

The Elizabethan



The Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church Burien, Washington

September 2015

Issue 2015-9

From Fr. John: In *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*, a most informative and inspirational book for anyone taking the spiritual journey seriously, Henri Nouwen talks about the movements of the heart as we mature spiritually. The second movement—from “hostility to hospitality”—is an excellent expression of the loving hospitality that St. Benedict asks of his monks and nuns, and so by extension, to all Episcopalians. Nouwen called listening one of the highest forms of hospitality and encourages us to create space for strangers in our lives by opening our hearts to those we meet.

Listening, Nouwen claimed, is an art that must be developed because it requires the full and real presence of people to each other. This definition of hospitality harmonizes with Benedict’s direction in the 53rd chapter of the Rule, encouraging the brothers and sisters of the monastery to receive the arriving guest as Christ—to literally serve this person as if he or she were Christ.

A story from St. Gregory’s *Dialogues* on St. Benedict’s life sheds light on this loving injunction. While still a young hermit in Subiaco, Benedict had been living in a cave for three years. He had been spending this time in holy silence and God-filled solitude, when he was visited by a priest sent by God who wished Benedict to have company for the holy feast of Easter. Gregory’s story says that Benedict was so deep in prayer and consequently so out of touch with the mundane that he had no idea that it was Easter—a circumstance, by the way, that not all modern monastics find fully admirable! The germane lesson for us is in Benedict’s exuberant reply to the priest’s greeting: “Easter it is indeed since I have the joy of seeing you.”

In commenting on this story, Esther de Waal wrote in *A Life-Giving Way*: “In the face of the first person that he sees, Benedict finds the first fruits of the resurrection and of the new world to which he is called.” Following the example of St. Benedict and heeding his instruction, each Episcopalian aspiring to live out our Benedictine roots can seek to live such a grace-filled theology: to meet the Risen Christ in all the people we encounter. And these encounters can be doubly graced: as we bring Christ to the guest, and simultaneously, as we receive Christ in the other. Christ is the center of every encounter. To look beyond our human differences and to see Christ primarily, is a crucial element of the Benedictine vow of *conversatio*, or monastic transformation.

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7th Annual Highline Classic Burien Jazz Festival

I am excited to tell you that, if everything goes according to our early conversations, we will be hosting part of the 7th Annual Highline Classic Burien Jazz Festival on September 19th, 2015.

The event is a “jazz walk” hosted by several businesses along 152nd from 6th to 10th, ending at St Elizabeth, where there will be dance bands playing in the Parish Hall from about 4:00 in the afternoon to about 9:30 in the evening.

We are scheduled to be showcasing Casey McGill's High Five, a swing band; the Uptown Lowdown Jazz Band, a Dixieland band; the hot jazz group, Holotradsband; and Zydeco Rex, for the swamp-and-gator crowd. There will be room for dancing too.

This will be excellent exposure for St. Elizabeth and allows us to be good neighbors and gracious hosts to the community. We may both see some new people in church because of this event!

QUESTIONS KIDS ASK ABOUT GOD

SEPTEMBER 2015

Q: What do angels really look like?

A: The word angel means “messenger”. Angels are God’s messengers. They can also be God’s warriors. In the Bible we read about people who saw angels. Sometimes the people knew they were angels, and sometimes they didn’t. Some angels described in the Bible have wings. Those angels are called cherubim. But most of the angels in the Bible stories looked like regular people. We don’t know what angels look like in heaven.

KEY VERSE: I, John, am the one who saw and heard all these things. And when I saw and heard these things, I fell down to worship the angel who showed them to me. But again he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who obey all that is written in this scroll. Worship God!” (Revelation 22:8-9)

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We, too, are called to receive Christ in all guests. Terrence Kardong, a monk of Assumption Abbey and the editor of *The American Benedictine Review*, says that the word “all” is crucial to Benedict’s instruction and that Benedict is really extending the internal values of his monastery to the outside world. In Benedict’s communities, there are no second-class citizens. In the Rule’s second chapter, Benedict says that the Abbott is to avoid all favoritism: all are called for counsel, all elect the Abbott, all have their goods in common, all are at peace. As Fr. Kardong concludes: “Benedict extends this egalitarianism to the rest of the world. All guests are to be shown the honor due to Christ.”

Our human tendency is to make distinctions in our treatment of others, to have favorites or to respect the rich and powerful in talent or money. But St. Benedict wants all guests received as Christ. He makes only one distinction: “special care and thoughtfulness should be shown in the reception of the poor and of pilgrims.” Here we find what some consider to be the center of the Benedictine spirituality at the heart of the Anglican way of being Christian in the world: to look upon the arriving guest with the eyes of faith. If the kingdom of God is truly for the spiritually poor of this world, then the poor and those seeking God are to be shown special care.

Fr. Noel Mueller, the guest master of St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indianapolis, says that he has had to pray often that God’s grace would fill his heart as he met the many guests that arrived at the abbey. “Truly,” he writes, “I realized that I needed the Spirit’s power to receive Christ in all guests who came here for such diverse reasons. I beseeched the Lord to transform my human hostility into divine hospitality. That is why the key to this blessed, Christ-centered Chapter 53 of the Rule of St. Benedict is prayer! Benedict exhorts his monks to pray about the encounter with the guest. If they do so, then truly Christ will be received. May each of us receive the Risen Christ in all who come into our lives!”

Living this prayer becomes actions of the full and real presence of people of people to each other—Nouwen’s highest form of hospitality. For the ancient Jews, and our early church fathers and mothers living in the deserts of the Middle East, hospitality was literally a survival mechanism: they opened their tents to strangers because there was no telling when they themselves might need such help. The scriptures are full of their examples: Abraham and Sarah, the Samaritan and Lot are just a few. Through our prayers, listening and actions, we can bring Christ-centered hospitality into our own lives and the lives of those we encounter. Sr. Joan Chittister calls this opening of our homes, hearts and minds “an act of the recklessly generous heart.” By widening our hearts and with God’s grace, we can transform ourselves and learn to welcome the stranger, the poor, the pilgrim, the guest in the spirit of Benedict’s response to his God-sent guest, the priest: “Easter it is indeed since I have the joy of seeing you.”

Tidbits at St. Elizabeth

- ⇒ John & Sandy Stonhouse have moved and also have a new phone number. If you would like this information please call Christine in the office or ask John or Sandy.
- ⇒ We will be putting the "Gardening envelopes" in the pews on the third Sunday of each month.
- ⇒ We have been given a newer dishwasher for the Zechariah room kitchen by Patti McGowan and Bob Knutson installed it. If anyone would like the old one it is available free of charge. Please contact Christine in the office to make arrangements for pick up.

Hospitality House News

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Do you have old jewelry you no longer want to keep dusting!

How about odds and ends of cuff links, earrings, pins with missing pieces etc? If you want to clean out your jewelry box and do a good deed too, then please drop off your "jewels" at Burien Art Gallery, 826 152nd St. or at St. Elizabeth's, and a group of jewelers will remake them into new and beautiful pieces for the women of Hospitality House ,and other shelters.

The recipients of the new jewelry are free to do with it as they choose, wear it for an emotional boost on a job interview, give it as a gift, or sell it to benefit the shelter. Thank you for your consideration .

The Elizabethan

The Elizabethan is published monthly by St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church. The deadline for articles is the fourth Friday of each month.

Articles, calendar items and ideas may be mailed or emailed to the addresses below or left in *The Elizabethan* box in the Parish Office.

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Events around Burien

- ◆ September 12th 10am to 3pm

Kids Day at the Burien Fire Station / 8th SW & SW 151st

- ◆ September 12th 5pm to 10pm

Arts-A-Glow Lantern Festival at Dottie Harper Park, 421 SW 146th

- ◆ September 18th 5pm to 7pm

Taste of Tuscany at Burien Community Center, annual Spaghetti feed Senior fundraiser

- ◆ September 19th 10am to 3pm

Burien Wellness Fair at Burien Town Square Park

- ◆ October 2nd 6pm to 8pm

Seahurst Beach Family Campfire

- ◆ October 4th Noon to 2pm

Burien Brat Trot in Olde Burien

- ◆ October 24th 10am to 3pm

Boo in Burien in Downtown Burien on 152nd Street, Safe treats for children

Have you seen the new shuttle buses around Burien? Route 631 replaces the Route 139 and is meant to link Highline Medical Center, Gregory Heights and Seahurst neighborhoods, downtown Burien and the Transit center. For more information call Metro Rider information at 206-553-3000.

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St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Save the Date:

St. Elizabeth is having another Town Hall meeting on ***September 13th*** after the 10am service. This year we will combine it with our annual Parish picnic. Please come and join us for fun, food and fellowship!!

We are having the picnic in our front entrance driveway. Our way of showing the neighborhood that St. Elizabeth is alive and well.

There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board for you to sign up to bring your favorite picnic side dish. The church will provide hot dogs and hamburgers.

If you would like to help with either the set-up or clean-up, please contact one of the vestry members or Fr. John.