
The EVANGELIST

Saint John the Evangelist Church, Barrytown, NY 12507

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From The Rector

Jesus and the End of Enmity

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’. But I say to you not to resist the evil one. But to someone who strikes you on the right cheek, turn also the other. And to one who wants to enter judgment with you to take your shirt, give your cloak, too! And with someone who compels a mile’s journey from you, travel with him two. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn away from one who wants to borrow from you.” (Matthew 5: 38-42)

But why should Jesus recommend non-resistance to evil? We need to stress that non-resistance is not the same as acquiescence. Injustice is never accepted as if it were just. Turning the other cheek, giving the cloak, going the additional mile, offering the money, are all purposely excessive, to underline the injustice of what is demanded.

In fact, it is not really accurate to call Jesus’ attitude “non-resistance.” The point is for the person making unjust demands to realize the demands are unjust -- a policy that served Christians and their faith well during centuries of persecution under the Roman Empire. It was effective because it created awareness within the Empire, even among Christianity’s enemies, that a policy of violent persecution was unjust (and for that matter, ineffective.) Rather than a teaching of non-resistance, this is a version of the advice of how to retaliate. It is exemplary response, as different form of retaliation: instead of an eye for an eye, a cheek after a cheek. This is not non-resistance, it is exemplary response. It is a different form of retaliation: not to harm, but to show another way.

The hope that the other way -- God’s way -- will be seen by means of exemplary response, and that once seen, will be followed, is basic to Jesus’ teaching.

Bruce

Annual General Meeting

A large group of parishioners attended the recent Annual Meeting, where all the news was good. A new questionnaire seeking opinions from church members will be distributed with the spring *Evangelist*.

Church Membership

Membership in St. John’s requires only giving one’s address to the Treasurer, John Ferguson. Penny Levine is working hard to develop a new Book of Members, which will be out soon.

Women of St. John’s

The November Clam Chowder event netted \$631, to be used for charitable donations. An autumn rummage sale is being considered, and the Churchwomen’s working account and emergency fund, including the Memorial Fund, are very healthy.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

The supper was held on February 28th, and it was expected to be the usual success, with the men of the parish handling all the kitchen and cooking duties.

Sunday School

The School is thriving, with 15 ‘students’ and the invaluable help of 10 parents. The Lower School is discussing miracles in the Bible, such as Jesus’ walking on water. The Upper School has completed its recent Old Testament study and is now focusing on the Book of Matthew, including the Sermon on the Mount. Ned Sullivan supervises the successful ‘Interactive’ Sunday school once each month.

The annual Sunday School spring ‘extravaganza’ will be presented on the second Sunday in June.

Getting to Know...Nan Eliot

by Jeanette Gurney

Born in New York City, Nan Eliot grew up in New York, Washington DC, Yokohama, and Salt Lake City. Her dad was an opera singer, then an army officer, restaurateur and business executive. Her mom, a schoolteacher, was an Anglophile and book-lover.

Nan made her professional singing debut at age 11 in Salt Lake City, singing in the chorus when her dad starred in "The Marriage of Figaro," with Maurice Abravanel conducting the Utah Symphony.

When the family returned to New York, Nan attended the Spence School and went on to study English at Vassar College. She married Jon Eliot in 1963.

In 1966 they had identical twins Adam and Matthew and 18 months later, Jonathan. The family moved to Albany in 1968. Son Adam is now a lawyer in Ohio. Matthew works for the World Bank in Istanbul. Jonathan is with Radisson Hotels, based in Omaha. Nan is the proud grandmother of two grandsons and two granddaughters.

After divorcing in 1974, Nan worked in advertising and in NY State Government, sold radio time, and also worked part-time -- hosting a radio talk show, writing ad copy, and voicing radio and TV commercials. She performed in community theater and sang in the choir of St. Paul's Church in Albany. An advertising job in Poughkeepsie brought the family to Germantown.

After her sons went to college, Nan became Director of Tourism Marketing for the I♥NY campaign. In 1992, she started The Eliot Group, an international travel trade marketing company based in England. She wound up living in a tiny Norfolk village, and sang in the choir of Wymondham Abbey, an Anglican church founded in the year 1109. She enjoyed traveling the world on behalf of her clients, but it did become "just a bit tiring" after 12 years.

So in 2004, she decided to return home to her beloved 133-year-old house in Germantown, which she shares with King Arthur of Kent (a yellow Lab) and two cats, sweet Max and the haughty Princess Morgan le Fay. She manages the Merritt Bookstore in Red Hook and handles occasional marketing projects.

To our delight and gratitude, Nan has undertaken editorship of this newsletter. She hopes it may help foster the warm and welcoming Church community that we all strive for.

Helping To Restore New Orleans

Cathryne Zemann is working to set up our church's participation in the restoration of New Orleans. Educated at Tulane University and resident for more than ten years, Cathryne has a very personal dedication.

She has been in touch with Archdeacon Dennis McManis, Director of the Office of Disaster Response for the New Orleans Diocese. He has explained that restoration will be a lengthy process, since most of the churches in the affected areas are not yet functional and their parishioners are all displaced.

As the Bishop of New Orleans recently stated, "The shape of our Diocese and parishes will be determined by how and where New Orleanians return." Archdeacon McManis believes the city will return one neighborhood at a time as its infrastructure is re-established.

Cathryne has expressed our congregation's desire to partner with a particular church in a broader sense than financially. We have lawyers, construction experts, psychotherapists, and other experts to offer.

Our close relationship with Bard College provides additional opportunities. Cathryne has spoken with Jessica Kemm, an alumna, director of the alumni office, and member of St. John's, who has worked with the New Orleans Historical Preservation Society and the Vieux Carré Commission. She recently went to help in New Orleans and is in touch with students at Bard who are actively involved in restoration efforts.

Current New Orleans Diocese programs include a mobile ministry, which travels into communities as they begin to come back to life. Trinity Church operates a mobile feeding vehicle that feeds 150 people per trip. Another church is developing a mobile medical care unit. The Diocese is creating a respite-care mobile unit, and mental health professionals are needed to staff it. The Diocese also needs volunteers to help in the Chapel of the Holy Comforter Compassion Center near the Universities of New Orleans and Southern New Orleans.

Archdeacon McManis has promised to provide updates of specific needs, and Cathryne will continue to bring our congregation up to speed on developments.

Far, Far Away

Amelia Harrar is spending 6 months in Finland, working as a children's daycare assistant.

Pledge & Plate

The final results are in, and the Church of St. John the Evangelist closed the year in the black! The church had budgeted expenditures of \$98,872 for 2005 (slightly less than 2004's actual expenditures), but we actually expended \$101,119. The good news is that income also exceeded expectations, totaling \$106,986.

Better yet, \$2,540 of the "overspending: (and income) was given by parishioners for transmittal to Episcopal Relief and Development for hurricane relief, which means that the church actually met its planned budget **and** contributed a substantial amount to disaster relief.

If you look at the sources of income, pledge payments (\$52,343) accounted for 48.9% of income, plate (\$6,397) account for 6.0% of income, and the rest came from rents (22.9%), gifts (11.3%), endowment income (9.3%), cemetery receipts (1.2%), parish hall rentals (0.3%) and fundraisers (0.2%). I was able to transfer a substantial gift for capital improvements and the cemetery receipts for burial plots directly to the endowment, without having to use them for day-to-day expenses. Altogether, it was a very good year.

The real heroes of 2005 are our parishioners ("we have met them and they are us!"). We increased pledge payments from \$42,484 to \$52,343 in 2005 -- a 23% increase! By my calculation, this increase represents about \$3 per week per pledge unit (or family if you prefer). The congregation rose to the five-buck-a-week challenge and tried its best to meet it, moving the church toward a much sounder fiscal situation. Thank you all for making my job much less anxiety-provoking.

John Ferguson, Treasurer

New Members

Ray Benckozy, the Carson family, the Clark family, Anne Davis, Delmar Hendricks, Penny & Fred Levine, Barbara Lewis & Anil Telang, J. Perry Lunn, Natalie Lunn, the Martz family, the Pelosi family, the Schabot family, and Melissa Sweet have joined the St. John's community. Welcome!

*[Editors Note: Have I left anyone out? If so, apologies, and please introduce yourselves so we can include you in the next **Evangelist**.]*

Grateful Thanks

Bim Chanler received a hearty round of applause at the general meeting for his superb work managing the church endowment and its investments.

The Art of James Gurney

Jim's amazing and beautiful work is on display around the country. *Dinotopia, The Fantastical Art of James Gurney*, opened on February 18th at the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, MA. There's still time to see it -- the exhibition continues until May 20th.

The Museum also hosted *Dinomania!*, a school vacation workshop in February, and *Science and Beyond: Where Fact Meets Fantasy*, an Educators' Symposium with Jim and others, on March 4th.

An exhibition on the art of the *National Geographic*, including some of Jim's work, can also be seen at the Norman Rockwell Museum until May 30th.

Another one-man Gurney exhibition, *Dinotopia*, opened at the Alden Dow Center for Art & Science in Midland, MI, in January 28th and continues through April 23rd.

Here's something you may not know: Jim has illustrated 17 United States postage stamps!

A Little Church Etymology

"...she knew there were all kinds of particular terms for the bones of the church, its carcass and ribs, like medieval poetry -- apse, chancel, nave, transept, clerestory, sacristy, misericord -- although she wasn't too sure what any of them meant, except for 'misericord,' because it was one of those words that once you'd come across it you always remembered it."
[From "Case Histories," by Kate Atkinson.]

"Misericord -- Derived from the Latin *misericordia*, meaning "compassion," a misericord provided support for medieval choir members who were obliged to stand during lengthy medieval services. Seldom seen, these wooden ledges along the back row of the choir stall often are intricately carved and decorated with a variety of delightful plant and animal scenes.

[From itsa.ucsf.edu]

Other definitions of *misericord* include (1) relaxation of monastic rules such as dispensation from fasting, (2) a monastery room used by monks who have been granted dispensations, and... (3) a narrow dagger used in medieval times to deliver the death blow to a wounded knight!

[From the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition]

Confirmation Class/Nicene Creed

by Penelope Levine

In the compost
the moist bodies of worms
muscular, strong
spasm between my fingers
Eat the trash I leave
Excrete clean dark soil

Egg shells, peach pits last for years
Corncobs come more brittle
and hollow
Onionskins, cabbage leaves,
cucumber scrapings
melt effortlessly to soil

The sycamore
begins stretching

White pine
twists
carrying height
beyond what I could have meant

A clump of peonies
under the lilacs
never bloomed, blooms weighty blossoms
now, in the sun

A theologian said
our resurrected bodies
will be ideal forms of us. If we were fat, crooked, old
or scarred
these aspects will be gone
Paul believed
in resurrection of the soul's body

In the yard
I visit the compost pile
with my bowl of scraps
The quiet decay
and irrepressible growth
of the garden

I can picture resurrection as a stiff daffodil
whose bulb nestles
in the cavity
of my worm cleaned heart

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