



May 2013

O Gracious Light *Phos hilaron*

O gracious Light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing thy praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Thou art worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The *Phos hilaron* is one of the oldest hymn and longest used hymns of the church. We recite it during Evening Prayer. I always focus on the Paschal Candle while saying this prayer. It is my single favorite thing found in the prayer book.

Light is so very important to us. But there was a time when we were afraid of fire. Historians believe that it was in the Neolithic Period, somewhere around 8000 BCE that humans began to use fire as a tool instead of being afraid of it.

Imagine a world without artificial light. Have you ever been lost in the dark? It can be a scary a time can't it?

In 2002 I had the chance to sail from Hong Kong to the Philippines. A friend of mine had been given a sailboat. His only task was to get it home to the Philippines.

It is not a terribly long trip, maybe 2 days and nights to cross the South China Sea. We checked the 120-hour forecast and had moderate conditions, so we set sail out of Hong Kong Harbor. That first afternoon was spectacular. I watched from the deck as dolphins played in our bow wave. A beautiful sunset followed. It was good to be alive

Sometime in the first night the weather changed dramatically and a tropical depression moved in. For the next 5 days we were in a fight for our lives against the sea in 40-foot waves and 40-knot winds! Our boat was no match to the storm. We took a beating. For five days and nights we were in those conditions. I have never been so sick in my life. And frankly I have never been so afraid. There was no one to call, no place to stop, and no way to get out of the storm. We had to keep the lights turned off on the ship so as not to ruin our night vision. We were sailing alone and had to keep our eyes peeled for other ships and the constantly changing conditions. Keeping the boat on course in such high seas was a desperate battle.

As we beat our way to the Philippines the ship showed her age and filled with water. Even with the sails reefed, we listed hard and had to pump the bilge by hand because the boat was keeled over so much in the wind that the electric bilge pumps wouldn't work.

I have never felt more alone then on those dark nights as I kept watch or struggled to keep that boat on course. Around midnight on the fifth night the rain let up and the wind and waves changed.

And as I kept watch I thought I was imaging something. A light, a tiny pinpoint of light was far off in the darkness. After a while the wind carried with it a different smell. Vegetation! I could smell something green. I could smell cooking fires. We were not lost. We were not alone. There are many things I learned in the trip. I learned about myself and my friends. My voyage on the boat, her name was Shibumi, revealed to me the power that light can have in the darkness.

We have seen a great light. We believe that God is the great light in our lives, guiding us to safe harbor. No matter what storms you might face in life, God is shining in the darkness and guiding you in the way you should go.

Warmly,

Father Rich+

SUNDAY, MAY 12TH 10:30 A.M.

Please join us at the 10:30 Worship service on Sunday, May 12th. We will celebrate Mother's Day, Ascension Sunday, AND the dedication of the memorial stained glass window dedicated to The Rev. Philip W. Snyder

Fr. Snyder and Kluane will both be with us for the dedication service.



From the Director of Music

Submitted by: Nancy Radloff

Many of you stopped me to compliment the music in our Lent and Easter worship services, and I appreciate hearing that. We all work hard preparing anthems and special music, and it's nice to hear that you notice. We're blessed to have so many dedicated musicians who choose to use their gifts in ministry at St. John's. Now, of course, we're looking ahead to the final weeks of our program year.

The bell choir's last Sunday will be May 5th. They have had an incredible year, and we're planning 2 anthems for inclusion in that service. The children's and youth choirs' will sing on April 21st, and their final Sunday will be May 12th, Mother's Day. They, too, have had a very good year. The adults, as always, will transform into a Come and Sing choir and sing through the summer. This is a great opportunity for all who enjoy singing to join us and see what worship is like from the choir stalls. All ages are welcome. Just arrive, as close to 9:30 on Sunday mornings as you can, and I'll take care of the rest.

Soon I'll be planning choir camp. Please check Sunday bulletins through May for a list of needed supplies, and thanks in advance. As always, financial donations are appreciated, too. This is a great opportunity for our young singers to improve their musicianship and learn more about their faith, and we encourage all young people who enjoy singing to join us this spring so that they can see if they'd like to go to camp with us.

It's been a very good year for music at St. John's. I'm very impressed with the improvement I've seen in every group. Comparing their sound today to what I heard in September is a true indication of just how hard they've worked this year. When we remember that every musician at St. John's [except me] is a volunteer, we realize how remarkable this is. If you enjoy music, consider joining one of our groups. You don't have to read music, and you don't need experience. Just bring your willingness to learn, and we'll take care of the rest.

Food and Drink indeed; Alleluia!

Submitted by Jim Johnson

Gregory of Nyssa was a fourth century Christian poet and theologian. Gregory was compelled to become the Bishop of Nyssa by his older brother, Basil the Great, to participate in the struggle against the Arian heresy and the Emperor Valens. He described the day of his ordination to bishop as the most miserable day of his life.

Described by the church historian William Placher as one who drifted through life without either a career or much religion, but who eventually found a deep faith.

The depth of his doubts and faith is shown to me by the consolation I take in his sense that with God there is always more unfolding, what we can glimpse of the divine is always exactly enough and yet never enough. It fills us to fullness and leaves us thirsty for more.

New Beginnings 2013

On March 22, I attended the spring weekend of New Beginnings at Vanderkamp in Cleveland NY. Three of my granddaughters, Clarissa and Theresa Wyak and Gina Emmart from Auburn, and Kalena Henry attended with me. This was a difficult weekend to be away from church, because going to New Beginnings meant we would miss Palm Sunday service. I believe if it were a different weekend, other youth in our parish may have joined me.

New Beginnings is a weekend for 6th thru 9th grade youth, lead by a team whose ages range from 10th grade thru college. On Friday the first time participants arrive as strangers, and by Saturday morning they are all friends, talking and sharing as if they knew each other for years. They discuss topics from families to how hard it is to be a student in middle school and high school. Regardless of the school system they come from, the issues our youth confront are the same.

I had the honor of being the “Mom in charge” for the weekend. During the weekend I shared how it was for me when I was their age, what school was like, and how the problems they face aren’t really much different than what I dealt with. We discussed how life has changed, and I had an opportunity to share my concerns about social media. We watched skits and listened to other team members share about their lives. We even had a snowball fight one afternoon, and the talent show on Saturday evening was amazing! Sunday morning we walked around the campus and took turns reading the Stations of the Cross.

The weekend was lead by Leigh Savacool and Gabby Clover, which was a nice treat for me. When I attended New Beginnings during the period of time I served as youth minister here at St Johns, these 2 women were youth participants. Seeing the two of them giving back to such an amazing diocesan youth activity was very heart warming.

I asked the girls who came with me to share their thoughts. Here are some comments I received:

“I learned so much at New Beginnings. I met a lot of people. I made a lot of friends. I am glad I got to go. It was a whole new place. I felt like we were all family (even though I was 1 of the youngest) I knew I could be myself with out being judged. I wish that where I went this weekend was the way it was everywhere.” Clarissa Wyak.

“Wow! I had such an awesome time at New Beginnings. It is definitely high on the list of the best experiences in my life. ☺ The friendships I’ve made will (hopefully) be with me forever. ☺ “ Regina Emmart. (I believe Regina will be on team in November)

“New Beginnings is a fun and enjoyable experience and it is definitely something that I would go to next time. It was fun because we did church services and activities like making our friend out of balloons and everyone is so friendly and nice and it was one of the best weekends of my life.” Tessa Wyak.

"I thought that it was fun and it made me feel closer to God then I have ever felt" Kalena Henry

The next weekend is November 8th, and I’m pretty sure these 4 youth are going with me again. My hope is other youth in our parish will give this weekend a try. I know it’s difficult to try something new, but this weekend is really a life changing experience. New Beginnings is held twice a year. I’ve attended this event 23 times, and each time makes a difference in my life. I will have applications in September and I promise to remind everyone about the weekend. If you have any questions, please talk to one of us who attended. We’d love an opportunity to share our experience with you. Karen Comisi

Diocesan News
Submitted by Lisa Tatusko

St. John's and 89 other parishes comprise the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York. Do you ever wonder what is happening in the Diocese? At their new location in Liverpool NY, the Diocesan staff is busy providing resources and creating events designed to strengthen and nurture both the individual and congregations in faith and mission.

There are two key methods of staying abreast of what your Diocese is doing.

Website

The website was recently reconstructed. It is easier to navigate and contains much more information. On the website you will find items such as current events, parish news, ministries that the Diocese is committed to, communications from Bishop Adams and much more. The new website can be found at www.cnyepiscopal.org.

The Messenger

The Messenger is the biweekly newsletter of the Diocese. You will find information such as parish spotlights, current events, happenings in the Episcopal Church, and more. The E-Newsletter is sent out the first and third Friday of each month. Additionally, copies of *The Messenger* can be accessed from the website. You can sign up for *The Messenger* on the website homepage.

I encourage you to take a few minutes to see all that is happening in the Diocese. You may be surprised!



New Ithaca/Cortland Dean of the District
Father Pete Williams

*Pete Williams--- "sorry folks, you're stuck with me."
The new dean is on the left in the photo.*

Father Pete Williams has been appointed the new Dean of the Ithaca/Cortland District. Fr. Williams looks forward to meeting with the clergy and lay leaders of the parishes in the district. Open lines of communication, more consistent times set for District Clergy to gather together and for District meetings are on the agenda to help reorganize and energize the district.

TO CONTACT THE NEW DEAN

Email is frpete310@aol.com
Parish phone: 607-753-3073
Pete's cell phone: 315-727-8189

*You can send me actual mail at this address:
Grace and Holy Spirit Church, PO Box 170, Cortland NY 13045*

Anglicanism 101

Father Rich will lead this five-part class that will explore the faith from an Anglican perspective.

Have you wondered...

Where did the Book of Common Prayer come from?

What was Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth's role in forming the Church of England?

How do we view the sacraments?

How do we read the Bible as Anglicans?

What is our basic Christian theology?

Wednesdays 7:00 to 8:00 pm. May 22nd -June 19th

All are invited and especially those interested in formal reception into the Episcopal Church.

Sunday, May 19th: Faith in Books Needs Your Help To Distribute 40 Bright Red

Bookshelves Please bring gently used/new children's books to help stock community bookshelves, as well as the one in St. John's Fellowship Hall. St. John's will collect book donations on Sunday, May 19, at both services. Your donations will help families make reading a wonderful part of everyday life. Since 1998, these collections have contributed a significant number of books for Ithaca families for free. Your donations will help children develop their love of and habit of reading and imagining all she/he can become

Weekly Altar Flower Order Form

You are invited to donate altar flowers in memory or thanksgiving of loved ones or special events.

Date requested: 1st choice_____

2nd choice_____

The Bulletin will read: The altar flowers are given by:

Check one: _____in memory of _____in honor of _____in celebration of

Flower variety(ies) or color(s)

requested:_____

Donor information:

telephone:_____email:_____

The cost is \$45. Please make checks payable to St. John's with "Altar flowers" in the memo line.

If you would like to recognize the birth of a child or loved one with a single rose, the cost is \$5.00.

Questions? Contact Elaine LaRocque at 255-2949 or EEL1@cornell.edu.

ST. JOHN'S MINISTRY FAIR Submitted by Susie Backstrom, Junior Warden

St. John's has a wide variety of ministries in which parishioners may participate. On March 17th, St. John's hosted a ministry fair between the Sunday morning services. Each of the ministries noted below had a representative, materials and a sign-up list. 19+ people signed up as new participants for our ministries! We intend to have another ministry fair in about 6 months. In the meantime, following is a description of each of these ministries and a person you may contact if you would like to learn more or would like to join. We look forward to hearing from you!

ACOLYTES

Acolytes are people who assist with services at St. John's. The word "acolyte" comes from the word "akolouthos," which is the ancient Greek word for an attendant or helper.

At St. John's, acolytes are responsible for lighting the candles before the start of church services and for extinguishing the candles at the end of the services. Acolytes also serve in several other significant duties. One acolyte, known as the crucifier, carries a long staff topped with a cross. Two acolytes known, as torchbearers, walk two steps behind the crucifier and carry mounted candles. Another acolyte, known as the server, carries a Bible from which the priest reads the Gospel.

The server also assists in the preparation of the communion table. The server usually is responsible for passing the sacred vessels to the priest for consecration of bread and wine. After communion is finished, acolytes are responsible for clearing the altar.

An acolyte also receives the offering from the congregation at each service and presents it to the priest. People of any age are welcome to serve as acolytes at St. John's.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Karen Comisi

ALTAR GUILD

Members of this ministry are servants of the liturgy. This ministry involves preparing St. John's worship space with the furnishings, vessels, elements and linens used in all of its services.

While altar guilds can trace their roots to the women who cared for Jesus, at various times in the history of our church altar guilds have been composed exclusively of men or exclusively of women. Today, *anyone* can be a member of the altar guild. Anyone, men or women, young or old, may have a vocation for altar guild service.

Joining the altar guild means learning many fascinating aspects of church tradition, including the esoteric names for all the various vessels, vestments and linens we use in worship. Most importantly, serving on the altar guild is a spiritual exercise. Caring for the altar is a way to act out our relationship with God. It is quiet, prayerful work.

You don't have to have any experience to join the altar guild. Your training will consist of hands-on instruction from experienced altar guild members, plus some background reading. *If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Susie Backstrom*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This ministry promotes comprehensive Christian education for St. John's diverse community of all ages. It includes providing guidance for, developing, and supporting, the leadership of nursery care, children's Sunday School, education and activities for junior and senior high students, the adult class for the specially challenged, adult Bible study, adult forums, Education for Ministry, the junior and senior youth groups, and intergenerational events.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Virginia Mansfield

COMMUNICATIONS

In cooperation with the Rector and the parish administrator, this ministry develops and supports leadership for the parish newsletter (the EAGLE), bulletin boards, the weekly bulletins, orientation booklets for newcomers, the parish directory, and other publications and means of communicating both within the parish and to the larger community. This is a fairly new ministry for St. John's and we encourage anyone who would like to participate in writing short articles for the EAGLE, for our website or in developing new lines of communication within our parish community to join us.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Susie Backstrom

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

EFM is an international program which helps individuals discover how to respond to the call of Christian service. EFM helps students encounter the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition and bring it into conversation with their experiences of the world as they study, worship, and engage in theological reflection together. Participants are given weekly assignments to study with the help of resource guides. In the weekly seminars, members have an opportunity to share their insights and discoveries as well as to discuss questions that the study materials raise for them.

The EFM group which meets at St. John's typically consists of 6 to 12 students with a trained mentor who meet weekly for two and a half to three hours over the course of a nine-month academic year. The program takes four years to complete and is broken up into these courses of study:

• Year One: The Old Testament • Year Two: The New Testament • Year Three: Church History • Year Four: Theological Choices

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Jim Johnson

EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF) is a national organization connecting all who seek a deliberate response to injustice and violence and want to pray, study and take action for justice and peace in our communities, our church, and the world. This ministry is called to do justice, dismantle violence, and strive to be peacemakers.

EPF began as The Episcopal Pacifist Fellowship on November 11, 1939, Armistice Day. In the early days of World War II, EPF supported Conscientious Objectors, urging the whole church to do so. EPF chapters are regionally based and work on local peace initiatives within their parish and communities as well as on national and international issues. Chapters sponsor and co-sponsor prayer and public witness such as peace vigils, liturgies, service projects and demonstrations.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Nancy Siemon

FELLOWSHIP

The fellowship ministry is one of welcoming: welcoming parishioners, visitors and inquirers. It shepherds and introduces newcomers and provides opportunities for fellowship and refreshment. Specific opportunities include greeting folks at our worship services, gathering and providing information for newcomers, providing coffee hour hosts and promoting and planning parish meals and social events (such as the monthly Parish breakfasts, Mardi Gras, the Harvest Dinner and the Maundy Thursday soup dinner).

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Tina Hallock

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This ministry designs and maintains the St. John's parish website. It also advises the vestry and the Rector about the information technology needs of the parish including, but not limited to, Internet service, printing/copying/scanning, computer needs and upgrades, software, and telephones. If you know what can be accomplished using information technology and you have some imagination, you can make a contribution to this ministry.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Mike Roman.

LITURGICAL PLANNING AND WORSHIP

The Liturgical Planning ministry works with the Rector in planning and executing special worship services during the year, including an instructed Eucharist, the weekly Lenten evening services, the Good Friday service and the Easter Vigil. It also is responsible for training and scheduling the Lectors and the Eucharistic Ministers who serve on rotation at the regular Sunday morning services.

Lectors read the first lesson. The Eucharistic Ministers read the Epistle and the Prayers of the People, in addition to offering the chalice for Communion.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Pam Talbott

LOAVES AND FISHES

Loaves and Fishes of Tompkins County is a non-profit Christian ministry that provides a place for free meals, hospitality, companionship, and advocacy for those in need, regardless of their faith, beliefs, or circumstances. This ministry is served from the parish house at St. John's.

Loaves & Fishes provides free meals each weekday. Lunch is served from noon to 1 pm every Monday, Wednesday & Friday. Dinner is served from 6 pm to 7 pm every Tuesday & Thursday.

Individuals being helped by Loaves and Fishes come from all areas of Tompkins County and include the working poor, the unemployed, the underemployed, individuals with disabilities, the homeless, people in crisis, families with inadequate public assistance and anyone in need of companionship. Loaves and Fishes serves an average of 125 guests per weekday. All are welcome.

Ministry volunteers for Loaves and Fishes help with a variety of activities, including: fundraising, food preparation, visiting with guests during meals, crafts, food rescue, music and entertainment at mealtimes and special projects.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Loaves and Fishes at 272-5457

MUSIC

St. John's has an active, vibrant music program. We rehearse weekly during the church's program year (September through June) and participate in St. John's weekly worship services. Presently, our music program is made up of the following groups: a handbell choir, a children's choir, a youth choir and an adult choir. Our children's choir is comprised of elementary school-aged children who learn part-singing and proper vocal technique. If your child is in the 5th grade or younger, this is the choir for him or her. The youth choir is for middle-high school youth. All of our musicians are volunteers and amateurs who worship God through music. If you enjoy making music in a positive, happy, group, please come join us!

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Nancy Radloff

OUTREACH

St. John's outreach ministry develops and promotes opportunities for outreach outside our parish walls, including development of relationships with other churches and dioceses as well as matters of social justice. Following are recent examples of St. John's outreach ministries:

Local: Contributions of time, money and food to the Kitchen Cupboard in Ithaca; supporting families at Christmas through the Salvation Army "Adopt-a-Family program.

National: Cash and materials donations to Love Knows No Bounds and St. John's #5 Faith Church, New Orleans; cash donations to United Thank Offering; ACT (Area Congregations Together).

International: Cash donations to the "Haiti Futures Fund" in response to a diocesan request. (This program supports new seminarians attending seminary in Haiti.); contribution of parishioner time to Feed My Starving Children (a non-profit Christian organization committed to feeding God's children hungry in body and spirit; specifically by hand-packing meals specifically formulated for malnourished children which are then shipped to nearly 70 countries around the world).

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Scott Russell

PASTORAL CARE

This ministry promotes an aware and loving environment for our parish family to care for one another, giving us opportunities both to give and to receive.

The organized opportunities presently include hospital visits, home visits and calling of shut-ins and the sick; sending cards to shut-ins; knitting and crocheting of shawls and afghans for the sick and shut-ins; a Eucharistic ministry which brings the Sunday Eucharist to shut-ins; the delivery of flowers after Sunday services; providing rides to church services and events; preparing meals to parishioners on occasion; and providing receptions to families after funerals St. John's.

As other parish organizations also provide elements of pastoral care, this ministry tries to assure that no one falls through the cracks.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Bettie Lee Yerka

STEWARDSHIP

The Episcopal Church sees stewardship as more than simply contributing money to the church; it is also about contributing time and talents, and volunteering for ministry and mission. It is about reaching out to build relationships from a perspective of abundance instead of scarcity

This ministry educates the congregation throughout the year to be good stewards of the gifts God gives us. It also is responsible for the planning and execution of the annual pledge drive and for implementation of new forms of financial support.

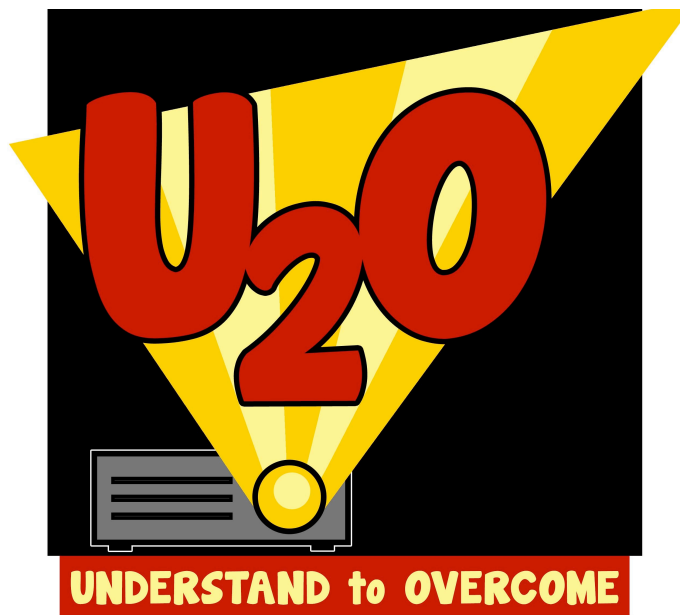
If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Sara D'Aprix

Watch the Sunday Bulletin for more information

We have a tentative date of Friday, May 17th for a Youth sponsored Spaghetti Dinner Fund-raiser for Feed our Starving Children. More details will be shared as we receive them! For further information contact Karen Comisi.

Gathering together to worship, growing together in Christ.

A Parish of the Episcopal Church



Come join friends from across our community in the powerful experience known locally as "Understanding To Overcome" (U2O) and become part of the conversation that happening across Tompkins County that focuses on understanding to build a better community.

Mark your calendars for Thursdays May 9, 16, and 23. Over the course of these three weeks, we are invited to join our friends in the Loaves and Fishes community, plus neighbors from across town at the Baptized Church of Jesus Christ, to watch together the PBS documentary "Race: The Power of An Illusion." Many people throughout our county have joined in on this community-wide viewing through their workplaces, social outlets, on Channel 13, or, as you may have heard, at The State Theatre.

What new understanding is possible? What new action will be inspired that, with all of our combined energy, will take our region to new heights in building bridges throughout our community while providing true understanding and opportunity for all?

For each of the three Thursday nights, come have dinner with Loaves and Fishes starting at 5:30pm then sit back to take in the video at 7pm. Around 8pm we'll begin a facilitated conversation to deepen our understanding of the documentary's message and what we stand to gain through the U2O movement. Childcare will be provided.

The viewing schedule:

May 9

Episode 1: "The Difference Between Us"

May 16

Episode 2: "The Story We Tell"

May 23

Episode 3: "The House We Live In"

It is not easy to talk about or make sense of race. Ask 10 people to define it and you're likely to get 10 different answers. On few topics have there been so many assumptions, myths, and misperceptions. And yet the ramifications of race – the meaning that we place on the color of one's skin – continues to be real, and still has very real consequences in our country and in our community.

Learn more online about U2O at www.u2o.org and watch a preview of this powerful video at [HTTP://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7NwtQe2FZM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7NwtQe2FZM).

Hoping to see you there! Fr. Rich & J.R. Claireborne, L&F Outreach Coordinator