

St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

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The Net Tender

Newsletter of St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

September 2015

WHY ARE WE GOOD? Part 2: WHY DO WE GIVE?

Last month, I wrote about different ways of thinking about being good: following rules, thinking about the consequences of our actions, or thinking about our actions as they relate to the ultimate purpose and goal of human life.

Generosity is a category of good behavior that is of interest to Christians, not just because the church relies chiefly on the generosity of members for its financial resources, but because wealth and the ways we relate to it are such a central part of the Gospel. Jesus talks more about money than he does about any other human institution, so there must be something there that he wants us to hear and understand.

Our spiritual relationship with money and giving is complex, and includes challenging ideas about philanthropy, charity, security, poverty, pride and greed. Today, though, I'd like to address the narrower question of whether and how we give money to the church – a question that is freighted with all sorts of history and assumptions which can make it hard to talk about.

Before going any further, I should give credit to my friend The Rev. Timothy Dombek, Canon for Stewardship and Planned Giving in the Diocese of Arizona (and fellow Hoosier). He teaches a two-day seminar called "Stewardship University" that changed the way I think about stewardship, and this article relies a great deal on his teaching.



Some of us may give to the church out of sense of duty or guilt. We may have the subconscious fear that we are loved in proportion to the size of the gifts we give, or that we can somehow make expiation for our sins by giving to the church. We may know intellectually that God's grace is unconditional and irresistible, but our insecurities doubt that this can be so.

Some of us may have internalized the world's model of payment for services rendered, and may give because of the good things we get from the church. We love the music, we appreciate the preaching, we enjoy the fellowship of our friends, and we are willing to pay something for that. If we find ourselves asking questions like "how much is the church worth to me?" or talking about our gifts to the church as dues or taxes, we may be giving from this model.

A much subtler version of this kind of giving is when we give philanthropically because we want to support particular activities of the church in the world. If we give to the church because the church does things we like, then we are really just giving money to advance our own will and our own interests, even if those things we like are good in themselves. This sort of philanthropy is a wonderful thing and has supported extremely worthwhile charities and arts organizations. There is an important distinction, though, between a charity and the church, between philanthropy and tithing.

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A LITTLE HISTORY LESSON

Excerpts from a letter written by David C. Glendinning in 1965:

"Some fifty years ago the mission of St. Andrew's Church was begun by a group of summer residents from the Northeast Harbor community as a means of spreading the Gospel of Christ into an area then largely unchurched. The first resident vicar, the Rev. Mr. Forsythe, built up the mission, and himself became the symbol of the ministry of the church as he walked amongst his parishioners, frequently covering the distance between Seal Cove and Southwest Harbor on foot. The first service in the Church was held on January 2, 1915 being the wedding of Seth Harper and Sylvia Reed. From these beginnings the Church grew quickly and carried on an effective ministry that saw the establishment of the mission of St. John the Divine in Southwest and the creation of a faithful congregation in Seal Cove and West Tremont. Despite its ups and downs over the intervening fifty years, St. Andrew's today is the product of a succession of dedicated priests, but it exists primarily because of the impetus that it first received in the beginning."

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Deadline for articles for October Net Tender is September 27

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ISLAND HOPPING



Recently, my daughter mused at the irony: she and her brother, though raised as landlubbers, have a mother and father who seem to have developed a penchant for living on islands, albeit independently of one another. Her father (my former husband) lives on an island in Indonesia, and in the last ten years or so her mother has

been island hopping from Ireland to Manhattan and now Mt. Desert. Blame it on the islands I told her, because I was drawn to each one for different reasons, drawn being the operative word; for I truly felt called or pulled to each particular watery place.

Now, most of us don't conjure up watery images when we think of Manhattan. Like most big cities, Manhattan is more so a concrete jungle rather than an island paradise, and most folks don't think "Manhattan" when they're planning an island getaway. But in trying to get off the island of Manhattan, or regain entry, one is most acutely reminded that yes, indeed, it is one; and therefore surrounded by sea water, tidal straights, and rivers, and thus bridges and tunnels to motor across, through, or under as it were.

I lived in (or is it on?) Manhattan in my twenties, and both then and most recently it had the peculiar effect of stranding one within its boundary. It's hard to get off islands!—and not just logistically; there is some kind of attendant result or conditioning that occurs when residing on a piece of land surrounded by water.

Psychologically speaking, our consciousness could be likened to an island, and the ocean surrounding it to the vast collective unconscious. The word itself could be read as "I-land," carrying with it a sense of self-consciousness but for the subliminal seas of perceptions, impulses, memories, and dreams. Consciousness, like islands, emerges from the deep below, our "shoreline" carved by the psyche, as well as flesh and bone.

Islands have long captured our imaginations as places that are magical, wild, holy, mystical, isolated, and encircled; as a paradise, an escape, a safe haven or harbor, a captive place of exile or captivating adventure, especially if hunting for buried treasure. Islands have a uniquely rhythmical, sonorous, and fluent nature, most expressly at their outer boundaries or edges; islands could even be said to be edgy.

Place and conversion or transformation are intimately interconnected, as we read throughout the Bible; and the act of being called and leaving one's place in the world has deep roots in the Christian tradition. The early Irish became particularly devoted to this discipline known as "peregrination," and saw it as a reenactment of Abraham's, Moses' and the Israelite's exile from their homeland. The ancient Irish ascetics left home for the "deserts" within Ireland or left the island itself, usually castaway to another one, never to return. It was not that "home" was unimportant, but rather all-important, and the sacrifice was of the familiar and comfortable.

On the first day of my hospital chaplaincy training we were asked by the supervisor if we could bring only three things with us to a desert island, what they would be? I hemmed and hawed internally because my immediate thought was not especially spiritual or practical; what I wanted to bring was tea. If I was going to be marooned on a desert island, I would absolutely want to have the comfort of my morning and afternoon tea; so much for sacrifice!

As I was writing this piece, my curiosity piqued as to just how many islands there are on our fragile island home among the stars. Apparently, it is not so straightforward to count them, and depending upon various factors, the total ranges from hundreds to many thousands. But according to Wikipedia, the population of the world's inhabited islands is estimated to be around 730,000 or about 11% of the world's population.

One day, when I was a native on the Emerald Isle, on a Holy Spirit whim, I got into my car and drove several hours to Ireland's rugged west coast. Sitting on the rocky moor, its dark cliffs rising up to meet the bluster

Why Do We Give *(continued)*

Tithing – the practice of setting aside a percentage of one's income for the church – is at its best a spiritual practice for the giver rather than a fundraising technique for the church. Tithing is an exercise in trusting God rather than ourselves. Tithing is not about the church's need for money, but a challenge for us to let go of part of the treasure that the world tells us so urgently that we need to protect and to hoard. Tithing is not the way we fund ministry; tithing *is* ministry. Tithing flips our assumptions about who is offering a gift to whom.

Tithing is a sort of Sabbath for our money: a recognition that all of our time and all of our gifts belong to God, and that we don't need to squeeze more work out of every minute and more stuff out of every dollar. As Sabbath makes the whole week holy, tithing a percentage of our income hallows all of it.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Jesus knows human nature well enough to understand that our money is a proxy for our energy and our commitment and what we actually value. What we do with our money says more about the state of our heart than the words that we speak.

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

Yours in Christ's Peace, *Tim*

VESTRY BULLETS—August 16

- ◆ Liz Erickson gave a report on the financial audit. There were no surprises or areas of significant concern, and Liz will share the Management Letter (auditor's recommendations) as soon as the final draft is complete.
- ◆ Reminder of special Evensong with Dr. Robert Radtke, President of Episcopal Relief & Development, on Saturday, August 29, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Divine.
- ◆ Moved and adopted to authorize Bunny, Rita and Tim to work with MCM electric to upgrade and make safe the St. Andrew's electrical and lighting up to \$3,600, the amount remaining from the FIC's recommendation of \$7,500 after roof repairs. As a side note, there was discussion of what would happen if the minimum responsible repairs cost more than \$3,600 – we said that we would come back to Vestry for authorization beyond \$3,600, and it seemed that that authorization would be likely to be forthcoming.
- ◆ Moved and adopted to donate 10% of total income from Yard Sale and Quieside Festival, a total of \$953.65, to be split equally between Hancock Medical Mission and the Acadia Family Center. There was also conversation about inviting Dr. Charlie Hendricks and the new Director of the AFC to speak to the church at Forums this fall.
- ◆ Moved and adopted to add The Rev. Kathleen Killian as signer on the Clergy Discretionary Account.



WASTE NOT...

No waste of these altar flowers
Paul Haertel gifts Vicky Vendrell with Sunday's altar arrangement from St. Andrew.



Birthdays

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

Wedding Anniversaries

SEPTEMBER
 12—Spencer & Floy Ervin
 18—Ted Fletcher & Ann Kidder
 23—Haywood May & Vicky Vendrell

SINGING FOR THOSE AT THE END OF LIFE

The Hospice Fund of the Maine Community Foundation is presenting this program on Saturday, October 24, 8:30-4:00 at Maple Hill Farm in Hallowell.

Kathy Leo, founding member of the Hallowell Singers, will be the keynote speaker. Don't miss this great opportunity to expand your knowledge and resources to establish and nurture a bedside singing group. Network and sing with others who comfort and support the ill and dying at bedside through music and song. For more information, please visit www.harboursingers.org



of grey, the wind in my hair, looking out over the ocean toward home, not a single person knew where I was—I was completely alone at the edge of my world. It was liberating and terrifying all the same. There was nothing between me and God's magnificent power and utterly breathtaking beauty. The longing of my soul became an immeasurable and perfect solitude. Listening to the waves, and searching the glimmer of the sea, I was transported into another wilderness, a freedom of light, a strange and embracing peace, not of this world.

The geography of where we live and to where we are called—whether to mountains, deserts, or islands, cityscape or village—is an integral part of our journey; its shapes our inner terrain and way of outer dwelling.

May you inhabit with grace the blessing of home and place within your life.

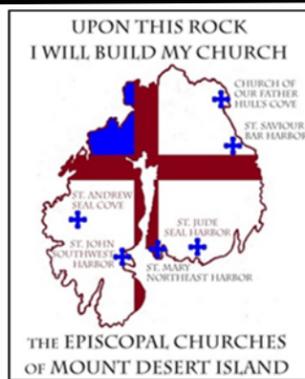
Faithfully,
 Mother Kathleen

EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT PHOTO EXHIBITION

In celebration of Episcopal Relief & Development's 75th Anniversary, St. Saviour's hosted the organization's traveling photo exhibition in August. Featuring 33 iconic photos of Episcopal Relief & Development's work around the globe, the exhibition leads viewers through a vivid, intimate exploration of the organization's history and programs.

Through compelling images and insightful descriptions, the photo exhibition builds meaningful connections to ERD's four core program areas: alleviating hunger, promoting health, creating economic opportunities and responding to disasters. Photos come from five continents and were chosen from over 20,000 images by curator Johanna Lehan, who has worked for *The New Yorker* and *Newsweek*.

Episcopal Relief & Development works with more than 3 million people in nearly 40 countries worldwide to overcome poverty, hunger and disease through multi-sector programs that utilize local resources and expertise. An independent 501(c)(3) organization, Episcopal Relief & Development works closely with Anglican Communion and ecumenical partners to help communities rebuild after disasters and develop long-term strategies to create a thriving future. In 2014-15, the organization joins Episcopalians and friends in celebrating 75 Years of Healing a Hurting World.



EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF MDI T-SHIRTS

How to be just like the cool kids! Get your limited-edition "Episcopal Churches of MDI" T-shirt. Ocean Blue heavy cotton with red, white and blue printing. Available in size S-XXL while supplies last! Sixteen dollars, payable to The Rector's Discretionary Fund. See Tim, Michele or Muffet for details.



THE LIGHTER SIDE...

A father took his 5-year-old son to several baseball games where *the Star-Spangled Banner* was sung before the start of each game. Then the father and son attended church on a Sunday shortly before Independence Day. The congregation sang *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and after everyone sat down, the little boy suddenly yelled out, "PLAY BALL!"



TAIZÉ - AN ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

Friday at 6 pm in the Chapel at St. Saviour's in Bar Harbor on September 18

Simple, yet profound. Experience the spirituality and the meditative songs of the Taizé community of France, an interdenominational and ecumenical monastic order known around the world for its message of trust, peace and reconciliation.

Candlelight, • Scripture, • Silence, • Song, • Prayer.



NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

Stephen Sampson

After a moonlit night in August, we are moved to send these words, written by William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616).

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
(The Merchant of Venice)

And while we are on the subject:

Play, music! And you, brides and bridegrooms all,
With measure heap'd in joy, to the measures fall.
(As You Like It)

And:

Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music.
(A Midsummer Night's Dream)

And again:

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me that, when I waked,
I cried to dream again.
(The Tempest)

And - best wishes for a happy autumn.



WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

September 6, Pentecost 15

8:00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist at St. Andrew by-the-Lake
10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 125; Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23; James 2:1-17; Mark 7:24-37
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

September 13, Pentecost 16

8:00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist at St. Andrew by-the-Lake (*last Sunday*)
10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 19; Proverbs 1:20-33; James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38
The Rev. Kathleen Killian

September 20, Pentecost 17

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 1; Proverbs 31:10-31; James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37
The Rev. Timothy Fleck
10:30 a.m.—Service at Sonogee

September 27, Pentecost 18

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 124; Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50
The Rev. Kathleen Killian

Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.—Holy Eucharist

September 3 (Prudence Crandall)

September 17 (Hildegard of Bingen)

The Rev. Timothy Fleck

September 10 (Alexander Crummell)

September 24 (Philander Chase)

The Rev. Kathleen Killian

**LAST
SUMMER SERVICE**
at St. Andrew by-the-Lake
September 13
8:00 a.m.