

Summer 2013



“What a lovely church!” We hear a variation of the phrase quite a bit here at St. John’s. We have been blessed with a beautiful church in which to worship God and from which to go and serve.

As you look around St. John’s you are likely to notice a number of maintenance items that need attention.

It bears repeating that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to all those who loved our church and community. Their legacy endures, but not without our continued care.

In the coming months you will hear more about our plan to address new and recurring issues with the physical plant. There are a number of large projects that must be addressed:

- Roof striping, sanding, and repainting of the galvanized metal roof.
- Foundation trenching in the garth and new drains to carry rainwater away from the church.
- Stained glass repair and restoration.
- Repainting of the church exterior.

Other projects will have been completed by the time this edition of the Eagle reaches you. Including the replacement of at least 31 heat detectors throughout the plant and updates to the wiring to the lights in the Parish Hall.

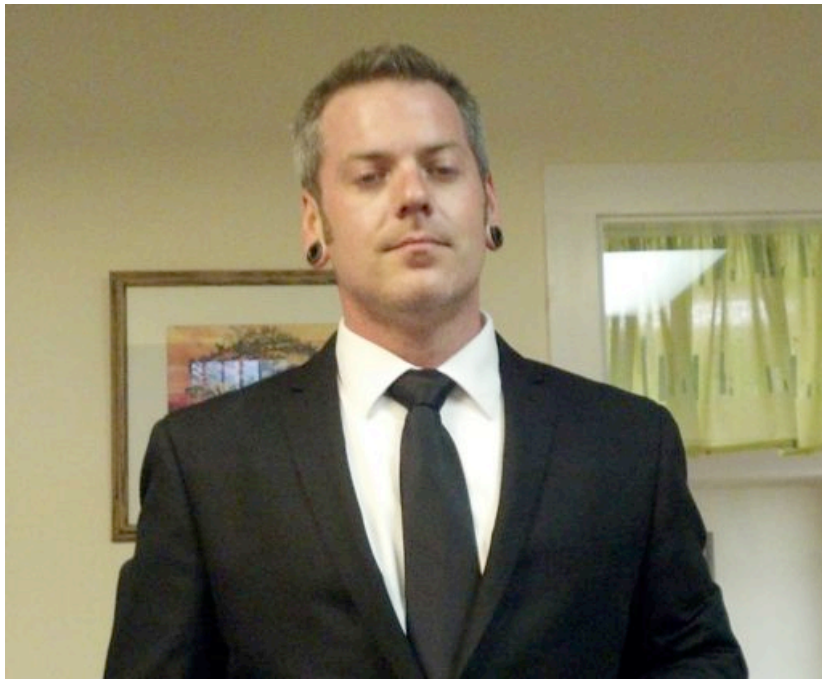
These, and many other smaller projects require money and time to complete. These projects are expensive and unbudgeted. Your vestry has been exploring the ways we can afford to complete the necessary repairs. We have also been receiving bids, prioritizing the projects, and tackling the smaller tasks in house. A realistic estimate for all the projects is likely to be in excess of \$500,000.

On Sunday, June 23, 2013 the vestry voted unanimously to “Create a plan to raise funds that are required to complete all deferred maintenance. The Campaign should commence in 2013.”

Additionally, the vestry authorized the wardens to move ahead and “Secure a loan of approximately \$200,00 with the diocese and/or a local lender. Funds will cover the first phase of repairs, which includes: painting the roof and steeple, repair of the most critically damaged stained glass windows, Lexan window protection for all stained glass windows, foundation drainage and possible structural testing of the nave ceiling. This loan will be paid off in full before the next projects are completed.”

You will receive more communication about our upcoming projects and capital campaign. Please know that we are endeavoring to be faithful stewards of the gifts and work of all that have gone before us. I exhorted the vestry, and will continue to affirm, that the common mission of St. John’s is worship that impels service and engagement in the community. St. John’s is not just a building. My prayer is that our work in maintaining our buildings serves to enrich our worship and enhance our loving service to each other and the world.

In Christ
Fr. Rich+



**HAVE YOU MET
OUR NEW SEXTON?**

If you haven't had the opportunity to introduce yourself, please do so . John Harty began working as our new sexton at the end of April.

He is still "getting his feet wet" and learning all the ins and outs and ups and downs of the building but has been very open and receptive to helping out with all of the little intricacies of the building and is working wonders on small projects to save us hiring the work out to other contractors. John comes to us with loads of experience as a private contractor, carpenter, and all around handy man. He is all over the building, everywhere, but if you catch him taking a breather, stop and introduce yourself!

John attends First Baptist Church here in Ithaca and serves on their Board of Trustees and volunteers his free time to special projects for them and other organizations.

Welcome John!



**Fr. Rich
Towers with
Jane and
Lawrence
Bruce-
Robertson
on Father's
Day.**

Godspeed to the Bruce-Robertson Family who shared Father's Day services with us for the last time before returning to Canada. They will be greatly missed by us here at St. John's!

The Altar Flower budget is supplemented by donations from parishioners. In an effort to maintain the Parish Budget, if there is no donor for a specific week, the altar will be void of flowers. Flowers donations may be given in honor or memory of a friend or loved one; in commemoration of a special event, or for any other reason you may decide to donate. Please contact Elaine LaRocque or fill in the slip below and place it in the offering plate, mail it to the parish office, or give it to Elaine in person. (Elaine attends the 8 o'clock service)

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: _____

Specific Florist 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 email her at **EEL1@cornell.edu**.

As well, the monthly cost of the Aumbry Candle and the Eucharistic Candles may be donated as a memorial, honorarium or celebration event. If you are interested in donating the candles, please contact Betty Kelts for further information.

Some thoughts on the Eucharist

We actively remember both the life and death, but more importantly the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in the meal we share. The body and blood of our Lord was given to all of us on Calvary and is given to us weekly in the Eucharist. When taking them we must remember both that He died for us and that He died because of us. We take a part of that death each and every time we celebrate the Eucharist.

We also share in the resurrection in the communion bread and wine. It is in the sharing of these things that we are fed. We come to the altar table remembering our Masters suffering and triumph, and also our own part in that salvation story.

Submitted by Jim Johnson, member of the Liturgical Planning Committee

NEWCOMER'S PICNIC

Sunday, June 23rd was the Newcomers Picnic. It was held at the Yacht club and hosted very kindly by the Oaks family. On a very hot day, it was nice to mingle with newcomers, get to know a little about their lives and reasons for being in Ithaca. The location, food and company made for an event to remember. If you are a reasonable newcomer to St. Johns and didn't attend, contact Father Rich or introduce yourself to any of our friendly parishioners. As was overheard at the barbeque, "Anyone of us would be happy to help you find your way in Ithaca!"

SUMMERTIME IN THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT!

Summer is finally here, and it's time to plan for choir camp. We have a great group of choristers going this year, and I think it will be a wonderful time for all of us. (And no, I don't always say or think that. It isn't always true.) As always, you're welcome to come to White Eagle to see our closing program, which will include a presentation of the musical we'll learn this year. Here are a list of things we need this year:

- Miner's hats – 4
- Toy trumpets
- Sheets of styrofoam or cardboard.
- A flat of bottled water
- Microwave popcorn – 1 box
- Power bars or granola bars for snacks

And, of course, we're always grateful to receive cash donations. The three biggest expenses for camp are the scores for the musical, scholarships for campers, and our 'road trip.' We choose an off-site location for many reasons – educational and recreational, for example. It's also a great way to build a sense of community among the kids and encourage them to watch out for each other. In the past we have gone to the Erie Canal museum, ridden a scenic train, hiked in the Adirondacks many times, mined for diamonds, and gone to a water park. Any help you can offer for any of these items will be greatly appreciated.

Choir camp is a great way for children to improve their vocal technique. It really is obvious, when you listen to our choirs, which children regularly attend camp and which can't. In addition to the social skills, critical thinking, and sense of responsibility that are an important part of our routine, we spend 4-6 hours a day working on the building blocks of good vocal production.

Of course, camp isn't the only musical thing happening at St. John's this summer. We continue singing, and I'm planning for next year already. What do I consider when selecting the direction of the program in the following year? Obviously, I consider the lessons of each week and what music will best support them. But this is only a small part of it. What are the needs of the parish? What programs enrich their spiritual life? What do the choirs need to work on? What skills need improvement? The following is from a sermon given by the Rev. Canon John Andrew to those participating in the annual Girls' Course at St. Thomas Church, NYC, first published in *The Journal of the Anglican Association of Musicians*.

It is an eloquent statement of what I believe is the choir's role in worship:

....If you want a title for this address you need look no further than what you will hear Father Mead sing when he turns to you at the altar. "Lift up your hearts!", the ancient challenge to the people of God to give themselves heart and soul and voice in worship. "Lift up your hearts," what in Latin is known as the Sursum Corda. It is the rallying cry to worship: the most important human activity, the most costly response the soul can offer. More important than impassioned personal witness, worship is the bedrock response of love to the Lord, who has brought you to this day and to this hour.

And you, choristers, have the responsibility in leading it. What you sing and the way you sing it can take our hearts to Heaven, so that we come away with music resounding in our hearts and memories to strengthen us for the day and the week ahead until we meet again, or it can cause injury – boredom, irritation, what we call turn-off when we shut the doors of our souls like the slam of a door.

What is the purpose of a choir? It's not to perform difficult music before a silent and intimidated (or irritated) congregation. It's not there to impress the faithful. It's there to encourage the faithful to find their voices to praise God in His holiness. It is there to give the people their voice. It is what we call a ministry.... The ministry of music is to get people's imaginations going, to offer God something they perhaps hadn't realized they had in them. Music can take them out of themselves. It makes some people cry, when they feel overwhelmed by the sheer force of its beauty. I know it's true. I confess to being vulnerable to this when a great hymn or its descant's majesty sweeps me off my feet.... I don't apologize for it. It's not cheap emotion. It's God's people finding their voice, their response with their uplifted hearts....

Do you have a music ministry inside, just waiting to come out? If so, join our Come and Sing choir whenever you can. It's relaxed and, like everything in the St. John's music program, geared for your success.

PASTORAL CARE

This ministry promotes an aware and loving environment for the parish family to care for one another, giving us opportunities both to give and to receive. The organized opportunities have included hospital and home visits; sending cards and calling shut-ins and the ill; knitting and crocheting shawls and afghans for the ill and shut-ins; a Eucharistic ministry which brings the Sunday Eucharist to shut-ins; delivery of flowers after Sunday services; providing rides to church services and events; providing meals, on occasion, for parishioners; and the ministry of providing receptions to families after funerals. Since other parish groups also provide elements of pastoral care, this ministry is responsible for seeing that no one falls between the cracks.

Committee members: Susie Backstrom, Joan Barnes, Susan Dunlop, Marcia Fort, Hugh Hurlbut, John Jackson, Susan Kerns, Kathleen O'Neil, Pam Quirk, Lisa Tatusko, Cora Yao, Bettie Lee Yerka, chair

Education for Ministry

Education for Ministry, or EfM, is an international program from Sewanee Seminary designed to help lay people discover how to respond to the call of Christian ministry that we have promised to do in our baptismal vows. EfM helps students encounter the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition and bring it into conversation with the experiences of the world today. They do this by praying, worshiping, studying and engaging in a process of theological reflection **together**.

Participants have weekly assignments to study with the help of resource guides. In the seminars, members have an opportunity to share their insights and discoveries as well as to discuss questions, which the study materials raise for them.

The EfM group which meets at St John's typically consists of 6 to 12 students with one or two trained mentors. It meets weekly for two and a half to three hours over the course of a nine-month academic year. The program is four years long, but students sign up for a year at a time. The first year is a study of the Old Testament with an emphasis on understanding the scripture set in the time it was written and as the record of God's action in the world. The second year students spend time with the New Testament, again looking at its historical setting as well as its meaning for the church today. Year three focuses on the history of the church from early days through the present time. The fourth year is spent concentrating on theological and moral choices. All of this is presented in an atmosphere of trust and respect in a four-year one room classroom, giving students a chance to see what is coming up, or reviewing what is past.

The cost per year is \$350.00 which includes all books and study material. There is a certain amount of scholarship aid available, so no one need feel that they cannot afford the program. If you are interested please contact Jim Johnson at hilltoppaddles@earthlink.net either for more information or to sign up.

A NEW COMMUNICATIONS TOOL IS COMING!

At its June 17, 2013 monthly meeting, the St. John's vestry approved a proposal to develop and launch a new method of communicating announcements and news to parishioners at St. John's on a speedy, parish-wide basis.

This will be done by means of email announcements addressed to all parishioners, ages 18 and over, for whom the parish office has email addresses. If they wish, parishioners who do not wish to receive announcements this way, may contact the parish office to opt out of the program.

The email listserv will be generated from the St. John's parish office. It will focus parishioners on announcements that also may be published in the Sunday bulletins, but which parishioners may have overlooked or, if they have been unable to attend a particular Sunday service, may have missed. Homebound, traveling and college-age parishioners also will benefit from receiving announcements in this manner.

What the announcement listserv will be used for:

- Matters requiring short turn-around time (such as suddenly scheduled events that parishioners would like to know about and which may not appear in a timely way in other media (such as funerals, receptions for which help is sought from a large number of parishioners, etc.)
- Matters that are prospective in nature and which need greater and broader publication than the weekly Sunday bulletins
- Announcements or matters from the Rector or the Vestry (such as announcements about construction or repair work to the church buildings for which Vestry minutes would not be adequate or timely)
- Parish ministries announcements or plans (such as pastoral care needs [rides for parishioners for upcoming events], fellowship needs [food or help needed for upcoming events])
- Parishioner announcements which support/are consistent with St. John's ministries
- Parishioner announcements which support/extend a sense of Christian community among St. John's parishioners (such as exceptional support needs of parishioners of a non-confidential nature [e.g. help with meals, driving, notices about support on Caring Bridge]; prayer requests of a non-confidential nature; high school, college and graduate school graduation announcements of parishioners)
- Outreach opportunities for non-partisan, noncommercial activities/events with which parishioners are involved and would like to invite other parishioners to join (e.g. bell-ringing for Salvation Army at Christmas, AIDS support activities, Hospicare's Women Swimmin')
- Announcements to form small groups related to the St. John's mission (e.g. young adult fellowship group, Bible study or book group)
- The content of the Sunday service bulletin (relating to BCP, hymnal and lectionary selections each week)(this will be done if the Parish Administrator's workload permits)

The listserv moderator will determine if particular requests or messages will be repeated in subsequent weeks' listserv announcements.

This listserv will be a tool for internal communications geared only to St. John's parishioners. Our new and improved website is the platform for external use by others in addition to St. John's members.

The "moderator" of the listserv will be the Rector or, in his absence or unavailability, one of the Wardens. The Moderator is the person who determines what content will be posted on the announcement listserv, consistent with the guidelines approved by the Vestry.

Frequency of announcement blasts:

We anticipate the announcements to be made at least once a week (with a fixed cut-off time for submission of content) unless a time-sensitive matter arises, in which case the announcement will be made as soon as practicable for the Moderator and the parish office.

The listserv proposal was developed by the Vestry's communications committee, comprised of Virginia Richardson, Lisa Tatusko, Margaret Johnson and Susie Backstrom.

After a few bugs are worked through, the announcement listserv will be rolled out. Keep a look out for it!

**SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE DIOCESAN EVENT, 'A DAY WITH PHYLLIS TICKLE'
Peg Coleman, Education for Ministry (EfM) Co-Mentor**

My first awareness of scholar, author, and Episcopalian Phyllis Tickle was in a Tuesday evening EfM seminar this spring at St. John's. Our theological reflections had explored aspects of church hierarchy and authority, as well as teachings on scripture and church history. Though I had not read any of Dr. Tickle's books or heard her present, I knew I would participate when the Diocese of CNY offered the opportunity for dialogue with Dr. Tickle, Bishop Skip, and more than 30 lay and ordained leaders from our diocese last month.

As a newcomer to the topic of 'Emergence Christianity', I found new ideas and insights swirling around me all day, and in the weeks since the event, I found my notes from the day difficult to distill concisely, with good

reason: the concept has been evolving in scholarly circles since the 1990s. I add my recommendation of Dr. Tickle's website (<http://www.phyllistickle.com/>) and her books to that of Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, who commented that 'we are called to read and study 'Emergence Christianity' in order that we may discern how best to serve the kingdom of God in whatever form God is presenting it.' Religious leaders of diverse traditions including our own have observed major transformations occurring in semi-millennial cycles, tsunamis of change re-shaping religion and culture every 500 years or so. In our day with Phyllis Tickle, our main question was what has been 'birthing' in Christian churches since the Protestant Reformation.

An unexpected surprise for me was the connection between religion and scientific advancements. Dr. Tickle described 'Emergence Theory', with its origin in the physical sciences in the first decade of the 20th century. She noted that psychologist G.H. Lewis and others developed what would become Emergence Theory (and later, Systems Theory) to explain human consciousness and other phenomena far too complex to be explained by Darwin's Theory of Evolution. 'Emergence Theory' explains how bird flocks rotate leadership while flying in formation, how each snowflake is unique though all have the same component (water); and the existence of non-hierarchical (communal) organizations (e.g., ant hills, in contrast to the hierarchical organization of bee hives, though both have a queen). Dr. Tickle invited us to consider theology, philosophy, physics, and other sciences all components, pieces of a created whole that evolves, transforms, and emerges as our understanding expands. This summarizes the historical and scientific context leading us to consider *Emergency Christianity: What It Is, Where It Is Going, and Why It Is Important*, the title of Dr. Tickle's latest book.

What I heard from Phyllis Tickle about 'Emergence Christianity' was her sense of a call to change. She sees the tradition Episcopal church as called to embrace the responsibility to form young Christians, to welcome them and learn how to live the liturgical year in a way that connects us, our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She sees emerging Christians as: communal, not hierarchical; valuing social justice and green Christianity; somewhat transient in their attachments; and engaging through the Spirit not creeds (e.g., spiritual, not religious). She likened our struggle with change in Christianity today to the struggles of the churches in Jerusalem and Antioch in St. Paul's days. How do we follow our commission as a traditional established church that evolved from the church in Jerusalem and welcome the emerging Christians from Antioch?

As we work out our responses to God's call in our parish and our diocese, I am eagerly awaiting delivery of four more books by Dr. Tickle on praying the Divine Hours, rooted in ancient Jewish and Christian forms of daily prayer for the laity that resonate with traditional and emerging Christians. I also look forward to another year of prayer, study, and theological reflection in EfM seminars starting in the fall at St. John's and to the discussions at this year's Diocesan Convention (Nov 15-16) on *The Heavens Tell the Story: Science in the Lives of the Faithful*.

In closing, I offer this prayer from *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*.

'God, give us the lamp of love which never fails, that it may burn in us and shed its light on those around us. By its brightness, give us a vision of that holy city where the true and never failing Light, Jesus Christ, lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.'