

July 2004

The Sandpiper

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

Dear Friends,

So who's listening?

The other night at the "preacher's aid" group, we encountered what the Jewish tradition calls the "Shema." It goes like this: "Hear, O Israel. The LORD your God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might."

A lovely notion, superficially at least. But I soon get to wondering, "How am I supposed to do that? Can one be commanded to love? What makes me think this is even a good idea?"

Perhaps the beginning of an answer hides in that first word of the Shema, "hear." "Shema," in Hebrew, means "hear." It could be translated "listen up!", as in: "What follows is important!" But *Shema* could also be translated as "pay attention." Pay attention, because God is one – and is therefore everywhere.

To *pay attention* does not necessarily mean to reflect, study, analyze or evaluate. It can just mean: look. And I am convinced of this: if we simply *look* at anything long enough, we begin to feel a bit of what it means to love God. Try it now and then.

If you are taking a vacation this summer, it may provide a good opportunity to pay attention. "What?!", you say, "I go on vacation to *relax*." Yes, indeed. And relaxing our usual *vigilance* – our attention to the next thing that must be done – could go a long way toward fostering our ability to simply look. And listen. And taste, smell, feel.

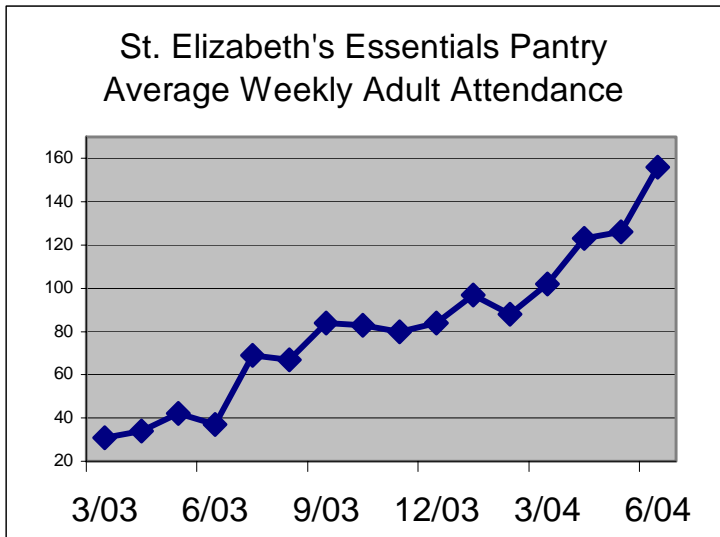
It helps, of course, if we go somewhere we consider beautiful and turn off the phone. But wherever we pay attention, a feeling arises within which I think can only be described as the love of God.

Relax into prayer.

Peace to you,

David





From the Pantry Board:

Pantry Clientele have quadrupled in past year Please review the attached documents. Pantry growth has been dramatic as we continue to get referrals from area agencies and word spreads about our ministry. Thanks to The Rev. Nicole Janelle, we have also updated the statistics on clientele by country of origin. The number of clientele from the USA is growing substantially as we are seeing more families and individuals from shelters. The number of clientele from Afghanistan has also grown substantially, as has those from Sudan.

Essentials Pantry Clientele by Country of Origin

Azerbaijan	1	Colombia	1
Croatia	1	Italy	1
Ethiopia	1	Kazakhstan	1
Pakistan	1	Latvia	1
Yemen	1	Cuba	2
Ukraine	2	Mexico	2
Dominican Republic	5	Congo	4
Russia	9	El Salvador	6
Iran	12	Somalia	11
United States	43	Afghanistan	28
Sudan	44		
		Total	177

The Pantry needs your HELP!

Now more than ever, the Pantry needs donations. We are existing week to week financially and cannot afford to obtain many of the essential items our clientele need. Please continue to promote the Pantry to your congregations over the summer. Some suggestions: ask each parishioner to donate a bundle of diapers whenever your church is scheduled for volunteer rotation, collect extra personal care products from vacation stays, etc.

Essentials Pantry Clientele by Region

Africa	60
Central/South American & the Caribbean	16
Europe/Eastern Europe (former Soviet Republic)	16
Middle East	41
North America	43
South Asia	1

St Nick's next date to staff the Essentials Pantry is Tuesday, August 24. The Sunday before (8/22) we will be counting and packaging items after the service.

Route 1 Sign Update

As of July 11th, we have raised a little over \$1,000 towards our goal of \$4,000. The sign was not part of the original building budget process and is required, by the Town of Scarborough, to be installed within a short period of time. Please consider making a donation towards the St. Nicholas Route 1 sign. Feel free to contact Vicki LaQuerre at 934-4160 if you need additional information.

Dear People of St. Nicholas',

I wish to thank you for the hospitality, support and affirmation you have shown me throughout the past several years we have journeyed together. It was an honor and a privilege to celebrate my ordination to the Transitional Diaconate at St. Nicholas on the same day we consecrated our new church building. Thank you for allowing me to share that special day with you. Both your generous contribution to my Discretionary Fund and ordination gift of a priest stole are deeply appreciated. To those who worked tirelessly to make the afternoon of June 13th so wonderfully festive, please accept my sincerest thanks.

I am pleased to share with you that I have accepted a call to be Assistant Rector at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Mariposa in the Diocese of Los Angeles. (Check us out on the web at www.stmarys-la.com) St. Mary's is a historically Japanese-American congregation, located in the predominantly Latino neighborhood of Koreatown in the City of Los Angeles. One of my primary duties at St. Mary's will be to strengthen the ties between the church and local Latino community. I will leave Maine at the end of July to begin work in Los Angeles at the end of August. This December, Bishop Knudsen will ordain me--God-willing--to the Priesthood in my new congregation. (Bishops Committee beware--a final round of paperwork is soon coming your way!) Please keep me in your prayers as I navigate the many "firsts" of ordained ministry during the coming months.

I look forward to periodic visits to St. Nicholas during my homecoming trips to see family and friends in Maine. (In the interim, do let me hear from you--nsjanelle@hotmail.com). The future of St. Nick's is bright and Spirit-filled; I will delight in hearing reports of its unfolding!

Thank you again for a wonderful six years. It has been both a joy and a privilege to be among you.

My love to you in Christ,

+Nicole Janelle

Diocesan Youth Trip to the Dominican Republic

Late June of 2005 will find several teens from around the state, in the Episcopal diocese, traveling to the Dominican Republic for a youth mission trip. This idea has been alive in the diocese for years, although no international travel has taken place since a group traveled to Juarez, Mexico approx. five years ago. Eleven high schoolers and 4 adults will comprise the group, among them Rory and Nancy Nickerson. The 'mission' of the mission trip is to share with Dominican youth, to learn about another culture----one much less privileged than ours----and to leave something tangible behind. We will stay at a retreat center, and spend mornings helping with a project (likely building, maintaining, or repairing structures) and afternoons holding a vacation bible school of sorts - reading, crafts, discussion, play, etc.

Funds need to be raised to support this project. Each teen is expected to approach his/her respective church with information about the trip and requests for support, financial and otherwise. You will consequently be hearing much more about this trip. Perhaps we will be selling cups of hot chocolate, specially prepared with cocoa from the Dominican Republic, at Christkindlsmarkt! Stay tuned . . .

What Is the Worship Committee?

The Worship Committee meets on the fourth Sunday of every month. Our general goals are to plan our Sunday services and special celebrations. We also discuss how our current services are going, and how we can improve, modify and try new things within our celebration of Holy Eucharist.

At our recent June 27 meeting, we talked about the issues of Sunday service length, music choices, plans for David's vacation, and upcoming September events.

We have heard some people within St. Nicholas saying that our service is too long. The committee recommended that we be sure to start the service on time. We'll try having David and Jeffrey come into the sanctuary before 9:00, to allow time for a short span of silence and the organ prelude. The actual speaking part of the service will start promptly at 9:00am. At some times during some services, we may sing fewer verses of certain hymns, or only one verse.

Marcia Kapinos volunteered to make a sign that we can post on our front door to let passers-by know what time our services are, how to contact us by phone or email, that we have nursery care available, and Sunday School during the school year.

People at St. Nick's love music, and see it as an important part of our services. The Worship Committee has asked Terry, together with David, to help us with some "adventurous" musical styles within our service. We look forward to trying some spirituals, camp songs, popular music and other genres.

We also decided to use the contemporary version of the Lord's Prayer, at least through the summer.

Upcoming items of interest in September include our Labor Day weekend beach baptism on September 5, the beginning of Sunday School on September 12, and the baptism of Jake Frame on September 19. Our next meetings are July 25 and August 22, directly after church. All are welcome to attend.

Members of the Worship Committee are Bill Baxter, Cathy Bennett, Jack Buckley, Don Clark, Jeffrey Ferguson, Terry Foster, Marcia Kapinos, and David Matson. Please speak with any of us if you have ideas about our worship time together.

Cathy Bennett

Warden's Notes

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone is enjoying some time this summer to rest, relax, and re-create.

Meanwhile, things continue to perk along at St. Nicholas. The Education Wing is underway, marked by a big hole and a lot of orange fencing. David has provided well for us in arranging guest preachers and celebrants for his three weeks of vacation. And in the relative peace of summer, quite a few things are coming off the back burner and being accomplished.

After talking about the need for months, we have the beginnings of two new committees at St. Nicholas. Each has met once or twice, and each has begun defining and working on its areas of focus.

(Continued on next page)

The Newcomers Committee is focused on helping newcomers and new members feel welcomed, informed, and invited to participate in all the aspects of our church life. On July 11, we hosted our first Newcomers Brunch. Everyone who has started coming to St. Nick's since the new building opened was invited to enjoy a delicious brunch, chat with members of the Bishop's Committee, and learn more about what St. Nick's offers and how we operate. Afterwards we watched short videos of St. Nick's first ten years and the demise of the Tub Shop. A new member information packet now exists, and a new video is in the works.

We hope to host similar events three or four times a year, and we would love to have a few more people join us to help plan them. Other newcomer connections already in place include notes from David and from a BC member on behalf of the congregation, and cookie deliveries. Newcomers are invited and encouraged to meet with David. David, being a newcomer himself, invites all of us to schedule time to meet with him.

The Growth and Development Committee would also be delighted to have some new members join up. This committee focuses on healthy growth and financial planning. That's a broad purview. We started by assembling a packet for visitors that includes a brochure about St. Nicholas and a newsletter. The brochure is nearly finished. We also put together a packet for newcomers, including lists of activities and contact people, a calendar of church events, a volunteer form, a pledge card, and a new church directory, hot off the press. This packet was distributed at the brunch and will be mailed to newcomers who could not attend. The new directory will soon be available for everyone.

A new Building Use Policy is nearly done. One of St. Nick's goals for the new building is to provide a beautiful, flexible public meeting space. This policy will help us process requests to use the building for different purposes, including non-profit, for profit, and member requests.

Many will be glad to hear the St. Nicholas Columbus Day Golf Tournament is returning this year. Look for more information in the newsletter and weekly bulletins. A sign-up board will soon appear at church. All sorts of help is needed for this fun event, which this year will raise money for our church sign and for Scarborough's Project Grace.

The Growth and Development Committee will now turn its attention to our annual stewardship appeal, which begins in September. We will also be talking about the 2005 budget and how to balance it. Again, we would really appreciate having more people join this committee.

Typically, St. Nick's committees meet once a month, at the members' convenience. Please do not feel you have to be a longtime member to serve on a committee! St. Nick's *needs* fresh energy and new perspectives! I can just about guarantee the experience will be interesting and rewarding. To sign on or to find out more, contact David at the church or call me at 934-1413.

It hasn't been all committee work this summer. Preacher's Aid, a weekly gathering to discuss the upcoming Sunday's lessons, resumed and is currently being held Tuesday evenings at 7 at the Adams' house on Black Point Road. Everyone is invited to join in, or drop in on, this informal discussion group. It's a fun way to spend an evening getting to know your St. Nick's neighbors better.

Peace and prayers,

Cynthia

Deacon's Musings

While sorting through the huge and untidy pile of magazines and papers on the hide-a-bed that must be used in 2 weeks, I came across a packet of information from 'Living the Covenant', a conference on baptismal ministry that I attended in 1999. (I really have seen and used the bed since then!) Although that is 5 years ago, the material is still fresh and nudges me, once again, to write about the Baptismal Covenant.*

In September we will hold our annual baptism on the beach and perhaps one before then. What does this sacrament mean to you? Why does it seem so special on the beach? What is a covenant? Baptism is, of course, one of the two sacraments initiated by Jesus. The other is Holy Eucharist or Communion.

One of God's first covenants was with Noah when God promised, "Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all living creatures. The bow (rainbow) shall be in the cloud; when I see it, it will remind me of the everlasting covenant between God and the living things on earth of every kind." God said to Noah, 'This is the covenant which I make between myself and all that lives on earth.'" With the covenant of baptism it is we who are making the covenant with God. Sometimes, we may take these promises rather lightly.

Do you really and truly try, in your daily places, to seek and serve Christ in all persons? How about the rude person in the check-out line or the driver who cuts you off by not observing the 'Yield' sign? I admit to a very explosive 'Good God, lady!' as the driver whizzed into my lane instead of following the ramp more slowly. I know I wasn't blessing her! How about the grumpy waitperson? A friend, dining with his 12-year-old daughter in a fancy San Francisco hotel, had a most unpleasant waiter. Nancy finally looked up at him and asked, 'Are you having a bad day?' With that the floodgates opened as he not only released some anger and frustration, but also said to her, 'You are the first person today to look at me as a human being.'

Rather than going through our promises* step by step, I urge you to read them carefully to see how you measure up and to think of ways to meet those questions that we answer, 'We will, with God's help'. If you find yourself sort of impatient during the silence at the beginning of our service this could be a way to make use of it.

For me the baptism on the beach is a reminder of Jesus' baptism that we read about in all four Gospels. An Atlantic beach may not look like the river Jordan, but the moving water must be somewhat like the motion of that river. There's something about water in a basin or font that seems rather sterile now that I have experienced participating in the plunge into the ocean. Also, the water is blessed before the baptism. Isn't that a wonderful thought for all those swimming in it on that tide? And as the tide recedes is not the blessing carried to other parts of the world?

*page 304-305 BCP

Jeffrey Ferguson

Help is still needed to organize the many different aspects of Christkindlsmarkt, an outdoor evening Christmas market, which will happen December 11th at St Nicholas Church. See Paula Atkinson or Darcie Libby for more details or sign up at church. A meeting of all chairpeople will be scheduled in September.

The Sandpiper thanks:

Barbara Martin for coordinating the Newcomers Brunch and Pat Beidleman for mailing the invitations

The Building Use Policy researchers and writers: Greg Kapinos, Don Martin, Vicki LaQuerre, Jeffrey Ferguson and David Matson

Vicki LaQuerre for designing the St. Nick's brochure, available soon by the front door

Speaking of gardens, thank you to the Kapinos family and the Girl Scouts for planting butterfly gardens outside the windows flanking the altar. Thank you also to parishioners who started a nursery there for young trees from the Arbor Day Foundation.

Anna Livingstone for assuming the care of our indoor plants. Several people volunteered for this task, so there may be hope for a front garden in the future!

Thank you to Katy Gannon, Tom Gagnon, Vicki LaQuerre, Pat Beidleman, and the craftsman from Eider Construction who made the nursery such a special, welcoming place for our little ones

We did it! We have raised the \$850 needed to pay for our weathervane. After eight months and at least a mile of pennies and assorted coins we have reached our goal. Thank you!

Joan Seidel for the pictures of the June 13 service included in this *Sandpiper*.

FROM INSIDE PRISON WALLS

My Brethren in Christ,

Hello and greetings from Pulaski Correctional Unit in Dublin, Virginia! I pray that all of you are well and that God is blessing you daily. Let me introduce myself; my name is Paul Aliff, and yes, I am an inmate in prison, but by the grace of God He has called upon me to do His ministry, and has blessed me each day throughout my ordeal. To know me, who I am, and how I got here would take some time to write, as my many adventures through life have brought me to where I am today, both as a prisoner of man, but also free in God's love.

I was born and raised in a very Christian family in Roanoke, Virginia; baptized at age 12, member of our youth group at Belmont Christian Church, a Junior Deacon, Bell Choir member, and was very athletic in high school. Indeed as I look back, those were "the good old days."

In 1974, my life took a complete and totally new direction through alcohol, drugs, broken marriages, and even natural disasters. But as I look back today at my life, I realize that all of that was in preparation through experience for God's purpose for me in life.

Many of my experiences are sad, some are funny, and some even unbelievable, but true. In the next months I wish to share in "The Sandpiper" with you these experiences and tell you how they have related to the man that I've become as a servant of God.

It is my hope that you will find through what I write to be beneficial to you and your children. This too is a new adventure for me, but bear with me and together we can learn. God has delivered me and I know that he will you also, no matter what your prison is. Indeed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." See ya next month!

Paul

It's easy to Get Involved!

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

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04070-0342

Sunday Service &
Church School
9:00 a.m.

Priest-in-Charge
Rev. David Matson

Office Phone:
(207) 883-9437

Deacon
Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson
(207) 282-3514
misjef@gwi.net

Warden
Cynthia Nye
(207) 934-1413

www.stnicholas-me.org

The Bishop's Committee will meet Monday, August 2nd, 6:30PM, at church.

Adults & Teens are needed throughout the summer months to Staff our Nursery during Sunday service. Please sign up in the meeting room during coffee hour or contact Vicki LaQuerre at 934-4160 for more information.

Preacher's Aid meets on Tuesdays at 7PM at Josiah and Patty Adams' house – 309 Black Point Rd, #66. This is an opportunity to share insights into the readings for the coming Sunday. All are welcome!

Stay after the service on August 22nd to help package items for the Essentials Pantry (see the article on page 2!)

St Nicholas Church staffs the Preble St Resource Center Soup Kitchen on August 29th (We need Cooks @ 10AM, Servers @ 11:30, Cleaners @ 12:45).

Mark your calendars for the return of the St Nicholas Golf Tournament this Columbus Day at Nonesuch Golf Course. The fundraising effort is primarily on behalf of the Building Fund, though we will also give 10% of the proceeds to Project Grace. We will be looking for golfers, sponsors and volunteers. See the sign-up sheet at the church.

Read the Warden's notes about new committees and contact the Warden or the committee chair for more information!

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