



St. George's Episcopal Church



Where everyone has a place at Christ's table

St. George's Episcopal Church

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This is a free publication for members and friends

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The Church and the Healing of Society

by the Rev. Canon Paul S. Nancarrow, PhD

A colleague of mine, Kirsten Mebust, who teaches religion at Augsburg College, told me that recently she's been engaging the question "Is it the job of the church to create the political will to make positive changes in our society?" I like the way she phrases that: to talk about "creating political will" makes it clear that the church does not engage *directly* in politics, and yet at the same time that the church cannot simply *ignore* the political realities of our society, either.

The church has always had an uneasy relationship with political power. In the earliest days of the Jesus movement, the Christian community was taken to be a subset of Judaism, and so "flew beneath the radar" of the Roman Empire. Later, when Christians were ejected from the synagogue and lost that protection, the church was persecuted by imperial politics. Later still, the Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, and imposed that conversion on his whole empire as well, and the church became the official religion of the political powers-that-be. Church and Empire seesawed in power and prestige all through the Middle Ages. In England after the Reformation the church was under the direct control of the Crown, and bishops were members of the political House of Lords. That's one of the reasons why the American Constitution is so adamant about the separation of church and state: because the establishment of any church as an official arm of the state leads to undue and inappropriate interference in *both* religious belief *and* political process.

So the church does not engage in politics, in the sense of campaigning for certain candidates, or endorsing particular legislation, or advocating any party's platform.

Yet at the same time, the church has a deep commitment to engage in public life. The prophets were not shy about calling the kings of Israel and Judah to account for their political decisions, especially when those decisions harmed the poor among the people. John the Baptist was arrested because he publicly criticized the irregular marriage of Herod Antipas. Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in a procession that was a deliberate counterexample to the military parade with which Pilate entered the city to suppress the possibility of rebellion which always cropped up around Passover time. Jesus' teachings to his disciples—and to us—are full of sayings and commandments which affect how we conduct ourselves in our public lives, and thus how we exercise our politics as well. In our Baptismal Covenant, the basic "how-to" for being disciples, we sum up Jesus' teaching about living in society when we say we will "strive for justice and peace among all people." Our Christian social ethics and moral theology call us to work actively in society for the relief of the poor, and the protection of the weak, and the inclusion of the outcast, and the reconciliation of opponents, and the well-being of every creature—*every* creature—in our communities.

In an open and democratic society such as ours, one way we work actively for the well-being of all is to engage in the political process. So while the church does not engage *directly* in politics, the church can—the church *must*—call its members to think deeply about Jesus' call to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to apply that call to the needs and concerns of

society through appropriate political action. The church must not campaign; but the church can and should work to create the political will to make positive changes in our common life.

To do any less would be to turn away from our call to be true disciples of Jesus our Lord.

Revised Educational Program Schedule

An updated schedule of the Adult Education presentations for May:

MAY 6

Topic: **Five Spiritual Journeys for Later Life**
Speaker: Rev. Kay Provine

Kay is the chaplain for Episcopal Homes in St. Paul and will be sharing ways for us to find spiritual renewal and vitality as we grow older. Although this will be particularly interesting for our older members, everyone can benefit from exploring how the process of aging impacts our spirituality and faith.

MAY 13

Topic: **Conflict in the Anglican Communion**
Speakers: Rev. Paul Nancarrow

As a deputy to General Convention, Paul has been part of making church history. The Anglican Communion is at a historic juncture with threats of schism and global politics. Come hear what all the fuss is about and get an overview of what's at stake.

MAY 20

Topic: **Immigration: An Overview**
Speakers: Representatives from ISIAAH

Immigration has been in the news a lot lately. Who are the immigrants that are coming to Minnesota? Why do they come? What's at stake? This will be a good opportunity to get your questions answered and go beyond the headlines to learn the facts and figures.

I hope you'll come for all the sessions and tell your friends!

Remember that we will review our Grown-Up Sunday School experience, and consider whether to continue this schedule in the fall, after the season comes to a close on Pentecost.

Where is God Leading Us?—A Bishop's Convocation on Diocesan Mission Strategy

At St. George's, we've been talking about growth and mission strategy a lot lately and so has the diocese. A group called the Bishop's Commission on Mission Strategy has been working hard over the past two years to reclaim and reframe the identity, purpose, mission and ministry priorities of the diocese. You're invited to add your voice as the diocese prepares to take a major shift in direction, staffing and structure. The Convocation will take place on **Saturday, May 5, 2007**, from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, at St. John's Church in St. Cloud, MN. For more information, go to www.episcopalmn.org

Pentecost in the Park

Sunday, May 27 is the Feast of Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Easter and culmination of the Easter Season. On Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples to become the Church. When the Spirit came upon Peter and the others, they were so overwhelmed with joy they burst out of their upper room and took to the streets, proclaiming praise to Jesus so loudly that the bystanders thought they were drunk! We at St. George's might not pass for drunk (I rather hope not...), but we will burst out of our building and take our praise to the neighborhood on Pentecost: we will gather at Oak Hill Park on May 27 at 10:30 for a festival outdoor Eucharist and a parish picnic. Be sure to wear something red, and bring your best picnic fare and your loudest singing voice. A (somewhat quieter) service will be held in the church at 8:00 am. More details will follow: watch for announcements in the Sunday bulletin and on the parish website. Come celebrate the Spirit!

Summer Schedule Announced

Mark your calendars for St George's annual change to its summer service schedule: We will celebrate the Lord's Day with one service of Holy Eucharist at 9:00 am during the months of June, July, and August. Beginning with the Sunday after Memorial Day weekend, and continuing through Labor Day weekend—the "unofficial" summer vacation season of Minnesota—we will celebrate communion at 9:00 am, and celebrate summer the rest of the day! The regular service schedule of Holy Eucharist at 8:00, Sunday School at 9:30, and Holy Eucharist at 10:30 will resume on Sunday, September 9.

Youth News

by Heather Whitesell

Youth News: Thanks to Emma, Philip, Ted and Maggie for reading at the Easter Vigil service. It was good to see returning college people! Thanks also to those who were able to Acolyte on Sunday morning. Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Hip Hop concert coming on Sunday evening May 6 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Sunday School

by Rachelle Troyer

A good time was had by all at the annual Easter event. It was truly amazing how quickly 14 children were able to find 95 well-hidden eggs. It just goes to show how powerful a motivator candy is.

We have just started our final unit for the Sunday school year. We will be learning about the history of the church and a few of the saints. In May we will also be doing a project to raise money for the Kohman breast cancer foundation.

There are some fresh supplies; books, paper, crayons, etc., in the back of the church if the children need a little something to do.

Spring Rummage Sale Canceled

by Dawn Bacon

The rummage sale has been a long-standing tradition here at St. George's. Many of us have been

asking in anticipation, "When is the sale?" Much discussion has ensued about the feasibility of having a sale given a decline in energy over the years. Today at St. George's we are reexamining all of our endeavors and how each will help us grow. At this time, holding a rummage sale does not appear to be a suitable venture and a decision has been made not to have a spring rummage sale. **We will be making efforts to attend to existing rummage in the coming months.** As a parish, we must be open to considering how all our activities, new and old, will best offer our time and talents in service to God.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry

by Mary Poulsen

"Bear one another's burdens." Gal. 6:25

Some of you may be wondering how to request a prayer shawl for a family member or friend who is facing a serious health problem or trauma. We have completed two prayer shawls that have been blessed and given away, but there will soon be more shawls available for distribution. If you know of someone who would be comforted by a prayer shawl from St. George's please call Mary Poulsen at 952-929-0176 or the church office at 952-926-1646 with your request.



Blood Drive

by Paul and Camille Schroeder

Give the gift of life by donating blood during St. George's semi-annual Blood Drive. The drive will be held on Wednesday, May 23, 2007 with hours from 3:30 to 7:00 p.m.. Donor requirements are:

1. You must be at least 17 years of age and eat a good meal within a four-hour period before donating.
2. You must be in good health.
3. You must be free from colds and flue for 3 days.

4. You must bring a photo ID with you to the drive.

To sign up, please call Paul Schroeder at 952-470-5730.



Spring Planting time

by Bill Stromberg

Saturday, May 12th will be the Parish painting, and clean up day. We plan to do some painting, especially the outside Sanctuary windows. Then, on Saturday, May 19th, we will plant our flower beds for a beautiful summer here at St. George's Church. Please save the morning to be available to do a little work for the church and have a good time with fellow parishioners. If weather is too poor, the alternate day is Sunday the 20th, after the service. A sign up sheet will be in the Parish Hall!

Choir Concert Announced

Lyra, the Vocal Ensemble from Russia, will be performing on Sunday, May 13th at 8:00 p.m. at Lutheran Church of the Reformation. Goodwill offering of minimum donation of \$10 is suggested. A few years ago Lyra was here at St. George's and many people enjoyed their talent. To reserve seats call Carsten at 651-291-8639, or the Reformation Church Office at 951-929-0439 and leave a request on the answering machine, and your call will be returned.

Notices

Thank you to:

- Dave Dittrich for coming in and putting up and taking down the aisle candles for the Easter Services at St. George's.
- Patti Wales for decorating the retable for Easter and for Palm Sunday.

- Members of Altar Guild for pitching in with all the extra services, a special thank you to Glennis Williams for helping out.
- Bill Stromberg for changing light bulbs in the Montessori classroom and other parts of the building.
- Randy Egan and the choir for all their extra practice and work preparing for the Easter Season.
- The Praise Group for their hard work on Maundy Thursday, the Easter Vigil and on Easter Day!
- Bill Stromberg for arranging for the new nametags – they were definitely needed
- Tom Zaun for putting up the huge grapevine wreath for holy week, taking it down and then hanging up the flowered one for the Easter Season.
- Carole Leonard for cleaning out the refrigerator in the kitchen, lets see if we can keep it looking nice.
- Bob Miller for coming in and helping to hang the banner in front of the church during Holy Week., the most important part is he came in on Easter Monday to take it down!!
- Lee Nancarrow for coming in on Good Friday and collating, stapling and stuffing all the Easter Sunday bulletins.
- To all who contributed to the March Minnesota Foodshare Drive. St. George's donated 519 pounds and dollars to the STEP food shelf.
- STEP thanks all who contributed a bowl to the Empty Bowls project and also thanks to all those who participated by attending the event.

A Huge Thank you to: all who turned out on Saturday, March 31st for our spring clean up day. Despite the rainy weather, or maybe because of it, many "housekeeping chores" were accomplished. Windows washed, pews cleaned, floors swept. windowsills washed, font painted, and the list goes on. We had a great turn out and the cooperation was terrific. A special thank you to Bill Stromberg for arranging the day. See you on Saturday, May 19th when we are scheduled to do the summer planting.

Congratulations to Laura Reese, the daughter of Kitty Reese, who was married to Matthew Hodges on April 21 at North Como Presbyterian Church in Roseville.



May Birthdays:

- 1 Bruce Becker
Addia Troyer
- 2 Betsy Furber
- 3 Buzz Anthony
Wendy Herbers
- 4 Ardis Martin
- 5 Katherine Wheatley
- 6 Ted Eschweiler
- 7 Joyce Gniot
- 8 Leslie Olufson
Ron Holbach
- 12 John Mangold
- 13 Christie Kraabel
- 15 John Stonhouse
- 19 Iris Alexander
- 20 Priscilla Hagerman
- 21 Mary Phelps
- 29 Diane Monroe
- 31 Jane Whitmore
Bonnie Jones
Grant Shipman

Graduations:

Do you know of anyone at St. George's who will be graduating this month or early in June, if so, please let the Church Office know so that on Sunday, June 10 we can recognize our graduates. Please call Patty in the church office, 952-926-1646.

A Stewardship Thought

A Tax Time Test

Now that you have figured out for Uncle Sam how much you made this year and how many charitable contributions you gave, it might be a good time to figure out just how faithful and generous you are. Throughout the scriptures, God has called us to "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse..." (*Malachi 3:10*)

The church traditionally recognizes the tithe as 10 percent of your income. Some suggest the so-called "modern tithe," or 5 percent to your parish and 5 percent to other charities. So how close are you to returning 10 percent of your treasure to God?

It's easy to calculate. Divide your total charitable contributions for the last year by your gross income for last year. Move the decimal point over two places and that is your percent of giving. So if your answer is .0346, you are returning 3.5 percent of your income to God. If you are not happy with the number, we encourage you to plan ways to increase your giving.

About St. George's

5224 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-926-1646
www.SaintG.org

Parish staff:

The Rev. Canon Paul Nancarrow, Ph.D., Rector
The Rev. Philip Schaffner, Deacon
Patty Dittrich, Parish Administrator
Heather Whitesell and Rachele Troyer
Children and Youth Coordinators

Wardens and Vestry:

Carole Leonard, Dawn Bacon, John Carlson, Pat
FitzSimons, Eileen Harvala, Karen Hurlbert, Mike A.
Johnson, Gordy Justus, Leslie Olufson, Bill Stromberg,
Cyprian Troyer,

Our Mission is to:

Listen, Proclaim, Serve, Celebrate!

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Pentecost Celebration

When: Sunday, May 27

Where: Oak Hill Park

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Bring your picnic fare! Wear **RED**! Proclaim our presence in St. Louis Park! More details will be available in the Sunday bulletins and on the website.

There will also be a Holy Eucharist, Rite I service at the church on Pentecost at 8:00 am.

Looking ahead...

Summer Schedule

June 3 through September 2: Holy Eucharist at 9:00 am

Mark your calendars now for the start of the summer schedule! Celebrate the Good News at 9:00 on the Sundays of summer, then celebrate the goodness of Creation all the rest of the day!