

Awareness

*"And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your
praise."*

(Morning Prayer, BCP, p. 101)

In a small Irish village called Cloyne George Berkeley, Anglican bishop and philosopher, made his contribution to the world's thought. Some poetic wit expressed the bishop's position about the nature of reality.

A philosopher pondered that God

must find it exceedingly odd

that a sycamore tree

still continues to be,

when there's no one about in the quad.

And then the reply:

Dear Sir,

Your astonishment's odd.

I'm always about in the quad.

And that's why the tree

still continues to be,

since observed by,

yours faithfully,

God

The first thing about being a Christian steward is an awareness of God's presence. When we become aware of the divine presence in our lives we begin to perceive more and more God's grace, his unlimited, marvelous, freely given love that is bestowed upon us and all creation. I believe, that at its heart, **stewardship is a response to grace.**

Do you remember the blessing we were taught as children? *God is great. God is good. Let us thank him for our food.* That, in a nutshell, is stewardship. "God is great; God is good": that's grace. "Let us thank him", that is our response to his grace. Grace causes a response, gratitude; and that gratitude is shown in generosity. The great Anglican poet and priest, George Herbert, said it best,

*"Thou that has given so much to me,
give one thing more – a grateful
heart;*

not thankful when it pleaseth me,

as if thy blessings had spare days:

Lbut such a heart, whose pulse may be

thy praise."

When you pray about your gift to the church, your pledge for 2008, please consider our life together in this Community of Faith called St. John's Church and respond generously with a grateful heart to God's grace which has been so generously bestowed on you.

Peace and Joy,

David+

This article appeared in a newsletter from the "Old Brownstone Episcopal Church" in Washington D.C. - 1953-54

LOVE IS SHARED FOR THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By the Rev. Canon Donald, Diocese of Southwest Florida

I love the Episcopal Church, in spite of the desirability of the onrushing ecumenism. Perhaps, I secretly hope that I may die in her arms. I love her, not conditionally or with calculation, but freely, joyfully, wholeheartedly.

I love her doctrine, her emphasis on sound learning, her devotion to scripture and tradition. But, I love too, the freedom which she grants her children; her openness to the new, her breadth of humanity.

I love the stone and brick of Victorian stateliness of her old city parishes, even when they get down at the heels because "the neighborhood has changed". And her tatty little small-town churches, smelling faintly of mice and damp, kept going somehow in the face of great difficulty by devoted self-giving souls.

I love her High-Church places with their clouds of smoke from the incense pot and their rank of statues. And no less do I love her low-church parishes - all furniture polish and gleaming brass and memorial tablets.

I love the bright young families proudly arranged in their pews on Sunday morning, and the sparse little congregations on weekdays, whose hushed devotion to their Lord is an almost palpable radiance. And her old priests whose eyes show the compassion taught them in a lifetime; and her young priests who are so sure that the world can be won in five years.

I love the letters to *The Living Church* which begin "Dear Sir: It is high time..." And the solemn nonsense with which the Executive Council launches a new project; the billowing sleeves of the Bishop's rochet and the whole wide range of possible headgear that clerics can wear; I love the battered Prayer Books in the pew racks that so often turn out to be hymnals.

I love the eccentric old ladies in city parishes who dress in liturgical colors. I love the hands of young and old reverently raised to receive the Sacrament.

I really can't help it. I don't know if everybody ought to be an Episcopalian; it may be that other people feel as strongly about their churches as I do about mine. I do know that I love the Episcopal Church, that I am sworn to her, forsaking all others.

I'm glad of it. And it isn't denomination loyalty of sectarian spirit or party fervor. *It's love!*

Bible Workshop

"Women Caregivers of the Bible" is the theme of a workshop planned by Karen Glazier and Beth Marquart on Saturday, Oct. 13, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Good Living in Malden. As an exploration of eight remarkable women of the Bible, we'll consider the caregiving stresses they faced and how their experiences might relate to our own. Contact Karen for information, 925-6568.

Covenant House Needs

The Food Pantry, located at First Presbyterian Church, needs soups and canned fruits, and more urgently, volunteers. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon Monday-Friday. The Clothing Closet, located at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, is in great need of winter clothing.

RCCR Annual Meeting

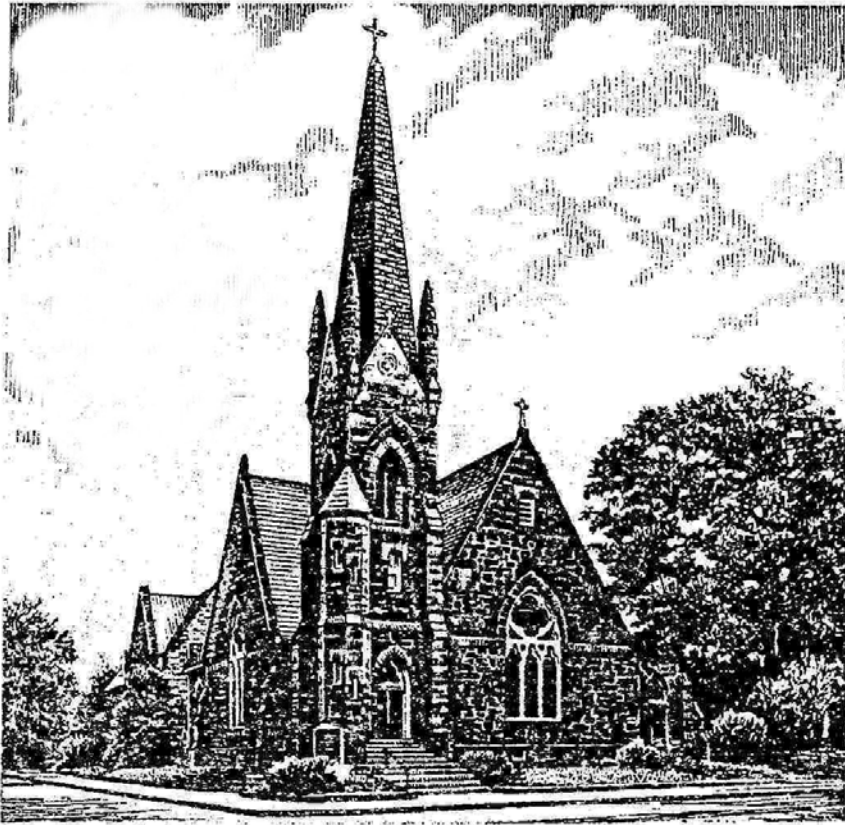
The Religious Coalition for Community Renewal will hold its annual meeting Oct. 25 at 5:45 p.m. at 1516 Washington St. E. All St. John's members are invited.

InterchangeDeadlines

The next issue will be for the weeks of Oct. 28 and Nov. 4. Please submit items to:

julkemp@verizon.net

or bdearien@stjohnswv.org by Tuesday, Oct. 16, at 4 p.m.



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| The Rev. David R. Hackett
Interim rector | Beth Marquart
Parish life |
| Brenda Maurice Vanderford
Organist / Choirmaster | Donna Hamra / Mary Fitzgerald
outreach |
| David Morton
Assisting organist/choirmaster | Bob Cochran / Dan McDonald
Stewardship |
| Brenda Dearien
Parish administrator | Bob Swartz
Property |
| Katherine Giltinan
Christian formation | Shonda Newsome
Children's Christian formation |
| Bob Westmoreland
Verger | Diane Hendricks
Confirmation |
| Dan Williams
Custodian | Marion Perry
Adult forum |
| Vestry | Phyllis Atwood
Pastoral care |
| Greg Clarke '08
Priest's warden | Ben Owens
Acolytes |
| Michelle Walker '08
People's warden | Bob Swartz / Bob Miller
Ushers |
| Becky Burns '09
Treasurer | Carter Blundon
Altar Guild |
| Ellen Archibald '09 | Betty Jo Lloyd
Worship rota |
| Cynthia Barrett '10 | Martha Cole
Registrar |
| Joe Boyland '09 | Ann Garcelon
The Back Door
Thrift Shop |
| Cheryl Clements '10 | Julianne Kemp
Interchange editor |
| Page Hamrick '09 | |
| Diane Hendricks '08 | |
| Dan McDonald '10 | |
| David Vick '10 | |
| Ann Morris '08 | |
| David Ramkey
Assistant treasurer | |
| David Ramkey / Becky Burns
Finance | |
| Wanda Dettinger / Rose Smith
Evangelism / new member | |

Saint John's Episcopal Church

Centering Prayer at St. John's

By Olive Meyer

Another opportunity for silent prayer arises at 12:50 p.m. after midday Eucharist on Wednesday of every week. A group of "soul friends" meet together for prayer, meditation and silence in the prayer corner to the left of the altar. It seems to me that we all find that it is the clutter, the chaos, the ups and downs, and the violence of everyday life that keeps us distracted from God. A kind of prayer called *Centering Prayer* helps us keep our own individual lives in perspective and helps us look inwardly towards God. It is a way, in Thomas Keating's words, of helping ourselves to be "open to God." We learn to detach from distractions in order to be available to God. It is not a spiritual method but way of surrendering to God so his grace and will can work within and through us.

Under the inspiration of Tilden Edwards, Richard Rohr, Basil Pennington, Thomas Keating and others, silent, wordless prayer has had a revival in recent years. It has a long history dating back to the early "desert fathers." It comes to us through the *Lectio Divina* of the Benedictines and the anonymous writings of a 14th century English monk found in the "The Cloud of Unknowing." Thomas Merton says, "Perhaps it is very important, in our era of violence and unrest, to rediscover mediation, silent, inner unitive prayer and creative Christian silence."

Our group meets for about an hour and 15 minutes. We start with 20 minutes of Centering Prayer and then go to the downstairs library for meditation in the form of Lectio Divina (sacred reading.) The readings are very short, just a sentence or two. If you feel a need

Established 1887
Present Building consecrated
1904
Jubilee Center since 1985
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Fax 304/346-0210

for a period of communal silence before God or if you would like a group of “soul friends” to accompany you in your inward searching, please consider joining us on Wednesdays. For further information please call Olive Meyer at 744-9219 or email oameyer@suddenlink.net.