

JUNE 2011

THE ROCK



THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Nuts and Bolts of the Rectory Financing

From reading the questions and concerns that were sent in with the survey responses, it is very clear that there is a lot of misunderstanding about the financing of the rectory. As chair of the housing committee, I take full responsibility for the lack of communication, and wish to take the time now to present it in more detail.

We currently spend \$24,000 every year on housing our rector. It is part of his overall package, but for our purposes here, consider it to be one \$24,000 check. We hand it to our rector, and he deals with his own housing. This is the housing-allowance model. One of its great advantages is that it is wonderfully simple. The vestry and congregation don't have to give housing a moment's thought. If we switch to a rectory model, we will no longer write that \$24,000 check. Instead, we will write several checks, the biggest of which is a mortgage, followed by property tax, insurance, heat and electric, water and sewer, phone, TV, internet, lawn-mowing and snow-plowing. The total of all those checks will be slightly less than \$24,000 per year. This is what we mean by "financially neutral". The plan doesn't add a dime to the church's expenses. The committee rejected any plan that would do so.

One might ask 'So why bother, if it's financially neutral?' Well, the second part of the plan is to launch a capital campaign in 2012 or 2013 that wipes out the mortgage (pays back the investors). We would then own the house outright. All the other expenses would stay in place, but at \$900/month, eliminating the mortgage will save us over \$10,000 each year. So the transition to a rectory would be financially neutral for the first three of four years, and then would result in a large reduction of our expenses. Since we have been averaging a shortfall of around \$25,000 - \$30,000 each year, this one move would represent a 35% - 40% reduction in that shortfall.

The plan calls for use of the \$75,000 in the Kenyon fund (from the sale of our previous rectory), combined with \$175,000 raised by the investors. That totals \$250,000. If we limit our purchase price to \$240,000 (our final offer on a suitable property), that will leave us able to simultaneously establish a \$10,000 maintenance fund, and if we utilize the proper home-inspection methods and make sure of the soundness of the roof and furnace (the big two), maintenance should be minimal for a number of years. Once the capital campaign is over and our expenses reduced, the finance committee of the vestry can decide each year if they wish to add to that fund.

In the survey responses and at the parish meeting on May 15, there were certainly other concerns and questions beyond the financing. Some expressed concern over parishioners financing the rectory. There was discussion about whether we would insist that a rector live in our rectory, or become landlords if we didn't. Some felt that having a rectory would reduce the number of candidates, while others thought it would widen the pool of candidates. These and other questions need to be explored over the next few weeks, and I hope that we continue the discussions. However, the comments that the plan would "add to the burden of our expenses", or that we would be "taking on more debt", are simply wrong, and need to be understood before we can make an informed decision. The plan is designed to have exactly the opposite effect, to save the church money, and this is before even mentioning the likely appreciation of the rectory's value over the years, whereby another generation of St. Peterites will have greater financial flexibility. Given our ongoing budget shortfalls, and in the shadow of a dwindling endowment, we on the committee feel that the better question is not "Can we afford this?" but rather "Can we afford NOT to do this?"

Respectfully submitted,
John Snow, Junior Warden; Chair, Housing Committee

June 12: Parish Picnic at 5 p.m. on the church grounds. Lobster as well as hamburgers and hot-dogs will be served. More details will be announced in the Sunday Bulletins.

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WINDOW OF THE SPIRIT *views into the souls of St. Peter's*

The Art of the Spirit Gallery exhibitions will be highlighted in the next issue of the Rock.



Eve Hupper says this about her exhibit in the Art of the Spirit Gallery : "When I look through a camera lens I see God, and he tells me when to take the photo. When I look at a landscape I see angels all around me. I know photography is meant for me just by the feeling I get in my heart. I hope anyone who looks at my photos feels the same.

SLAPSTICK AND VERSE

Charles Packard

A church in southern Maine teaches children in grades three to five how to "become clowns, put on clown makeup, read some clown stories, and mime stories from the Bible." Similar programs, most of them involving the clowning-around of adults, can be found in many other churches here and abroad.

In an objective, ecumenical effort to understand what on earth is going on here, I took it upon myself to search the Scriptures for passages featuring clowns or clownish behavior. Hoping to be aided in my search by the Internet website, "Red-Ball Noses and Oversized Sneakers in the Old and New Testaments," I was quickly disabused of that notion. My server had found the site to be "suspicious, perhaps even heretical" and was refusing to display it. So much for open-hearted tolerance.

Left to rely on my own mostly secular home library, I spent a little more than a morning trying to find clown-centered incidents in the Scriptures. I couldn't find a blessed, let alone an unblessed, thing even remotely connected to clowning. I even played my tapes of Larry the Cable Guy to see if, somewhere along the line, he had treated the Sermon on the Mount in a stand-up comedy routine. He hadn't. I read Emmett Kelly's obituary to see if the famous "tramp clown" had ever replaced his sad circus visage, at least for a Sunday or two, with a yuk-it-up happy-face. He hadn't.

I then interviewed my own minister who, making an excuse to leave his office for a minute, called the police on his cell phone. Finally, I could turn up no archeological evidence whatever that the water-squirting lapel flower dates back to Biblical times.

So, for reasons both explicit and implicit above, I ended my

research in agreement with the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, who asserted that "The total absence of humor from the Bible is one of the most singular things in all of literature."

Heaven only knows why, but for some reason or other, there is not much clowning-around in the Scriptures. That does not mean, though, that some Biblical stories might not benefit from a bit of Barnum-and-Bailey buffoonery here and there, a touch of farcical frivolity to perk up nodding heads.

Consider, for example, the David and Goliath story. Imagine how much more entertaining it would be if it included clowns jumping into and out of colorful barrels and making taunting gestures at Goliath while a nervous David, just after shaking hands with Goliath, is trying to remove the too-tight ring of a flattened joy-buzzer from his slinger finger.

And what about the incident involving the Bickering Pharisees? When they were arguing among themselves whether "Pharisees" should be spelled with one "r" or two, a few clowns working the crowd with snake-in-the-can tricks while honking bulb-head horns and tossing Milk Duds into the assemblage almost certainly would have relieved the debate's tension and enhanced the story's telling, even if not resolving the dispute.

In the service of fair and balanced reporting, I must point out here that there have been five books published on the topic of humor in the Bible. Each one of the five, though, cites instances of supposed Biblical humor drier than the Judaeen Desert. No life-of-the-party wannabe steps forward in the Scriptures and asks "Why did Moses cross the Red Sea? Give up? To get to the other side!"

Thigh-slappers like that are totally absent from both the Old and the New Testaments, and, for whatever the fact is worth here, are just as absent from the muted chit-chat at post-service caffeine hours and baked-bean church suppers.

Yet I readily concede that there is a chance, and maybe even a very good one, that these clown programs are on to something. The philosopher Benedetto Croce wrote many years ago that there is no "final philosophy," that all concepts reach a time when they "must be refreshed or reformed." Maybe that is what we are witnessing here.

So I say, after full and further review, go for it: send in the clowns. Absolutely no harm has come of the program yet, and some real good might well be in the offing should it succeed in coaxing children away from Scooby-Doo re-runs and out of the house on Sunday mornings.

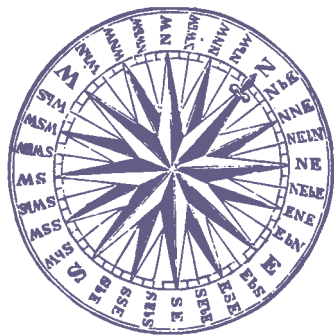
Charles Packard is a communicant of St. Peter's. This essay is reprinted from his former column, "Touch and Go," in the Herald-Gazette.



WINDOW OF THE SPIRIT *views into the souls of St. Peter's*

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WAYPOINTS *activities and notices on our journey together*

A New Ministry Has Sprung!

Last year two gentleman from the United Universalist Church, Dick Cadagan and Frank Mundo, came up with a great idea to help Mainers reduce their heating costs, and in the process help the environment. They began building what they call WindowDressers, which are storm window inserts for inside the home. They are wood-framed, both sides of which are shrink-wrapped drum-tight to trap a dead-air space with a high R factor. The inserts are crystal clear, and custom made to fit snugly inside a window jamb. The homeowner pays only the cost of materials. Given the increasing cost of heating oil, the loss of heat through drafty windows can have a large impact on a struggling family's finances. This effort will have an immediate impact in an area of great need

Last year these two men installed 214 inserts with a team of four people. This year they are hoping to get four more teams, with a goal of 1000 inserts total (200 per team). They are asking each local church if they can form a team. At this point I am asking that anyone who has an interest to please contact me, especially if you have a warm, well-lit workspace. I have the use of a workshop, but it isn't mine, so another space would be a great help. The UU team stressed that this is NOT a men-only endeavor, and that it does not require wood-working skills. No use of power tools will be expected of anyone but me. It involves gluing and screwing the frame pieces together, and then taping a clear film over each face of the frame. Someone then uses a hair dryer to make the film drum-tight, and then something like weather-stripping is wrapped around the frame. This last step assures that the unit will fit snugly, even if the window is not perfectly square

Dick told me that a team of three can do an average window in an hour, and more quickly as we get used to it. If we had six people (two teams), that would be a commitment of less than 100 hours each from January through March, which is when they do this. That amount of time is the equivalent of one full day each week. Dick's team met twice a week for about four hours each session, and he stressed the sense of fellowship that grew within the team. Can we help? I'll have more information after I meet with the two men.

John Snow • 596-6025 • john@lynsnow.com

The St. Peter's Prayer Circle

The Prayer Circle at St. Peter's has been in existence for a loooong.....time. When I first arrived in 1996, it was a telephone based method of passing the word around that prayers were needed. As you might guess, telephone tag was common and meals or other activities were often interrupted. As email became commonplace it made sense use a 21st century means of communication. There are currently 13 members of the Prayer Circle and anyone is invited to join us. It is very simple. Via email you receive a prayer request and you add that to your personal prayers.

We do have a few rules: the most important is confidentiality. We receive requests that are not listed in the Sunday Leaflet. We ask that you verify that the person being prayed for has consented to have their name on the list. Ask what the person would like in the prayer. Often the request is simply for healing or support and comfort. Some people wish to be anonymous so we ask for prayers for "a young couple" or for "MK" or in some other way to not divulge a name. When possible an update

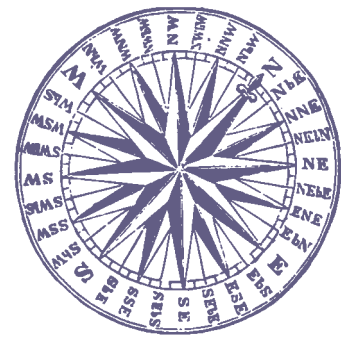
about the person is given, hopefully with a request for prayers of thanksgiving.

Anyone in the parish can make a prayer request by contacting the church office or anyone on the Prayer Circle. That person then passes it on to the full group. Who are we? Marilyn Smith, Jude Thomas, Ellie Hutchinson, Glenn Mahaffey, Jane Chatfield, Marty Rogers*, Barbara Yatsevitch, Chris McLarty, Bruce Davis, Vicky Lesmerises, Ted Kanellakis, and Lolly Mitchell. Our email addresses and phone numbers are in the parish directory.

Anyone wishing to join this ministry can do so by contacting Jane Chatfield. She will be filling in for me while I am on vacation. We do have written guidelines and a list of email addresses that Jane can send you. I hope you will join us.

Marty Rogers

**while I am on vacation from May 6th to August 6th please do not ask me to initiate a prayer request. Where we are travelling makes it hard to make timely responses*



WAYPOINTS activities and notices on our journey together

April 20, 2011

- **Financial Report.** The report for January – March 2011 was accepted.
- **Buildings and Grounds.** A parishioner has offered to pay for one-half of the cost of tiling the two downstairs bathrooms. The estimate is \$760 plus the cost of the tile. Vestry approved to proceed. Discussed ways to encourage more volunteer help for facility cleaning.
- **Columbarium.** A report prepared by Thom Buescher was distributed. Vestry approved the suggested price of \$200 and named a committee (Mary Alice Bird, Tom Putnam, and Thom) to draft an announcement to the parish asking for an indication of interest in purchasing a niche. Design plans to be finalized with the builder, Bill Faller.
- **Annual Retreat.** A summary of the Vestry retreat prepared by Mary Alice Bird was reviewed. The development of small neighborhood groups will be pursued.
- **Baptismal Ministry Committee Report.** David Grima distributed an inventory of activities and participants in the parish and a copy of his article, "The gifts of God for the people of God." The Committee discuss this further and present the vestry with a plan.
- **Housing Update.** Thom stated that some survey forms had been returned and that results will be compiled for the next Vestry meeting.
- **Fellowship Committee.** Planning was discussed for the Easter breakfast and the parish picnic on June 12th. The work on having a liaison for funeral receptions is now on hold; we may use the neighborhood groups instead. In the meantime, the Fellowship Committee will coordinate the receptions. Olive Pierce will be presenting her photography at an adult forum. Rock City Coffee will continue to provide us with free coffee; when Marilyn Smith is in town, she will pick it up and the Committee will take over in her absence.
- **Rector's Report.** Jane Chatfield sent a report on her work as a Postulant for the Deaconate. Glen also noted the next Vestry meeting will be held on the second Wednesday in May. He will not attend the special in-between services program on housing.
- **Vestry Concerns.** Mary Alice said that Bob Earle has expressed an interest in providing entertainment at a parish supper. Prayers were asked for Elizabeth Biddle. Volunteers are being sought to sit with Harold Willey so Judy can attend vestry meetings.

Vestry Notes

The next meeting
of the vestry is
Wednesday, June 22, 2011
at 5:30 pm

From the Rector



GLENN MAHAFFEY

The summer service time will change from 8 and 10:30 to 8 and 10:00 on Sunday, June 19th (Father's Day).

Dear brothers and sisters,

I was looking at the sign at the front of the church which brackets Our Lady of Walsingham which says "journey with us". It was inspired by the fact that the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in England was considered a place of pilgrimage for those who could not afford to travel to the promised land and visit the birthplace of Jesus. The small statue and sign express our invitation to people to join our pilgrimage of faith and "journey with us" to find Jesus.

As I was thinking of this, I also was noticing the Art of the Spirit wall which is currently showing photos taken by Eve Hupper. It struck me that perhaps what the Lord is asking us to do is not only to invite people to "journey with us" but to go out and join others on their journey. This is what Eve did with the lens of her camera, she captured a moment in the journey of life of some of the kids in our congregation. While we are speaking of young people, congratulations to Eve on her graduation from Rockland High School and being awarded a scholarship to continue her studies in photography! Also, congratulations to Elijah Hupper who starts at the Maine Maritime Academy this fall.

Just think of the New Testament story of Phillip on the road with the Ethiopian eunuch leaps immediately to mind (Acts 8:26-40). As we journey with someone, we are not the leader, all we have to do is listen, interact and move with them as they go along. In journeying with them, we actually are bringing Christ with us as Phillip did with the Ethiopian. So, in effect, through us, Christ is joining them on their journey in life. It seems that it is just as important to take Christ into the world as it is to invite others to journey with us as we experience God together.

This brings me to the local developments in the area of community need. You may remember reading in the weekly bulletin about the changes that are taking place in terms of agencies that have traditionally been the on the front lines for meeting with people who have emergency needs in our community. Besides Area Interfaith Outreach, which deals with food, and also some assistance with housing and fuel/electric vouchers, people with emergency needs in their life have gone to either the Town offices for assistance, Salvation Army or other agencies such as Penquis, as well as area churches, the hospital, and DHHS.

Just over the past few weeks, I have discovered that the Town employee who has dealt with emergency need for years is retiring. The emergency worker at Salvation Army, Karen, who is a major center for helping people gather resources from various groups is being let go because of budget restraints. Penny Beebe-Center, who was a wonderful advocate through the Penquis programs is also leaving due to the state's budget cuts. In June people with emergency needs will be experiencing a vacuum as the people that would ordinarily listen to their story and try to point them to the various places they need to go to cobble together some assistance are no longer there to do this task. Where will people go? Who will listen? Who will be an advocate and help coordinate assistance so efforts are not duplicated? In other words, who will join these people on their journey in life?

Church administrative personnel (like Kate) are trying to gather as much information as possible, projecting that they will encounter a larger than usual number of people coming to the churches to find assistance. My guess is AIO will have some increased responsibility, but they are not set up to coordinate community efforts for people. Is God calling St. Peter's to take a role in all of this? Should the interfaith council of ministers be looking at trying to put together resources from various

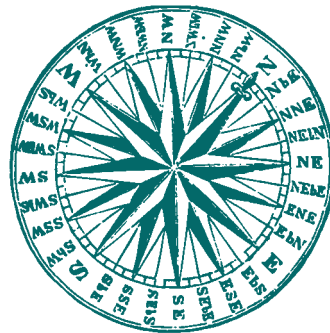
churches to hire someone to fulfill these tasks, creating a center at one of the local in-town churches such as St. Peter's or Rockland Congregational or St. Bernard's?

I encourage you to be in prayer about all of this and about who God is calling you to journey with? Whose vision are we following as individuals and as a community of faith? Are we trying to re-create the religious experience of our memories or are we following a path of faith that is often unfamiliar and may even be unsettling or at times challenging to us? Are we inviting to all people or are we only inviting to people who meet our expectations?

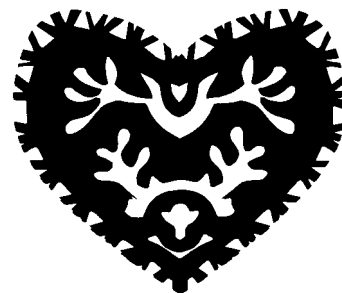
As these realities percolate in our life, please don't forget to offer what you can to the work of Christ in the world. Whether this is through joining a person on their journey in life, writing a check to help people ravaged by the destructive powers of nature in the Midwest or the South, or by making a donation to the Rector's Discretionary Fund here at St. Peter's. (Make your check to St. Peter's and simply put RDF in the memo line). I hope that whatever you choose to do is centered in listening to the voice of Christ in prayer and scripture, and propelled by a clarity and pureness of motivation.

As you will notice announced elsewhere in The Rock, the summer service time will change from 8 and 10:30 to 8 and 10:00 on Sunday, June 19th (Father's Day). Also, please don't miss the special Adult Forum on June 5th and 12th, led by Olive Pierce. This special program will meet in the undercroft on June 5th to view Olive's photographs taken of children during the time of the UN sanctions in Iraq. The second Sunday (June 12th) we will discuss issues that arise from the photos and who sanctions effect in society. I hope you can make it. In the meantime, I hope to see you in Church!

In Christ,
Glenn+



WAYPOINTS *activities and notices on our journey together*



St. Peter's Episcopal Church seeks to serve God's mission of restoring all people to unity with him. We open wide our doors and say, in the name of Jesus Christ, "Welcome."

Worship

Sunday 8:00 and 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist
Wednesday 7:00 AM Taizé Holy Eucharist

Office hours

Monday–Friday 9 AM to 12 PM
The Rev. Glenn Mahaffey, Rector
(home 593.9003, rector@stpetersrockland.org)
Kate Jones, Parish Administrative Assistant
(stpeters@stpetersrockland.org)
Robert Earle, Organist
The Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane, Bishop of Maine

Officers

Senior Wardens
Thom Buescher, 354.0608
Tom Putnam, 594.2994
John Snow, 596.6025, Junior Warden
Tish Taylor, 596.0115 Treasurer
Linda Ames Mann, Clerk

Vestry members

Stephen Alley, Mary Alice Bird, David Grima,
Anne Mahoney, Joanne Smith, Marilyn Smith,
Pat Snow, Ron Staschak, Tish Taylor, and Judy Willey

THE ROCK

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