipp, Christine Stolfi, Gail Szantyr, Pam Toffey, John Torrance, Michelle Webber, and Loribeth Young.

ORDINATION – JUNE 8, 2002



St. John's Pastoral Intern, **Malinda Johnson**, will be ordained to the Diaconate at Christ Church Cathedral on Saturday, June 8 at 10 a.m. The annual Deacon's Ordination is always a special celebration for the diocese. If you'd like to go, sign up in the hallway or call the church office (754-3116) to let us know. Travel plans will be arranged since car-pooling is always a good idea—especially since there are over a dozen deacons to be ordained this year!

EMMAUS WEEKEND RESCHEDULED DUE TO ORDINATION



The next **Emmaus** weekend will be **Friday, June 21st** from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. and **Saturday, June 22nd** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

During that time participants will examine their own faith journey and the Future we are creating for St. John's through conversation, faith exercises, writing, prayer and worship. The paradigm of the Emmaus Journey comes from Luke's Gospel, Chapter 24.

The cost is \$10 (\$15 for a couple) and enrollment is limited to 12. Sign up right away or call the church office to save a space.

YEA, ROO! GOOD FOR YOU!



Ruthanna Hooke, who was a seminarian and intern at St. John's for three years, is finishing her Ph.D. at Yale Divinity School and has been offered a position as Professor of Homiletics (that's "preaching") at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria beginning in January 2003. VTS is the seminary where Jim received his M.Div. degree. If you want to drop Ruthanna a note of congratulations, her address is 2 Court Street, New Haven, CT 06511. We're sure she'd enjoy hearing from St. John's folks.

OL' FASHIONED HYMN SING



Because of the work being done by St. John's Discernment Committee, there will be **no May Companion Evening**. But we will have the **last Companion Evening until fall on June 4th**. Since April's potluck resulted in no less than 10 desserts, in June, bring a main dish if your last name begins with the letters A-M. Bring a vegetable, salad or dessert if your last name begins with the letters N-Z! It will be an old-fashioned hymn sing. So come with your best voice and your favorite hymn.

PENTECOST VOLUNTEERS



Can you read in a language other than English? If you can and you'd be willing to be part of the Pentecost reading of Acts on May 19, please let the Rector know.

We have, in the past, used many tongues to read the Pentecost lesson. It is always powerful and moving. Please consider being a part of that.

PENTECOST BAPTISMS



The **Feast of Pentecost on May 19th** marks the anniversary of the birth of the church as told in the Book of Acts. It is one of the most appropriate days to welcome new members into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism. If you or your child desires baptism, please contact Jim Bradley, St. John's Rector, to set up a conversation.

ORDER YOUR BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER



We are in need of more books of **Common Prayer**. If you would like to donate a book in memory of a loved one, please mail a check in the amount of **\$17.00** for each prayer book to the Church Office or place it on the collection plate. Thank you!

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC



Mark your calendars! The **Annual St. John's Parish Picnic & Cookout** will be held on **Sunday, June 9, 2002** at St. Margaret-McTernan School, Chase Parkway, Waterbury. The challenge has been set and the gauntlet has been thrown down – come cheer on your favorite players at the annual softball game between the Rector's Team and the Senior Warden's Team.

SPRING CLEAN UP & PLANTING DAY



Please join us for our Spring Clean Up Day on Saturday, May 18, 2002 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. We will be fertilizing and mulching and will be in dire need of wheelbarrows that day. You can sign up on the hall table.

FALL RETREAT AT HOLY CROSS MONASTERY



The annual Fall Retreat at the **Holy Cross Monastery** will be the weekend of **October 4 – 6, 2002**. Mark your calendars! Call the Church Office to make your reservations for this event.

ANGLICANISM 101



What? A six session course in “all you’ve always wanted to know about the Episcopal Church but were afraid to ask...”

When? Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m., April 21 – May 26.

Where? The Clergy Office on the second floor of the Parish House.

Why? Will serve as an introduction to the nooks and crannies of the Episcopal Church for those new to us and as a refresher to long-time Anglicans.

PASTORAL CAREGIVERS NEEDED



...I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these...you did it to me. (Matthew 25:35ff.)

This is how most of us consider pastoral care, or Christian service: doing something specific and concrete for someone in need. And *doing* something for others is no small thing. But perhaps there is more – or rather less in terms of *doing* – to this ministry than that. First and most important we are called simply to be present, to *show up*. In *Traveling Mercies*, Annie Lamott suggests that although just showing up may seem inadequate, somehow this simple gesture can radically change everything for the person who is hurting or in crisis or even just plain lonely. Lamott puts it like this: “Your thereness..can be life giving, because often everyone else is in hiding...So you keep them company...and your being there says that just for this moment, this one tiny piece of the world is OK, or is at least better.

St. John’s needs lots of caring volunteers who are most of all willing and able to *show up* and *be there* for a growing population of older and disabled members of our community who are now confined to their homes (or a nursing home). Starting in September, we plan to gather monthly to share our experiences and offer one another support. In addition, clergy will provide ongoing instruction and guidance for those who would like to offer communion and/or healing prayer as part of their ministry.

If you’d like to learn more about this exciting, new opportunity to share the gift of yourself (nothing more but nothing less either!), please contact Marilyn Mitchell (203-263-7484) or Malinda Johnson (203-259-8766).

Shalom,

Jim

May Parish Prayer Cycle

May 5: The Blaszczyk Family, Marie Blatherwick, Charles and Donna Bock, Evelyn Bodor & family, Ted and Pat Bojarski, Christine Borch, John and Josephine Bozzuto, and Ann Braccio.

May 12: The Bradley Family, Evelyn Bradshaw, The Breslin Family, The Brown Family, Lillian Brown, Linda Bruce, The Budhram Framily, and Verdell Bush.

May 19: Robert and Diane Caggiano, The Caggiano Family, The Cambigue Family, William and Norma Cambigue, The Candal Family, Ambler Cantey, The Campobianco/Umbro Family, and Cathy Caraballo & Kim Hunter.

May 26: Michele Carrano, The Carrillo Family, Lorene Castle, The Castro Family, Patrick and Phyllis Catuccio, Karen Sue Cavanaugh and family, Ron and Ruth Cebik, Stan and Maryann Chesnas.



MAY

5/1 Ernest and Linnea Savoy
 5/4 Antonio Ebanks and Maria Sorokina
 5/4 Joseph and Karyn DiTomaso
 5/15 Charles and Dawn Beaudoin
 5/17 Eric and Franca Hahn
 5/20 Rocco and Vicki Longo
 5/24 Hector and Lisa Echeandia
 5/28 Nicholas and Katherine Masi
 5/30 Bill and Elaine Garretson
 5/31 Vincent and Elena Viega

Parish Statistics

Lisa Anne Bartush and Richard Harvey Collins were married on April 6, 2002

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to Honesty Chanie Punter on April 7, 2002

Funeral Services were held for Elizabeth Schweiger on March 19, 2002



MAY

5/1 Hazel Sponza
 5/1 Jessica Plaster
 5/2 Bill Payne
 5/4 Priscilla Munson
 5/5 Sarah Haines
 5/6 Mae Osborne
 5/7 Thomas Santopietro
 5/7 Andrew Gates
 5/8 MacKenzie Bodor
 5/8 Glenn DeCarolis
 5/10 Emily Brown
 5/10 Genevieve Scott
 5/10 Jeffrey Scott
 5/10 Jill Stevenson
 5/11 Olivia Quirici
 5/11 Courtney Tani
 5/11 Carol Vanderman
 5/12 Ted Bojarski
 5/13 Marian Russell
 5/14 Kayleigh Blaszczyk
 5/14 Melissa Perreault
 5/14 Robert Worden
 5/16 James Chilcoat
 5/17 Monica Daniel
 5/17 Dominic DiZinno
 5/17 John Mastropietro
 5/18 Casey Spinella
 5/20 Tiffany Tellerday
 5/27 Robert Cook
 5/27 Heidi Payne
 5/29 Tiffany Sevas
 5/29 Jeffrey Brown
 5/29 Janet Gurniak
 5/30 Jason Lanoie
 5/31 Gabrielle Benjamin



OUTREACH – TEAM 2000 SAFE HAVEN NEWS

May 5: Joseph Viega, Margaret Kirschbaum, Raymond Eugene Parker, and May Morin.

May 12: Doris Brown, Lillian Andrus, Wanda Audieltis, Patrick & Phoebe Osborne, Thomas and Alice Behan, Harold and Ruth Peterson, and Edward Jefferson.

May 19: William John Briggs, Sr., William John Briggs, Jr., Margaret Briggs, and Howard Hughes.

May 26: Warren and Virginia Wheeler, and William and Dorrice Andrew.

My name, address, and phone number are:

COMMUNION BREAD AND WINE
I would like to donate (\$10) the bread and wine for the weekly Eucharist at St. John's on Sunday:

[] In thanksgiving for:

Please acknowledge

Big Thank You!
Friez

Thank you for your assistance in delivering Easter plants to our parishioners who are shut in. Pat & Ted Bojarski, Eleanor Crean, Dorothy Ferguson, Susan Jefferson, and Willis & Gert Payne.
Henry

Serving



OTHERS

Last month, St. John's Safe Haven Project suggested that towels were especially needed. This need was announced at St. George's, Middlebury, and one family contacted a nearby hotel. Towels weren't available in great supply, but many sheets were given instead. Other families participated as well, and two carloads of donations were delivered to St. John's. Thanks, St. George's.

The suggested donations for May will be helpful for the women and children as everyone will be spending more time outside in the warmer weather.

Socks! Many children had their socks lost or worn out getting in and out of boots over the winter. And socks do have a way of disappearing in the laundry...especially little socks.

Please consider donating this second Sunday of the month:

- 1 pair new women's or children's socks **or**
- 1 new hair brush.

We are constantly amazed how St. John's community continues to be so very generous to this Safe Haven Project. Many blessings this spring, as we enjoy the signs of new life bursting forth in God's beautiful trees and flowers. Enjoy! Alleluia.

Diane C. & Jan G.

Meatloaf Ministry



Meatloaf Ministry is the third Sunday of each month. Please wrap your meatloaf in aluminum foil and bring to church – place in basket in the foyer. A \$5 donation to have a meatloaf made in your name is optional. Thank you.

Haines

Sarah

**St. John's AmeriCares Project
Saturday, May 4, 2002**



This is the fourth year that we will help make a home of a family in our area safe, warm, and dry. On the first three projects, the volunteers have repaired roofs, added gutters, upgraded electrical service, installed toilets, painted, filled up three huge dumpsters with trash and made the yards beautiful.

The families selected to receive help have family incomes of less than \$35,000 yearly, own their own home, and plan to stay in their home at least 5 years. The family we helped the first year has volunteered to help on the last two projects. The family we have helped two years ago plans to provide food for the volunteers this year.

We need volunteers for this year's project. We also need volunteers to prepare food for the people who will work on the house on May 4.

Jeff Brown is the House Captain this year. Greg Emmens will be Assistant House Captain. Glenn DeCarolis will assist with mailing and Lorene Castle will be volunteer coordinator.

Please sign up on the table outside the church office if you would like to help. You may also call Lorene Castle at (203) 756-1733 to ask questions or to volunteer.

Casserole Ministry



Each day, Sunday through Friday, the Soup Kitchen feeds 150 people-plus, so casseroles are in great need. We, as a parish, are doing this six times a year, the first Sunday of the month. A different casserole each time. These are the remaining months for this year: May-July, September-November. The chosen casserole for Sunday, May 5th is Tuna Surprise. Please bring to kitchen – Thank you.

Sarah

Haines



Easter Lilies Were Donated In Memory Of:

Fred & Ruth Harrison
John Mancinone
Elliott & Jessie Harrison
Arch & Gertrude Mitchell
Louis & Elizabeth Schoeck
E. Carl Ospalek
Richard O. Clark, Jr.
Mary & Al Winchell
Penelope M. Harris
Dan & Emma Pisano
Eunice A. Munger
Virgil & Cleo Bradley
Joseph Viega
Jessie Coyle
Ralph Petrocione
Cameron Klobedanz
Audrey Larson
Ruth M. Parsons
Albert Lange
Edwin G. Grant
Herbert and Belle Marsh
Christian Schumacher
Phoebe and Patrick Osborne
Victor & Frances Larson
Alice and Thomas Behan
Stanley Baranowski
Ruth and Harold Peterson
Mae Lauper Mraz & Arthur Mraz
Frederick and Lucy Kellogg
Lena Chillemi
Sara Seystahl
Dorothy Seystahl
Robert Seystahl
Charlotte Moran
Genevieve Hamilton

Lilies were also donated in thanksgiving for the April 6, 2002 wedding of Lisa Anne Bartush and Richard Harvey Collins.