

THE EPISTLE

THE MISSION OF ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, A CENTRAL CITY CHURCH,
IS TO WELCOME ALL PEOPLE INTO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST AND TO SERVE IN HIS NAME

THE RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS

Thirty years ago, when I was new in the work world, I had the following quote framed. It's attributed to Jack London. For many years it was on the wall of every office I had. Somewhere over time I lost this quote in its simple frame.

But I still love it and often say it to myself in my own heart.

*I would rather be ashes than dust!
I would rather that my spark should burn out
in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot.
I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom
of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.
The function of man is to live, not to exist.
I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them.
I shall use my time.*

Time. It is both gift and nemesis.

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Last month Loraine Garner talked about something called "Trakel time" in an article about me for this newsletter. She was poking some gentle fun at my propensity for being late for things. I do struggle with that because I am always trying to fit just one more thing into the time available. Which results in me being late when I don't leave enough time between things.

I am actually always acutely aware of the time. I have extra watches in my office in case I forget to put one on before I leave home. Several times recently I got to the office and laughed at myself upon noticing that I had unwittingly put on two watches—so concerned am I to not be without one.

Time. Chronos. I never have enough time. I always want more.

There is another kind of time. It's called Kairos. Chronos is *our time*. Chronos is the clock that I fight against when I try and fit too many things into one day.

But Kairos is God's time. And God's time is very different. God's time allows for both dust and ash. God's time goes maddeningly slow and blaz-

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ingly fast. God's time goes in God's own good divine rhythm. God does not do things for us in Chronos, God does them in Kairos. That is to say, God who always answers prayers will answer them. But God may not answer them when we want God to. God will answer in Kairos, not Chronos.

Retreat time allows me to slip a bit into Kairos. Freed from the daily demands of parish life, and the truth that there is just never enough time to get done everything I think I should have done, retreat time allows for a glimpse or two of Kairos. God's time. God's time to have God's way with me in God's own good time.

I still think that none of us should fritter away our time. Our time, Chronos, is a gift from God. But Kairos is God's prayer for us. Kairos is that instance when our hearts are open and God can get in. Kairos is a blessing, always. I pray for you moments of Kairos as we move into this summer season. But you can always borrow one of my extra watches. I love you.

~~Mother Debra+

FROM THE DEACON'S BENCH

Two Questions

In the course of a few days recently, I was asked two questions by two different guests from The Gathering. The nature of these questions caused me to pause and look at my ministry, and in a broader sense to look at the ministry of St. James'.

I was walking to the bus stop after a meal at The Gathering with a young man I had been working with, trying to get him to seek help in a meaningful way for his drinking problem. On that brief walk I stopped and spoke to several other guests. Nearing the bus stop, the young man asked me "Why do you try to help everybody?" My quick response was, in effect, that the ministry God led me into was a ministry of service, not just to some people, but to any of God's people I could help.

Later, I thought to myself: you sounded like a great white knight, riding off on his trusty steed to serve all mankind, and you know one person can't accomplish such a feat. What was really happening on that walk as I talked to different people was an effort to keep communications open; an effort to remind them that when they were ready to talk, I'd be there for them; an effort to let them know they weren't alone and that someone cared. In my heart of hearts I know that this is a ministry that God wants me to perform with all

my imperfections. Perhaps a dirty, gray knight on a tired old nag of a horse.

A ministry of service is at the core of our mission at St. James'. Each one of us stands as a resource, as an icon of Christ, when we serve in His name. The people we are in contact with in all the different ministries at St. James' see us that way, even if they don't verbalize it.

Another part of the "why" in the question may well be answered by the occasional good result that have come about pursuing my ministry. Like "C," who after living on the streets and sleeping in a garage finally went to Detox and followed through with treatment. He relapsed when he was laid off from the job he had. The embarrassment he felt when he showed up back on alcohol was obvious, but when he was regularly reminded how good it felt to be sober, he went back for more help and at last report (he comes back regularly to let me know he's OK) he was going to work with Goodwill.

Or "K," whom I had dealt with years ago at Detox, who kept resisting offers of help, thinking he could do it on his own—which he did for a brief period of time, and who now comes back to let me know how he's doing in a program called Impact, run by the Guest

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VESTRY NOTES FOR MAY 2009

The St. James' Vestry met on Wednesday, May 20th at 6:15 PM. Our check-in question for the month was "How has God changed something in you or for you this week?" As in the past, it turned out from our responses that God had indeed been active in affecting our lives in recent days.

The Treasurer's Report was presented, and it was noted with pleasure that our diocesan financial review was a very positive one.

Mother Debra's Rector's Report covered issues of building development; the progress of discussion around music in the future; success in grant application that cover various repairs, storage equipment for Red Door Clothes, purchase of children's clothes for Red Door Clothes and funding for music ministry development; and other aspects of life at St. James'.

There were updates on the Sundries on the Avenue program and the progress at Red Door Clothes, and general conversation around the end-of-the-month celebration of Mother Debra's ten years with us.

As usual, there was much laughter amid the serious, thoughtful consideration of the direction of the church. Mother Debra's closing prayer and blessing sent us out into the world with renewed confidence in our mission at St. James'.

Gust Olson

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House.

These steps taken over time by these men make it possible to pursue my ministry with renewed vigor.

The second question I referred to at the beginning was asked by a man who has been a regular at The Gathering, Sundries, and Red Door Clothes and was aware of my involvement there. Before asking his question, he allowed as how he wasn't sure that God existed, but was unwilling to answer why he felt that way. His question: How can you be with "those people" all the time?

My response was, I'm there because God wants me there, because they are all God's people, just as you and I are. God doesn't distinguish between the sweet smelling and bad smelling or between the clean and the dirty.

I will admit that when I started volunteering at The Gathering it was a bit uncomfortable, but the coordinator's daily reminder that "These people are our

guests and should be treated like any guest we would have in our own home," removed that anxiety. We are all God's people and nothing I do because of my status in life makes me better or worse than any one else. Again, referring to our mission "to welcome all into the presence of Christ", there are no loopholes.

President Obama, in his commencement address at Notre Dame, talked about how his first job after college was organizing a community service program and how working in the community and seeing its problems led him to church. The combination of the two brought him closer to Christ.

Indeed, service to our neighbors who happen to be homeless or living in shelters, without regard as to who they are or any other description of status, not only brings them into the presence of Christ, it strengthens our own journey as we serve in the ways He would have us serve in His Name.

Deacon Ned

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Contemporary visual artist Elizabeth Peyton said in an interview in *The New Yorker* magazine: “Art work expresses what it’s like to be human, and one of the things about being human is time passing.”

What struck me about this quote was the first half: “Art work expresses what it’s like to be human...” I have often thought that in the best of any artistic endeavor, both the reality of the human situation and also a more transcendent vision are presented. And I find that satisfying combination expressed in Christianity as well.

Karen Beaumont

SUMMER BREAK WITH GOD

Ah, the joys of summer... Swimming pools, picnics, baseball games and festivals. While the heat and humidity of the summer months might not be upon us quite yet, they will soon come. And when the temperature rises, and the beautiful sunshine beckons you to bask in its summery glory, remember that God is in our midst. Summer is a great time to kick back and take a break from many things, but not from church. As Christians, communal worship more than just something we do; it is part of who we are. So let us be the full community of St. James’,

worshipping our Creator together on Sunday and enjoying this blessed creation all summer long!

See you on Sunday!

Dorota Pruski

READING ON WORSHIP

Last month I submitted an excerpt from Evelyn Underhill’s book, *The School of Charity*. Here is one more excerpt:

The Light of the World enters our life to show us reality; and forces us to accept the fact that it is the whole of that life, no some supposed spiritual part of it, which is involved in our response to God, and must be self-given to the mysterious purposes of Charity. Christianity is a religion which concerns us as we are here and now, creatures of body and soul. We do not “follow the footsteps of His most holy life” by the exercise of a trained religious imagination; but by treading the firm rough earth, up hill and down dale, on the mountain, by the lake-side, in garden, temple, street... The whole physical scene counts and is of vital importance to Christians...

Submitted by Karen Beaumont

A MORE PUBLIC GOD

Many of you know that I am originally from south central South Dakota. The community of 3100+ is the largest town within a hundred mile radius. For family reasons, I have been travelling back more frequently.

I am considered a “city gal” now with an “eastern accent.” I personally do not think my accent has changed. Its Milwaukee slang has become engrained language during 35 years of living here. The only relevance of this little tidbit is that there are some distinct differences in language and how it is used, especially when it comes to the word “God.”

One of the differences between the city and being out west is that you hear and see the word God more publicly. References to God abound in general conversation. It might be two people talking about farming or ranching; it could be a conversation on the radio related to the weather forecast and how Mother Nature is affecting the main industries of farming or ranching; or a God Bless America, God Bless Our Troops or Easter Greetings on the electronic signage at the banks. The local weekly paper seems to refer to God somehow on almost every page.

I have been thinking about this a lot. I personally believe that if you have grown anything by planting a seed in the ground, you have seen God and God’s miracles. Birthing is a miracle, too. When we plant a seed of any sort we generally do so with faith and hope. A belief in the future. In Winner, SD it is all about God’s country, literally. Hope springs eternal. One is always at the mercy of Mother Nature.

People risk *their* financial present and future every day. It is their risk, not someone else’s. They work their land and/or cattle. The community lives and thrives based on how well the two main industries are doing. It has opened my eyes to the expression, “In God We Trust.”

As our society has moved further and further away from the land, it seems to fuel the concept of secularism. People were needed to grow corporations. As corporations became profit driven, people became pawns in the profit formula. People are no longer viewed as God’s miracles of life.

My belief in the concept of planting a seed grows stronger as we continue to hear and see the travesties of some CEOs who are walking away from their failures with millions of our dollars. They took no personal risk and certainly didn’t get their hands in any real dirt.

God Bless you and the great land we call America.

Linda Steiger



MEET LUCY COOPER

You may know Lucy Cooper as a member of the St. Ann's Altar Guild, or as a Minister of Hospitality. She is also a Lector, a guitar player supporting worship when the choir is absent, and a former alto in the Choir. You have listened to her announcements as a purveyor of Singing Rooster coffee from Haiti. You may know her as the baker of the best cheese sticks at any St. James' potluck event... but did you know that she is President of the Board of Trustees of Funds and Endowments for the Diocese of Milwaukee and, as such, a member of the Diocesan Executive Council?

Lucy joined the Board of Trustees of Funds and Endowments in 2004, and became President in 2008 (her term limit ends in October of 2009). As a member of this Board, she helps to oversee the various funds that the Diocese has received, and safeguard them for future growth and development at the parish and diocesan levels. More information about this entity can be found at www.milepiscopalfeats.org.

As President of the Board, Lucy is *ex officio* a member of the Executive Council of the Diocese of Milwaukee. As a member of the Executive Council, she represents the Board, but also has become involved in diocesan policies and activities. She has worked on assessment policy; property issues (most notably, the sale of Camp Webb); issues of Christian formation; and parish loan applications.

Lucy says that she has gained a deeper understanding of the operations of the diocese and the parishes as a member of the Council. She thinks that positive diocesan developments will include more continuity, clear policies, and communications.

She has been proud to be a face of St. James' at this level, and demonstrate to the larger diocesan community that we can "work and play well with others."

As a member of the Executive Council, she has been appointed by Bishop Miller to the Task Force on St. Andrew's Church, the Haiti Project (whence all that enthusiasm about coffee!), and the diocesan Grants Committee. These involvements will cease when she leaves the Board of Trustees, but her interest in diocesan

activities will continue.

Lucy has been a member of the Board of The Gathering since 1992 (and will continue to 2011). As such, she has volunteered at Saturday morning meals (when St. James' takes its turn to volunteer), and is a member of the legal clinic every other week on Wednesday evenings at the south side location.

If you come to the St. James' Annual Meeting, you'll recognize Lucy as a member of the St. James' Endowment Fund Board. Here she has, she says, learned much about investment principles and strategies – and was much involved several years ago in increasing contributions to the Fund.

Apart from all this (!), Lucy is a member of the Bach Chamber Choir, attends "summer guitar camp" in Asheville, NC (she is a native of North Carolina, and rejoices in her journeys back home), and revels in world travel – even to the extent of singing solo in an Irish pub this spring.

Lucy practiced law for 16 years after earning her JD at UW-Madison: working with legal services to the poor before setting up in private practice for six years with Sandra Edlund, and then becoming a Court Commissioner in 1988 (until retirement in 2006). As a commissioner, she dealt with family cases, including divorce, custody, child support, paternity adjudication, domestic violence injunctions and other difficult situations. Her adult son, John Leppanen, will be travelling his mother's – and father's - path as he prepares for Law School at Boston University in the fall.

Finally, you can't know Lucy without knowing her love for her animals – Lady Jane the cat and Miss Blue, the lab/border collie dog – and her love for her vegetable garden. Sometimes Lucy says she is at heart a farmer, and when the green beans and tomatoes show up in church in August, we believe her.

Gust Olson

SUNDRIES THANK YOU, UPDATE & REMINDER

I would like to thank everyone who collected sundries and brought them to St. James' ministry *Sundries on the Avenue*. On Sunday May 3 several parishioners stayed after services to sort and count all the items donated. We had a total count of 1580 shampoos, conditioners, lotions, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body wash, mouth wash, shaving cream and an assortment of other miscellaneous products.

It would have taken me several hours to do this by myself, but with the help of Sam Zainer, Kathy Nall,

Katie Weidinger, Ellie Washbush and Mary Washbush we finished in 90 minutes! Your help was greatly appreciated. Thank you so very much.

Usually I drop the sundries off at Our Savior's for the next step which is to package the items for monthly distribution at the food pantry housed at Our Savior's. Recently though, the United Methodist Church on the avenue has taken on the responsibility of packaging the sundries for distribution. This will be a big help to the staff of the food pantry as their budget, staff

and volunteers continue to decline in these difficult times. On behalf of the sundries ministry, I would like to remind you to continue to collect personal hygiene products as you travel this summer. If you know of family and friends who will be vacationing, you might consider asking them to bring back sundries from their hotel stays. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to talk with me after church. In addition, my email address and phone number are listed in the church registry.

Linda Steiger

LIKE I NEED THIS RIGHT NOW...

Spring is my worst time of the year. Grades are due, parent teacher conferences, spring play productions, numerous video production, honors banquet speeches, award ceremonies, and the infinite number of spring home projects all combine to drive my stress levels through the roof this time of year. On the Wednesday evening of the last vestry meeting, I was scheduled to be at St. James', filming a concert and presenting a series of scholarships all at the same time. I went to the concert, scooted over to give the awards, and was thankfully excused from the vestry meeting. So when I got a call from Gust, our intrepid parish administrator, asking to do "something for the Epistle," my reaction was "yeah, like I need this right now." In this most hectic time, I find myself looking at my work and stress load, my available time on a weekend, and that block of time for church on Sunday morning and saying about coming down to church, "yeah, like I need THIS right now!"

This past Sunday, I ducked out to my car just a few minutes before the service started to get something I had forgotten. On my way I paused to admire Josie Neff's extremely beautiful new full accessibility van and found her still in it! She was having trouble with the gate and the van would not let her out! To say Josie was frustrated just doesn't do this episode justice. My vocabulary of curses and swear words was expanded greatly (just kidding, Josie. I really did know all of those words before.) As I was helping Josie with the gate, I said to her, "Don't go home, Josie. When things aren't going right is when you really NEED to be here."

CLICK! Sometimes I think this is how God amuses himself, setting up and waiting for these moments when the message gets to the correct person and it just clicks. That may indeed have been what Josie needed to hear on Sunday, but I really think that sentence was meant for me. When things are the most stressful and I have no reserves. When I am unsure of everything else in my life, I know that God will be there. And if I am ever unsure of where to look for him, or need guidance of how to start, I know that St. James' will be there for me. Yeah. Like I NEED this right now. YEAH! I NEED THIS RIGHT NOW! And thank God, it is here!

- John Washbush

STUMP THE PRIEST

Dear priest,

I heard you say in passing recently in adult education that there were three creeds. I know of only two: the Apostles' Creed that I grew up having to memorize and the Nicene Creed that we use in church on Sundays. What's the third creed? Signed, incredulous

Dear Incredulous,

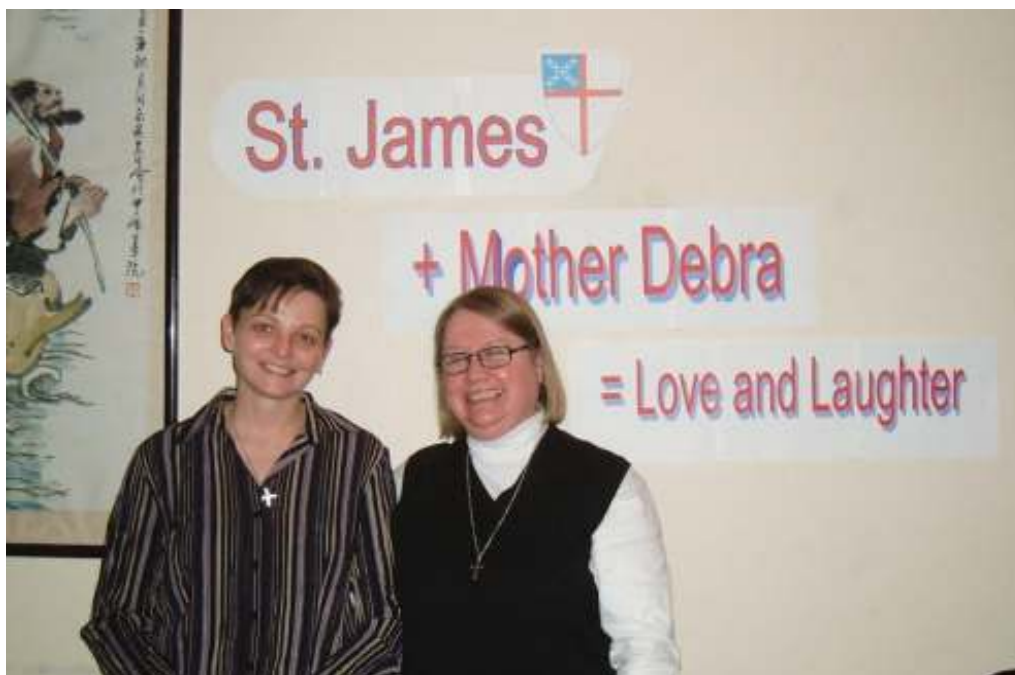
Clever signature by the way, it comes from the same root word as "creed."

Here's the most simple answer to your question. The third creed is the Athanasian Creed. You can find this creed on page 864 of The Book of Common Prayer in the "Historical Documents of the Church section."

The creed of St. Athanasius is one of our statements of belief in the Christian church. It has been used by Christians churches since the sixth century, and, curiously, was probably not written by St. Athanasius, although tradition attributes it to him. Athanasius was a firm supporter of belief in the Holy Trinity and the creed focuses on Trinitarian doctrine. It is the first creed in which the equality of the three persons of the Trinity is explicitly stated. The Athanasian Creed differs from the other two creeds in that it includes condemnations of those who disagreed with it.

While the creed is widely accepted as a statement of belief among Western Christians it is rarely used anymore in public worship and that is why you are unaware of it.

Thanks for your question. Signed, the Priest



Beth Taylor, Senior Warden, and Mother Debra at Peony Restaurant, May 1, 2009