

The Net Tender - October 2014

St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

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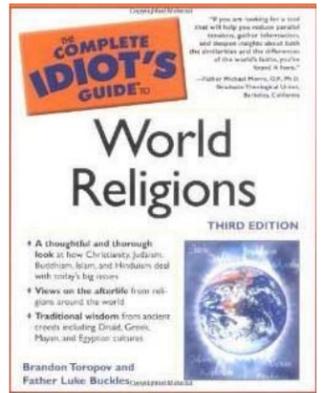
The Net Tender

Newsletter of St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

October 2014

OTHER

There is a book in my library called *The Complete Idiot's Guide to World Religions*. It has long sections on Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, other Asian traditions and various New Age movements. It is intended for people of goodwill from all religious backgrounds (and none) who want to enter into conversation with each other without offending, to learn from each other without being ugly religious tourists. At the most practical level, it is to allow a Jew to attend a Hindu friend's wedding, for example, and understand some of what is going on without stepping on too many toes.



Although the *Idiot's Guide* helps to avoid trouble, it doesn't go far enough. Rather, a better goal is to enter authentically into discussions with people of faiths and religions different from our own. As our world becomes more interconnected, we become aware of the rich variety of religious thought and practice around us, a variety far beyond Rev. Lovejoy of *The Simpsons*' list of "Christian, Jew, or Miscellaneous." Before recent conflicts in the Middle East, how many of us knew anything about Zoroastrianism, Yazidism, or Coptic Christianity?

Unfortunately, Western Christianity's attitude toward non-Christian (or even non-western-European-Christian) peoples has too often been "convert or die." While the idea of interfaith conversation is not an invention of the twentieth century (see Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, for example), crusades and conversion of the heathen have been far more common. Even when non-Christian religions have not been eradicated, they have sometimes been treated with condescension as "primitive." Enlightened Christians in the nineteenth century sometimes spoke of "unintentional Christians:" that is people who worshiped a God and lived lives of Christian virtue, but who had not been exposed to Christian teaching. While this was an improvement on the Crusades, it still reduces all other religions to a sort of defective Christianity.

More recently, folks who want to be open minded have been likely to say things like, "It doesn't matter what name we call God, right? We're all interested in the same thing. We're all on different paths up the mountain, but they all lead to the same summit." Well, no. This sort of liberal relativism glosses over the very real differences among world religions: Different convictions about the existence or non-existence, singleness or multiplicity of God. Entirely different relationships between humanity and the divine. Entirely different ends and goals for human existence. These are not just differences in emphasis or different ways of expressing the same human intuitions, and to say that they are reduces all religion to a sort of sentimental spirituality, not-so-subtly assuming that deep down, everyone is really just like us.

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If you no longer wish to receive the Net Tender or prefer to receive it by e-mail, please call the church office.

Deadline for articles for November *Net Tender* is October 28

THE COLOR OF SOUND

Musician/composer Kevin Campbell will lead his contemporary Jazz ensemble, The Color of Sound, in a performance of original compositions and familiar Jazz classics at St. Saviour's Episcopal Church on Friday, October 10 at 7 pm.



Merging sensitive vocal Bossa Nova influenced stylings with exciting instrumental Jazz, Color of Sound offers a wide sonic palette that appeals to music lovers of all styles.

Performing songs from his debut CD, "First Light", new original compositions and Jazz classics, the ensemble will present an evening of dynamic musical entertainment featuring some of the area's finest Jazz musicians.

Winner of both Helen Hayes and Barrymore Awards for musical direction in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC, Campbell will present compositions and arrangements highlighting the chemistry of interplay between ensemble and stylistic artistry.

Come and join us in the beautiful St. Saviour's Church, 41 Mount Desert St, Bar Harbor as the melodies flow and reverberate through the wonderful walls of the Church. Suggested donation of \$10 at the door will benefit Local Solutions and St. Saviour's Outreach programs.

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

Bunny Watts

The vestries of St. John's and St. Saviour's held a joint retreat at the Maine Sea Coast Mission on September 26 and 27. This spacious setting provided a peaceful environment for the deliberations led by The Rev. Richard Burden, Rector of All Saints Parish, Brookline, MA.

He introduced the evening session by asking us to consider a series of "Touchstones" which were to guide our deliberations. Among these were:

- ◆ I will speak my truth in ways that respect other people's truths.
- ◆ When the going gets rough I will turn to wonder and curiosity.
- ◆ If we feel judgmental or defensive the suggestion was to ask "I wonder what she is feeling now" or "I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself."
- ◆ I will trust and learn from the silence.

The retreat was divided into sessions which focused on a poem or reading which we read aloud. After some time to reflect on the passage we broke into groups of three, or sometimes two, where each of us would share his or her thoughts on what that passage had meant. Both parishes were represented in each group. Many went in to this experience with some hesitancy. However in the end most everyone benefited from sharing thoughts and experiences on a deeper level than the usual coffee hour chit chat especially with someone from the other parish.

During the retreat we put post-its on sheets of newsprint to finish the sentence: "I dream of a church where..." Among the responses:

- ⇒ people say: "those Christians, look how they love one another!"
- ⇒ I can enjoy and celebrate!...where people smile.... that challenges me.
- ⇒ Where each person feels that they can contribute and are asked so that they feel included.
- ⇒ a church which is open minded and has no fear.... where we don't worry so much
- ⇒ where people come because they want to..... no guilt
- ⇒ where there are no labels....full of real joy

⇒ that goes beyond the walls and meets people where they are.....where "outside" people will wander in without prejudging by "insiders"

After lunch we were more than ready to address the central question on all our minds: what does the future look like for Tim Fleck and our two parishes? Tim expressed his enthusiasm for continuing his shared ministry with both churches. Terms of a proposed contract will be discussed at the October and November vestry meetings and parishioners are encouraged to share any comments and concerns with vestry members. December 15th was set as the date for a final contract.

We concluded with Eucharist celebrated on the lawn overlooking Frenchman's Bay.

We came away from our time together feeling nourished not only in spirit, but also in body, thanks to the delicious meals prepared by Tanya's "Off the Grid" foods in Southwest Harbor. She has been a victim of the current road construction and has closed her retail shop for the time being. But she might be willing to come up with some of her delicious lasagna or chicken enchiladas if you're planning an event. Her phone is 244-0777.



BLESSING OF BEASTS FOR ST. FRANCIS' FEAST



October 4 is the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, known by many as the patron saint of animals and the environment. In celebration, St. Saviour Episcopal Church will be offering a free public ceremony for the blessing of pets and companion animals on Saturday, October 4, 2:00 PM in Grant Park, at the end of Albert Meadow near the Shore Path in Bar Harbor.

All sorts of animals are welcome, so long as they are in pet carriers or on a leash and under control. If your animal companion does not do well in crowds or with other animals, you may bring a photo, a favorite toy, or some sort of representation of your animal to be blessed instead. There will also be an opportunity to remember and honor departed pets: you are invited to bring a photo or other memento of them.

Fr. Tim says, "Animals are an important part of our lives – our pets as well as the wild animals among whom we live here on MDI. Many of us have learned how to love and to be loved in our relationships with animals, and have experienced closeness with God through appreciation of creation. It's only natural that we should want to give thanks for the blessings of nature."

The attached image is © David W. Raber, used by the permission of the artist.

MAH JONG

Karen Craig

The every Friday afternoon Mah Jong gathering is still going strong. Lessons are available for newcomers, or for those who just need a refresher. We meet from one to three in the community room. Any questions, just call Karen at 244-5267. No need to preregister. Just come and have a great time. See you there!



VESTRY BULLETS

Jayne Ashworth

The St. Andrew and St. John Vestry went on retreat with the Vestry of St. Saviour's in September 2014, and so did not have a business meeting. See the Senior Warden's article on page 2 in this issue for information about what was discussed during the retreat.

Other... (continued from page 1)

Although perhaps it should have been obvious, an epiphany for me was the realization that while adherents of other religions don't want to be converted, they do want to have real, thoughtful, committed Christians as conversation partners. Think about it: if you were going to have an interfaith dialogue with a Buddhist, would you want her to be wishy-washy, to water down her belief to make you more comfortable, to say that Buddhism really isn't that special? No, you'd want a real, thoughtful, committed Buddhist, one who could articulate her beliefs and practices, one who is comfortable talking about differences. We Christians owe the same thing to this pluralistic world: an authentic, confident Christian voice. In our fear of appearing arrogant or giving offense, we deprive our neighbors of the real gifts we have to share.

Imagine being invited to a potluck with people from a dozen different cultures with a dozen different cuisines. You would know going in that some of the dishes might not be to your liking, but I hope you'd be brave enough to taste. Then think about the dish that you would bring to the table. Would you assume that all food is basically the same? Would you intentionally pick something bland, something nondescript? No, you'd want to bring your specialty, something you know that you and your family enjoy, something so good that you want to share it with everyone. It may not be to everyone's taste, but you honor them by offering your best.

Feedback? I hope you will call or e-mail me to continue the conversation.

Yours in Christ's Peace, Tim

Birthdays

OCTOBER

5—Chloe Hatcher
7—Wanda Fernald
12—Bob Stanwood
12—Neela Zinsser

Wedding Anniversaries

OCTOBER

1—Alice Downs and Dean Henry
16—Jean and Carl Storage

THE LIGHTER SIDE...

This is the story of four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. Consequently, it wound up that Nobody told Anybody, so Everybody blamed Somebody.



SENIOR COFFEE HOUSE WILL OPEN ON MDI

Led by the Maine Sea Coast Mission, a comprehensive group of organizations serving the older adult community has been meeting since March to plan a senior coffee house for the winter months at Colkett House, the Mission Headquarters on West Street. The coffee house, called “Coffee’s On”, will run from November through April on the first and third Tuesdays of the month from 9:30-11:30 AM. All MDI seniors will be welcome, and transportation will be available.

Organizations working together on this project to date have included Harbor House, Neighborhood House, AARP, Birch Bay Village, the Straus Center, MDI YWCA, Southwest Harbor Public Library, the Bar Harbor Police Department, the Episcopal churches of St. Saviour and Saint Andrew and Saint John, First Baptist Church of Bar Harbor, Island Connections, Friends in Action, At Home Down East, Acadia Senior College, Eastern Agency on Aging, and Washington/Hancock Community Agency, as well as a number of community volunteers. The group has studied existing coffee house models, including Friend in Action in Ellsworth and the Coffee House program of the Sea Coast Mission in Cherryfield.

The objective of the coffee house is simply to provide socialization opportunities in a beautiful setting. Music will be provided in November by Ruth Grierson. Attendees themselves will decide on the introduction of any additional programs.

Volunteers, churches, businesses, and community groups will be invited to take responsibility for hosting each session of the coffee house. Hosting will include welcoming, clean-up, and food supplies as needed. Father Tim has offered our parishes as hosts for the January sessions.

For questions and further information, call Patsy Fogarty, 244-9410.

SONAGEE SERVICES

Michael Shook

- St. John has responsibility for leading worship at Sonagee on Sunday, October 6, at 10:30 a.m. Michael Shook (mshook@gmail.com) usually leads Morning Prayer at Sonagee for the St. Andrew and St. John and Sonagee communities. You are welcome to join Michael and the Sonagee residents on October 6.
- We are also scheduled to lead worship at Sonagee on Sunday, December 28 at 10:30 a.m. - you may want to put that opportunity on your calendar now!

NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

Stephen Sampson

As autumn gets underway, thoughts turn to falling leaves, dropping temperatures, and perhaps visions of the winter to come. Here at the organ bench, one thought that autumn brings is how to best keep Greta, our pipe organ, healthy over the long winter season. Greta had a rough winter last year; because of the prolonged periods of very cold and dry weather, her windchest—a wooden box inside a pipe organ that holds the pipes in place and contains the valves that control the flow of air to the pipes as the organist plays—developed cracks that significantly affected her sound. When cracks form in a windchest, air can escape into adjacent pipes and produce unwanted sounds. When the cracks form in the bottom of the windchest, air can flow continually through the pipes even though the valves controlling the airflow are closed. These unbidden sounds are termed “ciphers”. Last winter Greta suffered from ciphers in several pipes, and these were evident prior to our Westside Food Pantry ‘Three Organists’ recital in February.



Fortunately, David Wallace, of David E. Wallace & Co. Pipe Organ Builders (Gorham, Maine), was able to visit Greta shortly before the recital and mitigate the problem. He reported that the winter had been an unusually hard one for pipe organs all over New England, and told of several that had developed similar problems because of the dryness.

While David’s repairs indeed reduced the ciphering, some whispering remained. He advised using a humidifier to swell the wood, so I purchased a small humidifier and placed it inside the organ, keeping it running nearly continually until the summer. This did not have an effect on the ciphering, but during the summer, as the air warmed and humidity did its thing, the ciphering disappeared—the wood swelled up enough with the more humid air to close the cracks. I now plan to purchase a large humidifier and keep it running throughout the fall and winter, with the plan of keeping the cracks at bay. If this works, we are all set. If, however, cracks develop despite the humidifier, Greta will need some expensive repair work—rebuilding key sections of the windchest—to remain functional.

(David estimates that the cost of rebuilding the windchest would be about \$10,000, and that the repairs would take about four weeks to complete.) So, our goal is to be sure that Greta remains moist, whatever the weather outside. In the meantime, we are enjoying cipher-free music as Greta carries on.



St. John's fall grounds clean up Saturday, October 18th

Bring your rakes and energy!

WEDNESDAY EXPLORERS

Wednesday Explorers is a weekly open discussion forum, facilitated by Vesta Kowalski, which meets in the St. John's Common Room from 1:30 to 3:00 on Wednesday afternoons. There's a different topic each week; the topics are suggested and chosen by the group. Anyone is free to come once, occasionally, or regularly, and friends from outside the church community are welcome, too. Schedule of topics for October:

October 1 – *What happens at communion?* We often say children shouldn't receive communion until they can understand what is happening – and then admit that we don't really understand it ourselves. We'll talk about how we perceive and experience God's presence in the act of receiving communion.

October 8 – *One God in Three Persons?* What do we mean when we say Jesus is “fully divine and fully human”? Is the Trinity a useful theological concept for us in our time?

October 15 – *The Top 10 Reasons to Be an Episcopalian.* Robin Williams left us this tongue-in-cheek yet thought-provoking list of reasons that includes “you can believe in dinosaurs” (#9) and ends with “No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other Episcopalian who agrees with you” (#1). We'll begin this discussion at a Sunday forum on October 12, and continue it on Wednesday.

October 22 – *What do we want from our priests?* As the church is changing and the model of one priest for one congregation is becoming increasingly rare, it has been suggested that we should reexamine our expectations of clergy who work on some kind of “part time” basis. What do/can/should we expect from our clergy in the “emerging” church?

October 29 – *(Why) did Jesus have to die?* Early expectations of a Messiah included worldly triumphs, not an ignominious death. Theologians beginning with Paul and the writers of the gospels have tried to explain why what happened was so different from what was expected. We'll look at different theologies of “atonement” and discuss whether any of them work for us today.

THANKSGIVING DAY WORSHIP AND MEAL

Dianne McMullan and Chloe Hatcher

Plans are being made for worship and a community thanksgiving meal at St. John's on Thanksgiving day. Worship will be at 11 a.m. with the meal served from noon to 2 p.m. Please consider being a part of these special gatherings. More information will appear in the next issue of the *Net Tender*.



SHARON DAYANA SALAZAR

St. John's sponsored child in Costa Rica is now a teenager in 8th grade. We recently received a current photo. Through Children, Inc., we continue to support her with her schooling. There are only two months not covered for this season (May and July). If you would like to participate, please sent a check (made out to St. John's) for \$28.



HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County is holding Patient Care Volunteer Training and Bereavement Volunteer Facilitator Training starting October 8 and 9. Go to their website at www.hospiceofhancock.org or call 667-2531 for information and to register.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER

Pentecost 17, October 5

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 19; Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski

Pentecost 18, October 12

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23; Exodus 32:1-14; Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski

Pentecost 19, October 19

MDI Marathon (*one service*)

8:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine

Psalm 99; Exodus 33:12-23; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22
The Rev. Tim Fleck

Pentecost 20, October 26

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 34:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46
The Rev. Tim Fleck

Thursdays, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

12:30 p.m. — Holy Eucharist
The Rev. Tim Fleck

OCTOBER FORUMS

Vesta Kowalski will lead the first two Sunday forums in October, each beginning at 9:00 a.m., following the 8:00 a.m. service, and ending at 9:45. The format will be the same as the Wednesday Explorers discussion group, and one goal of the discussions is to generate new topics to explore in the future. The topics are:

October 5 – *S/he said what?* This is an opportunity for the larger congregation to talk about sermons of note (good or bad), or preaching in general. The floor is completely open for discussing ideas from recent or past sermons that you found intriguing, irritating, inspiring, provocative, puzzling, peculiar . . . anything that made you want to talk back to the preacher.

October 12 – *The Top 10 Reasons to Be an Episcopalian.* Robin Williams left us this tongue-in-cheek yet thought-provoking list of reasons that includes “you don't have to check your brains at the door” (#7) and ends with “No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other Episcopalian who agrees with you” (#1). We'll begin this discussion on Sunday, and continue it on Wednesday, October 15.

There will be no forum on October 19 (Marathon Day); and on October 26 there will be a Vestry Dialogue about the Convention.



MDI MARATHON SUNDAY
October 19
One service at 8:00 a.m.