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Late October Newsletter
Submission:

I wanted to thank Bishop Craig for graciously blessing my pumpkin at the October 30th 8:00 AM service. It was Mr. Olantern, myself, and the collection plate at the rail. I thought it was the least I could do for Jack before I sacrificed him on a table covered with newspaper and littered with pumpkin guts. Later it was suggested I get a life.

This was not so much about the pumpkin as it is about respecting the planet we live on. Do we ever wonder about where all the stuff we consume or discard comes from? In this world of instant communication and social media do we ever stop to marvel at nature's creations and God's miracles? In this time of reflecting on stewardship do we think about who were stewards before us and who will they be after us? I never used to, but I try to do so now.

Again, thanks to Craig for being such a good sport and long live the Great Pumpkin. - Dick Burghardt

RECTOR'S RUMINATIONS FOR
DECEMBER 2011

THE FIRST 'E' OF "S.E.E." – ENVIRONMENT

In my November Rector's Ruminations, I invited your attention to a vision I S.E.E. (Stewardship, Environment, Evangelization) for Emmanuel Parish. In reflecting on the "S" of S.E.E., Stewardship I noted that being a steward involves everything we do after we say "I believe" in how we spend our time, talent and treasure.

As we begin Advent and approach the season of the Incarnation, Christmastide, I invite you to a consideration of the first "E" of S.E.E., the Environment, and closely associated with it, other "E" terms, EARTH, ECOLOGY, and to take some linguistic liberty, ENCARNATION as a variation on the Latinized *incarnatus* (in+caro – "flesh") to a Greek rendering Encarnation. My purpose in this rendering is to posit the Environment, the Earth, as the "Enfleshment" of God. Fear not – I am not suggesting some form of pantheism (the worship of the Earth as God or Goddess) but rather a pan(en)theism (God in the earth) fundamental to all the Abrahamic faiths including and especially Christianity where God indwells all of creation as evident in the second Genesis account of creation where God is incarnate/encarnate in the environment of the cosmos to include the Earth. While we do not worship the Earth (pantheism), we are called as stewards to revere and respect the earth (panentheism) by caring for God's presence and holiness in all creation.

The earth or environment as the incarnation or enfleshment of God is difficult for us to grasp given the fact that in an Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment age we tend to think of and treat the earth as an object rather than a subject.

Stewarding the Earth, however, calls us to see the earth not as an object to be exploited, divided, sold, conquered or used as a possession but rather to understand it as a living organism to be cared for and nurtured as our oikos – home, dwelling place, habitation; etymologically the root of the word "Ecology."

Said differently, the concept of the Earth as Gaia, our mother personified as a living entity, helps us to retrieve our relationship to our environment as a subject to another subject, recognizing a mode of interdependence, not a subject to object independence. The Earth, humus, is the basis of our hum(us)anity as clearly articulated in the first Genesis creation account where the creation of humanity follows the creation of the earth and in the second creation account which emphasizes, "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Gen. 2:7). We remember our humus origin in The Burial Rite and on Ash Wednesday - "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." But we forget this essential fact in the way we move from the "wonder to the plunder" of our environment, our habitation, our mother. The earth is our fellow creature and existed prior to the evolution of humankind as the species homo sapien. We do not possess the earth; it possesses us and "harming the Earth heaps contempt on the Creator" as stated by Chief Seattle in his address to President Pierce in 1854. Or in the poetic words of Ecclesiastes 1:4, "A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever."

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December Birthdays

1	Dick Thompson
4	Karin Fuhring
5	John Inch
5	Caroline Scott
10	Mimi Anderson
14	Robert Tucker
16	Patty Thompson
19	Don Pritchett
26	Cecilia Schwanke
30	Susan Adkins

December Anniversaries

15	Dick & Deborah Hansen
29	Doug & Judy Schliebus

Prayer List:

John, John Michael, Melia & Chris, John Fox, Kyle Palmer, Carol Tully, Louise Tucker, Jennifer Wong, Sharon Heller, Jean Blease, Jenny Peters, Ron Johnson, Nora Dietlein, Ruth Bergsman, Anna Kathryn & Molly, Barbara Padget, Dawn Lease, Kate, William Henry Brown, Marilyn Storey, Peter Rutledge, Ross, Marsha Cowles, Dick Zornes, Joe Goodrich, John Russell, Judy Phillips, Kaye Mattson, Bo & Heather Smith, Michael Plautz, Dana Blake, Robb Lucas, Margaret, Loren Dickey, Rachel Adams, David Moffett.

Continued from page 1

Unfortunately much of contemporary spirituality suggests that the spirit of God transcends the material, matter or *mater* earth. Encarnation as a corrective points to our spirituality as grounded in the land, the earth, our mother, which gives life and nurture to all living things. If the earth dies, we shall all die, whether this is a part of our spirituality or not. We have lost our love, our reverence for the earth and nature and are in danger of being “so spiritually minded that we are of no earthly use.”

Theologically, Sallie McFague in her book, Models of God, suggests the metaphor of the earth as God’s body, or what I have termed “encarnation.” She states that the earth is not an inanimate substance but a living being throbbing with energy, and manifesting continuity with spirit. Such a metaphor of the world as God’s body also creates a different understanding of sin. Sin becomes the refusal to realize one’s radical interdependence with all that lives: sin is the desire to set oneself apart from all others as not needing them or being needed by them. Sin is the refusal to be the eyes, the consciousness of the cosmos.

All of which leads us back to the question of stewardship. How are we to steward the earth, our environment, our ecology, our home place as co-creators with god, our special vocation as Stewards of the Earth?

First, in prayer and gratitude as we do today in The Eucharist, thanksgiving for the gift of creation, simple bread and wine as well as our monetary gifts. Second, to further embrace and deepen our commitment as a Genesis Covenant Parish in preserving and bettering this island home through individual and community efforts. Third, in teaching and practicing “A Catechism of Creation, An Episcopal Understanding” to all members of the Church and especially our children. Fourth, and finally through our parish outreach program and individual efforts in giving of our time, talent and money to support organizations committed to stewarding this earth, “our fragile island home.”

I close with a line from “The Cloud” by Percy Bysshe Shelley,
 I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
 And the nursling of the Sky;
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores,
 I change, but I cannot die.

+Craig

RETIREMENT PARTY PLANNED FOR NOEL

Noel is retiring from Emmanuel Episcopal Parish on December 30, 2011, after 22 years of faithful service as Church Secretary/Parish Administrator. A grand evening of good food, fond remembrances and presentations is planned for Sunday, January 8, 2012 beginning at 5 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Dinner will be provided – honey-baked ham, scalloped potatoes, green salad, homemade pie, and assorted beverages, including Noel’s favorite, Foster’s Beer. We welcome participation if anyone has a fond remembrance of Noel and Pat.

Everyone is welcome. Please sign up in the Parish Hall. For further information, please call Karen at 376-6579.

JOYFUL NOISE! REFLECTIONS FROM THE SR. WARDEN

With the First Sunday in Advent we begin a new Church Year. Through the first half of the Year we re-enact our foundational story - the life of Jesus. In the time after Pentecost, we focus on the parables, the healings, the miracles which occurred throughout his ministry. In doing this we begin to recognize our own story within THE story. But there is more. The seasons are punctuated by memorial days that celebrate the saints and martyrs of the church – people who have lived extraordinarily holy lives and who thus serve as models for us.

So the Church Year is about remembering. And it becomes alive for us as we share the memories with others. We do this in our worship. In this season of the incarnation it is a “right and joyful thing” to recall that the liturgy is incarnational – that it involves both our bodily and sensory perceptions. Each season has its own set of traditions, sights, smells, and sounds that reflect the meaning of the time we are celebrating and that help us to align our lives with our true center.

It is also about how we prioritize our time. Following Jesus is counter-cultural. We are called to resist the excesses of our culture and to live by the plumb line of the gospel stories where Jesus took time to pray, to eat with friends, or to give time to one needy person. Our theme this Advent, “**in the fullness of time**”, suggests that there are right moments when things happen – it is up to us to structure our lives so that we recognize these moments. One of the paradoxes of life is that much of its meaning happens *in-between* the things which we have carefully planned. So we must be careful not to plan so much, to fill our lives so full, that we cannot engage the *in betweens*.

I want the in-betweens. I would like my life to be a series of pauses. I want to do less and be more. I want to give myself permission not to feel guilty about what I don't do, and to know that I am releasing myself into God's presence in that stroll down the beach, or the early morning quiet before the rest of the family is awake. I want relationships with people, not the computer. I want to keep up with and be available to a few really good friends, rather than trying frantically to be in touch with everyone I have ever known. I want time to read a lot of books.....I want time to think.....

One of the ways Emmanuel will honor the church's focus on time in the coming year is to celebrate liturgically more of the major feast days in our calendar. This will add more purposeful opportunities for remembering and for pausing. Some of these occasions may be small and quiet, some may be a party. All will be announced in the bulletin. So read the announcements, attend if possible, and know that Emmanuel aligns itself with the calendar as given in the Prayer Book, and with the larger church in its commitment to observe all time as holy.

Catherine Clemens

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

“Thank you for your prayers and caring during this journey.”

- Kaye and Dale Mattson

2011-2012 VESTRY MEMBERS

CATHY CLEMENS
KATE HANSEN
SCOTT HEISINGER
SCOTT JONES
BETH JURGENSEN
DARLEEN KENT
HARLAN PEDERSEN
JOHN PRINCE
JAN REID
JAN TITUS
KELLY TOOMBS
LINDA WATTS

PARISH ADMINISTRATORS:

KAREN BLINN
NOEL JEFFREY

FAMILY & INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY:

CHERYL HUNNICUTT DANSKIN

ORGANIST & CHOIR DIRECTOR

MARIANNE LEWIS

RECTOR:

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NEWSLETTER ITEMS

It's a community effort! **Please submit your newsletter contributions in a Word .doc file to Karen Blinn at: parishoffice@orcasepiscopal.org.** (Since you would type it anyway, submitting electronically saves the office staff from needing to retype – Thanks!)

Your photos of Parish Events are appreciated! Photos are gratefully accepted and may be submitted electronically to Karen B. as well, preferably in **.JPG file formats.**

Please note that **the deadline for submissions to Emmanuel's Newsletter is 12 Noon on the 25th of every month.**

**IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME...
Advent/Christmas Worship**

Advent 1 – Nov 27

8:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Holy Eucharist
5:00 All-parish Supper with Compline

Advent 2 – Dec 4

10:00 Holy Eucharist – Combined Service
5:00 Evening Prayer with music

Advent 3 – Dec 11

8:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Holy Eucharist
5:00 Taizé Evening Prayer

Advent 4 – Dec 18

8:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Holy Eucharist
5:00 Lessons and Carols, reception following

Christmas Eve – Dec 24

3:00- 8:00 "Journey to the Nativity" Indoor Labyrinth Walk
5:00 Holy Eucharist – Family Service
8:00 Holy Eucharist with choir, guest soloist and bells

Christmas – Dec 25

10:00 Holy Eucharist