

MAGNIFICAT

PARISH NEWS FROM THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LADY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH APRIL 2008

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FROM THE RECTOR



The Baptismal Covenant in the Prayer Book (p.304) is comprised of two parts. The first part is of course the Nicene Creed laid out in question and answer form, divided into three parts for each person of the Trinity. The second part contains five questions and answers. Each question asks something of the believer. Each question invites us into a deeper place with our souls, with those around us and with God. This is a Covenant, not a Confession. Our faith is based upon a relationship not a dogma. That relationship is expressed in our manner of living and our connection to each other.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? I will, with God's help.

This question basically asks if you will gather for worship and fellowship. Will you commit to going to church and pursuing relationships in your community of faith? Will you participate in the Eucharist and will you pray for those who have entrusted their needs and joys to your gathering?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? I will, with God's help.

Sin can be a hard word to define. As you probably already know, the literal translation of that term is "to miss the mark". A more helpful definition comes out of Process Theology that defines sin as "anything that defiles a relationship". It can pertain to how we treat our bodies or our psyche, it can mean how we treat creation, or how we deal with other people. In the Covenant, the point of this question is very clearly focused upon restoring that which has been defiled as soon as possible. Evil then can be understood as that which leads us to estrange ourselves from God, the creation, or our fellow human.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ? I will, with God's help.

The scriptures remind us that we are to be ready to give and account for the hope that is within us and that the joy of God is our strength. We do not need to brow beat others into believing like us, nor do we need to be shy about giving God due when asked about how we might get through a particular situation. This is the natural evangelism of being who you are every day. Put the Sunday pious self away and be who you are. Our authentic selves is really who God wants us to be anyway.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? I will, with God's help.

The incarnation, the act of God becoming flesh, necessarily drives our faith to understand that God dwells in our midst and that creation is basically good. Seeking and serving God in each other is a foundational piece of what Jesus taught. It should be ours as well.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will, with God's help.

God is not partial. The parable of the Samaritan shows us the importance of seeking God in the other. Working to create a just and peaceful society is the systemic expression of the command to love our neighbor as ourselves. Working for justice is a key component of all three religions who worship the God of Israel. It should tell us something that God made this point a very clear command in each expression of faith in those traditions.

See you in church.

- Fr. Clyde+

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

A few weeks ago during the announcement time, one of your Vestry, Todd Shumate, spoke to the parish about Annunciation's newly approved 2008 budget. As you may remember, pledges were slow to come in this year and we were unable to formulate a budget in time for the Annual Meeting (I want to note that I realize that one of the reasons pledges were slow to come in is that the Vestry was slow to ask for them!). In February, with the help of the Finance Committee, the Vestry was able to come up with a workable budget. It was important to us, especially since we were unable to present a budget at the Annual Meeting, to make sure everyone in the congregation knew where the Parish is financially. It was also important for us to be honest about our financial challenges.

Since that presentation, several people have come to me and asked worried questions that I'd like to share here in the Newsletter. Perhaps some of you are asking the same questions.

Question: Is Annunciation broke/going down the tubes?

Answer: NO!! Our parish is not wealthy and has to watch every penny it spends. Bruce, our treasurer, sometimes has to wait to pay a bill until after the Sunday offering has boosted our bank account sufficiently. But we pay every bill. We are not deficit spending. We do, however, depend on every pledge, so if you miss a week or two (or the summer) it makes a difference. But no, we are not going down the tubes-far from it.

Question: Are we unable to continue to employ Rev. Kate?

Answer: NO! We are certainly able to continue to employ our very dear Rev. Kate. This was a non negotiable expense as far as the Vestry was concerned. After working for free for most of her time at Annunciation, it was a relief two years ago to finally be at a place where we were able to compensate her financially for her many (often behind the scenes) contributions to the parish. Our worship and spiritual life depend on our clergy. They depend on us to pay them fairly. We will continue to do so.

Question: Why did we cut so much from Outreach?

Answer: This was the most difficult cut for us to make. What does it say about us as a Christian community if we have so little available to give to the poor and needy or organizations that serve them? We trimmed the Outreach budget from its requested \$8,000 to \$1,240. It was gut wrenching. When we did this, though, we kept in mind that every time we have asked the parish for a special offering for Outreach (the New Orleans trip, for example) people have been overwhelmingly generous. *[Editor's note: At the time of this printing, the outreach budget has already increased an additional \$1,500 due to a memorial fund donation.]* Funding PADS through the Outreach line item has only been in the budget for two years. Prior to this, PADS depended on individual donations of food and money. It can be funded this way again.

One thing to consider about Outreach is that while money is important, it is people power that really makes things happen. I think our parish has to take a long, hard look at what our purpose really is with Outreach. Speaking for myself, it has been very easy to simply

write a check and let someone else do the tough work. Money can do a lot, but it can't bring energy or passion to Outreach work. Only people can do that. Which brings me to the last question; a question I asked myself:

Question: Does this budget mean that the Growing Together Initiative was a failure?

Answer: NO! The Growing Together Initiative was about defining what our passions are as a parish and making plans accordingly. Financial support is implied in that, but it is not the only measure we use to indicate success. We are still discerning what our passions are. We need to formulate new ways to support our ministries. The April 6th Pentecost planning meeting will not cost a penny and I think it will go a long way to addressing some of the areas from the GTI. First, the meeting will make the most of our RELATIONSHIPS. We like each other. This meeting will allow us to sit down and talk to each other. Second, it will improve COMMUNICATION. Every ministry and every interested parishioner will hear and see what is planned for the next 6 months. Third, it will encourage PARTICIPATION. Have you heard of the 80/20 rule (80% of the work is done by 20% of the people)? Everyone who has even a passing interest in this parish should be at this meeting, from the newest newcomer to the most veteran member. Are you looking for a niche? Do you need a new niche? Do you need some new ideas or support for your ministry area? THIS IS THE MEETING TO ATTEND.

I hope this has answered some of your questions. If you have more questions or any other concerns, don't hesitate to contact me by phone, email, in church or by carrier pigeon.

-Maggie Attiyeh
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FROM THE JUNIOR WARDEN

This year Easter arrived too early for many of us. I like to think of the season of Easter as being mid-April when everything is starting to grow and the air is clean and fresh.

Just as I see this season as being a new start, I also see Annunciation starting anew. Why? We are starting a new way of doing things. We have a plan, the Growing Together Plan, looking out three, four, five years. It is one that can be continually updated and modernized as necessary. Who developed this plan? We did – the congregation of Annunciation of Our Lady Episcopal Church. However, this is only a plan, a skeleton outline of where Annunciation is going to go.

Next comes the hard part: Implementing the plan. In order to make the plan work, the entire congregation must be involved. On April 6th after the 10 o'clock service we are we are going to take a giant leap toward implementing this plan. On this date, there will be a parish meeting to determine what activities will be conducted and who will coordinate them. Here is the important change and one that leads to the implementation of the plan: which member or members of the Congregation wants to take the lead in planning and conducting one of these activities. This is a radical idea for many of us. It can be filled with danger and yet have an aura of excitement to it. Some things which we see as a traditional Annunciation happening may actually be put aside. Things which we never thought of might be brought forward as something we can do. Since this is the first time we are doing this, we all must recognize that there will be some missteps,

and people should recognize this fact and not be too critical of the process. We will learn from the missteps and make it better the next time.

The important thing to remember is that we, the congregation, have the power to make the Growing Together Plan succeed. Scary isn't it. See you on April 6th. -Rich Ringhofer

SOJOURNERS IN SPIRIT

This year, our parish women's group has been talking about "Women who Dared." In March, that was Dorothea Dix, a tireless social reformer on behalf of the mentally ill. In April, we're going in a very different direction, using Pope Joan as our jumping-off point for discussion. Join us for fun, information, and great fellowship on April 21st. All the women of our parish are invited, as are women friends.



-Maggie Attiyeh and Rev. Kate

UNITED THANK OFFERING

What kind of people donate to the United Thank Offering (UTO) using the little blue box?

- People with a focus. Their blue box is right by the table by their front door. They empty their pocket or purse with their change and place it in the blue box.
- People who are always prepared. They have blue boxes all over the house with
- a bowl of change next to each box – they are not going to be caught unprepared with

- a thank you and no box or money to put in the box.
- The thinker. Their blue box sits right next to them in the car. They spend their driving time thinking about their day, and when they remember a thanks giving, they put a coin or two in their box.
- The parent. The box is right smack in the middle of their dining room table and a coin is placed by everyone's plate. Grace is said and the box is passed around with everyone placing their coin in the box.
- The parent II. The UTO box is placed on everyone's bedside table to remind everyone to thank God before they close their eyes.

This is just a few of the people at Annunciation who use the blue box daily ... if you haven't joined the many people who "blue box it" please do so, pick up a blue box in the narthex next Sunday.

—Linda Lutter

BOOKS & MORE

This month's book club selection is *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett. Join us at Panera Bread in Gurnee on Wednesday, April 9th to discuss this tragicomic novel (and, chances are, many other topics as well). —Rev. Kate+

"A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end he realized that prayer is listening."

- Søren Kierkegaard
Christian Discourses

ATRIUM NEWS



For the children, the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers many avenues for reflection, discovery, insights and personal triumph in mastery of skills. I am in awe of the beauty of their development where so much is prepared for them to work with – a feast of faith. And yet none of this would mean anything, but for the opportunity to be in God's presence. This is why the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd isn't "taught" in a lesson as much as it is experienced as the children work with the materials that are designed to lead them into a deep communication with God. The children have been preparing the model cruetts. They listened to the Parable of the Hidden Treasure, and on Palm Sunday we explored the Last Supper presentation. Lent has been a time of preparing and patient waiting for the wonderful feast of Easter. Our atrium provides the children with the opportunity to explore events in the life of Jesus, our liturgy and the profound teachings in the parables. I invite you to schedule an observation in the atrium to see your wonderful children.

-Mary Oesterlein

EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ... GARBAGE?!?

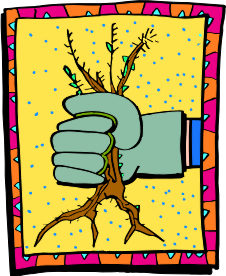
Spring has sprung! Unfortunately, the melting snow has revealed a bountiful crop of litter along the side of the road. Annunciation sponsors a stretch of road from the post office on O'Plaine Road and Washington Street up to Old Grand Avenue . It's our trashiest ministry!



Highway clean up is easy! It requires a small amount of time, a little physical effort and practically no thought at all. Please give it a try on Saturday, April 19th at 9:00 am. Anyone 10 and over may participate. We use garbage bags supplied by the county and get to wear cool orange vests! Wear a pair of sturdy work shoes and bring a pair of heavy work gloves.

A brief video must be viewed if you have not done highway cleanup before. The video is short enough to be watched during coffee hour. Please see Bob Coates or Fr. Clyde if you are interested.

ALL HANDS ON DECK!



We are planning an "all Parish" weed and mulch day for Saturday, May 3rd. This will be in conjunction with the Building & Grounds committee repairing, weeding and re-mulching the playground area.

More info to come, and a sign up sheet will be posted in the Narthex starting March 30th. Plan to be there! Many hands make light work... not to mention a beautiful garden.

-Bill Hagan

COFFEE TALK



Greetings! I know you will all be excited to learn that the new coffee hour sign-up sheets are posted. Before we all fill up the new sheet, there are a few dates on the current list that just beg for filling. We are in serious need of two families to host May 11 after the 10:00 service and another family to host the coffee hour after the 8:00 service. This is a double whammy Sunday since it is Pentecost AND Mother's Day. Please prayerfully consider filling this great need. Thank you. -Mary Oesterlein

FROM THE PEWS

News, views and who's who... all from the pews! Please submit your own news and views to Rev. Kate for next month's newsletter. We'd love to hear from you.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Ruth Hull Chatlien's short story "Dance Partners" has been accepted for the 2008 volume of *Rambunctious Review*, a Chicago literary magazine that is published once a year. This will be the fifth story of Ruth's to be published, and the third to appear in that magazine. Way to go, Ruth!



And speaking of "way to go," here's to all the Annunciation kids who made the Woodland Middle School high honor roll: Rosie Attiyeh, Brynne Boyke, Samantha Haevers, Amanda Pullinger, and Gretchen Riemer. Wow! This really *is* "the thinking person's church".

VIEW FROM THE PEWS

Here's a suggestion someone sent in to the *Magnificat* for your consideration:

"What will you be doing with your 'free money' from the government in April? You know the government payout that is supposed to help our economy. May I suggest you donate it to Annunciation? We all know that the church can use it to help support our many ministries. If you don't want to sign over the whole check, make a gift of a portion of the check. We won't

have any trouble spending it to help our government boost our economy. Pray about it.”



WHO'S IN THE PEWS

I would like to introduce to you the Haworth Family. As I promised, I was going to introduce you to the other half of the presenters at our Advent morning of reflection. We met Rob Quirk and his family last month, and this month we meet Jennifer Haworth and her family. Jennifer has been married to Steve for 17 years after dating for 5 years. They met at Marquette University where Jennifer's uncle taught and Steve's father taught for over 40 years. Steve works as a research scientist at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Jennifer is the executive director of EVOKE at the University of Loyola. They reside with their son Marcus, soon to be 11 years old, in Beach Park.

Jennifer was having some disagreements with the Roman Catholic Church - such as their position on the ordination of women, and their view that the only people who could wash the paten and the chalice after the Eucharist are ordained deacons or priests. Because of these and several other stands, she decided that the Roman Catholic Church was not in touch with the times. She remembered attending St. John the Divine Church in New York when she was at Columbia getting one of her many degrees. She enjoyed the experience of that church very much, so she googled Episcopal churches within a 45 minute radius of home and found our church to be the most attractive. She loved the idea of a husband and wife clergy team. They started attending and have not at all been disappointed in her decision.

Marcus attends the Armitage Academy in Kenosha and plays clarinet in the orchestra but would love to take voice lessons. Steve likes to work with his hands when he has time to futz. He enjoys gardening and fixing things. In Jennifer's free time, she loves the arts – live theatre and concerts. The whole family is outdoor enthusiasts and go canoeing and fishing (Jennifer's favorite). So their summer will be filled with vacations of outdoor activities. Take a moment and get to know Jennifer, Steve and Marcus!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

How are your writing skills? Would you like to get to know some of our parishioners better? Then I have just the job for you - “Who's in the Pews” reporter. Every month you would interview 1 or 2 people or a family and write up a short article about them for the *Magnificat*. If you would like to do this, please e-mail me or call me and we can discuss it.

Regards,

Linda Lutter

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Our mission is to know God and to make God known. Our office is open Monday – Thursday from 9-1. The vestry members who guide our church are:

Maggie Attiyeh, Senior Warden
Rich Ringhofer, Junior Warden
Deb Gallinger
Bill Hagan
Jane Penticoff
Cindy Pullinger
Deb Rakestraw
Dale Sander
Todd Shumate