



ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER



St. John's Episcopal Church, 4 Church Street,
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FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

Dear Parish Family,

To state the obvious, we are in the midst of change.

When I leave the rectory whether I'm walking or driving, I quickly find myself gasping in awe of the beauty of fall in the North Country. The vast sweeps of intense color continually take me by surprise as I round a corner or reach the top of a rise. The change of seasons is such a beautiful and profound reminder that God orchestrates continual change. I'm struck by the fact that life never stays the same and *change* is what our lives are all about.

Recently Terry and I went back to the Midwest to scatter his parents' ashes over their final resting place. Suddenly, like many of you, we are the oldest living generation in our family. Although we do not feel or even consider ourselves to be old, the very fact that we are now the *elders* in the family changes our role. In a turbulent world, whether or not we are wise or worthy, our children and grandchildren look to us for stability, inspiration and wisdom. Again, I find myself pondering not only *change*, but also, our response to change.

To continue to live vital lives we must continue to be responsive to change. We must allow ourselves to be challenged and stimulated by change. This does not mean that all change is good or that all change must be embraced. But, whatever the change or challenge is before us, we need to examine it, explore it, and evaluate it rather

than burring our heads in the sands of what life used to be.

We've heard the statement that God never changes – that God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This is most comforting in that we know that we can always count on God's love for us, God's interest in us, and God's continued presence in our lives. Yet, how exciting to recognize that as Creator, God's activity in the world continues to be new. Through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, God inspires us to find new ways of approaching old challenges, or perhaps reminds us of old ways to approach new challenges.

Today, St. John's is faced with changes and challenges many of which are related to our own aging, be it time, energy, finances, spiritual depth, or our appeal to younger generations. With the exception of a few precious members, we are now the oldest generation. We are blessed with the legacy of those who have gone before us, but we also bear the responsibility to pass on our faith to those who are spiritually hungry and those who are unaware of their own need to discover God through God's church. Perhaps this sounds like a daunting responsibility, but I suggest that it is an exciting opportunity. If in God's company and in God's energy we face the challenges head on, living and praying with expectancy, we will be surprised and awed by the opportunities God's creates for us at every turn of a corner or rise in the road.

With you in Christ's love,

Margie

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

By Warden Lynne Goepper

A special meeting was called to discuss the possibility for St. John's managing the Ice Cream Store. As this is an "anchor" business in the village, it was agreed we would (with volunteer help) with a paid staff of two (two shifts) finish the season. A portion of the profits that are generated will be used by St. John's to help those in need.

The major work of this meeting involved developing our budget of 2010. Most expenses are essential (salaries, house and grounds, office supplies, fuel and electricity). During the past year flowers for the altar have been donated. Most vestry activities away from church were paid "out of pocket". In other words expenses for 2008 into 2009 were kept on a "leash"!

Over the past few years we at St. John's have tried to be as caring for our church, parish hall and rectory as it is our other home. We want it kept in good order for us, our guests and the next generation. Through continual attention we can try to plan necessary repairs and not face expensive emergencies.

September

As summer concludes stewardship must begin. Prior to the regular meeting, finance and stewardship committees met to finalize our budgetary needs and to set up the pledge drive. Jon McBride will speak to the congregation on September 20th re our thoughtful participation in pledging. A letter and pledge card will be sent out in early October. The vestry goal is to have all pledges returned before advent (Nov).

Other matters: Mother Margie will be away September 21-23 for a bishop requested workshop at Christ the King. She will also be at an orientation meeting at Christ the King on September 28. Additionally the Shaw's will be in Indiana (Michigan for the next few days to recover the ashes of Terry's parents).

Other matters

The community expresses pleasure with St. John's help at the "Scoop" Shop!
Our volunteers and staff are doing a fabulous job. Buckets of thanks to all who have so eagerly "scooped".

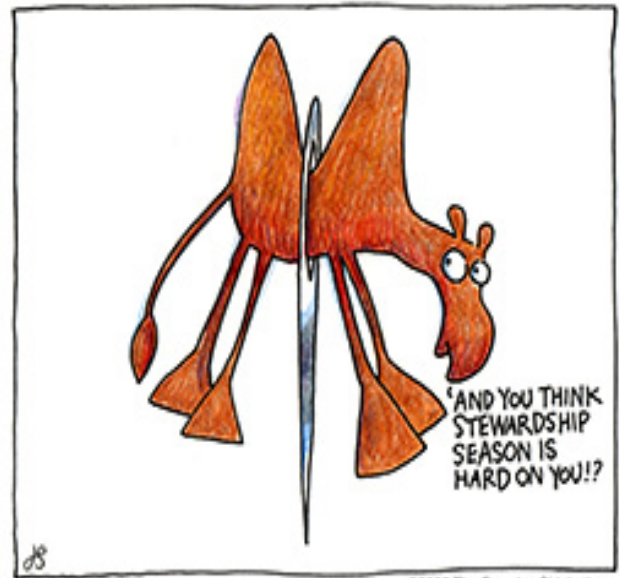
A program committee is being formed to plan church activities for the coming year. Please share your thoughts with Dean Caveney, Katherine Preston/or Lynne Goepper.

Next vestry meeting: October 21, 2009

OF INTEREST

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<http://www.bcponline.org/>



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If you have news or an upcoming event, and would like to share with our Newsletter please feel free to contact Kathy at the church office.

518-963-7775

Mon-Fri 2:30-5:00pm

Or you can email us at; stjohnschurch@willex.com

STEWARDSHIP AND YOU

St. John's vestry has spent a great deal of time working on its budget to present to all of you. We have tried very hard to be "tight" with expenses while also planning realistically for 2010.

It is extremely important for EVERYONE to evaluate what you may pledge to support our church. When Jon McBride spoke on September 20th and suggested that we all try to raise our giving by 30%, he was most sincere.

This past January when we asked for pledges, some of you expressed a desire to hold your pledge until you met and considered our new priest. Fortunately most of you continued to contribute. AND I believe we are unanimous in our support for Margie Shaw. It was faith and God's intervention that we now go forward!

At the annual Diocese of Albany's in June Bishop Bill Love presented our Diocesan Vision Statement (developed by a strategic planning committee):

The Diocese of Albany is One Church fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, moving from membership to disciple-ship: equipping, emboldening and sending disciples to make disciples.

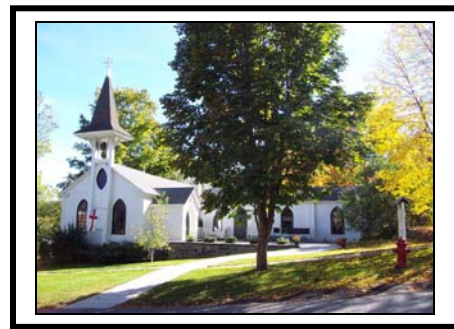
The Vision Statement includes ten specific Diocesan Values for us to focus on: "Prayer and Workship", Scripture, the Catholic Structures of Anglicanism, Christian Education, Christian Fellowship, Spiritual Gifts and Healing, Christian Service, Generosity in answering God's call as Stewards of His Creation, Evangelism, and Mission at home and abroad."

Bishop Love, with great urgency, asked that we all commit Ourselves to the Vision. In his own words, "...I believe it is truly who the Lord is calling us to be as this part of the Body of Christ, and as such, we must be intentional about living the power of the Holy Spirit"

He further expanded on too many parishes being stuck on our physical plant while our priorities ought to include a focus on outreach. We at St. John's are reaching out more every year to our community through ReNew, the Ice Cream Shop, the Elizabethtown food shelf, support of missionary endeavors and the "Rector's Discretionary Fund". Your pledge and plate offerings are given to these outreaches. Our vestry is VERY keen on helping others and finding the resources to help.

In conclusion how you care for your soul and that of our community, remember that St. John's is our home, our neighbors are part of our family....our generosity via our pledge will keep our "hearth" warm and our efforts will help insure that we will be "around" for the future.

God Bless,
Lynne Goepper, Warden



Our Mission at St. John's Church

We share in God's work of calling, forming, sending, and supporting Christians as agents of love, justice, and peace as shown through the life of Jesus Christ.