

The Epistle *E-news*

GRACE CHURCH

in New York City



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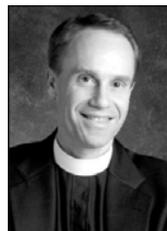
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Sunday, May 5, 2013

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

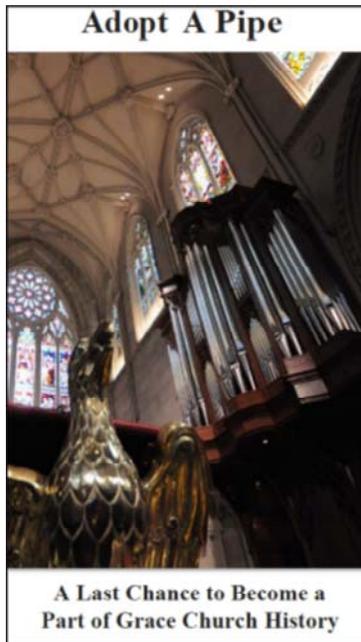


Dear Friends,

I was intrigued by an [article](#) in *The New York Times* this past Tuesday about the philosopher Daniel Dennett. Dennett is the co-director for the Center of Cognitive Studies at Tufts University, and is well-

known for his books on the study of consciousness. What is the mind? Is it distinct from the brain, or merely a product of it? What makes us aware? Dennett's conclusions are starkly materialistic. The mind, the soul, the self, God, the unique way that we each perceive life, anything that might be counted as part of the spiritual realm - these are merely illusions that have no reality of their own. They are nothing more than images that the brain generates and flashes before us.

Dennett is also well known for his atheist activism. A recent undertaking of his is the study of clergy who have lost their faith, something he calls The Clergy Project. "There is simply no polite way to tell people they have dedicated their lives to an illusion," he says. In case you are wondering, I would not qualify to participate in Mr. Dennett's study! Often I have read the books in the genre he writes, and I may indeed read his latest. Invariably, I find that the faith that the new atheists debunk is not my faith, but a straw man



Just in time for the glorious planned Exhibition on September 21st - the event that will serve as **the capstone of our new organ's installation - the names of Adopt a Pipe donors will be inscribed** on special plaques affixed to the organ case.

Only a few weeks remain to honor or memorialize a loved one through our [Adopt A Pipe program](#).

[Click here today!](#)

to choose from popular giving levels like Donor (\$500), Friend (\$250), and Contributor (\$100).

Pipes are available at every level, but in order for your name to be

caricature of religion that is easily propped up, and easily knocked over. At the end of the day, what is true is true, and no one's intensity of belief or disbelief alters whether or not God exists or doesn't. As for me, I find the Christian account of mind and consciousness a far better explanation for the way things are, a more useful tool for navigating the changes and chances of life, and a more compelling reason to try to make the world a better place.

At the end of the article, Dennett quips that if he had to do it all over again, he would still choose to be a philosopher over a scientist: "That way, he says, he can still think about all the cool theories and lab experiments without ever having 'to do the dishes.'" Hmm. I suspect that the next time it's my turn to take care of the stack of dirty dishes in the kitchen sink, claiming that they are an illusion will not suffice. Nor will debating who put them there. I am grateful to the community of Grace Church, because we not only think about these things in the world, we try to do something about them as well.

See you in church.

[The Rev. J. Donald Waring](#)

Rector

This Sunday, May 5, 2013

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: The Parish Choir

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: The Choir of Men and Boys

6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring

Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

THE SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM - "CONFIRMATION REFRESHER" PART 1 - THE INCARNATION AND THE TRINITY Central to the traditional faith of most

engraved on the plaque, you must respond by Sunday, June 16! Visit www.gracechurchnyc.org (click GIVE - ADOPT A PIPE) today!

ANNUAL SPRING BENEFIT



45 years ago, members of Grace Church and parents of Grace Church School created the [GO Project](#) as an educational outreach program for underperforming public school children. To celebrate the 45th anniversary, the GO Project is hosting a spring benefit on May 16th at 82Mercer. The event will feature an assortment of cocktails and tasting tables generously donated by local restaurants, as well as a silent and live auction.

All monies raised directly benefit GO Project students. Your support can help the GO Project increase the number of students served from 494 to 567.

For more information, please email Liz or click [HERE](#).

Christians, the New Testament theologies of the Incarnation and the Trinity will be the topics for discussion with The Rev. Sarah Wood. Our three-part series of "Confirmation Refreshers" allows the congregation to preview what the clergy will be teaching the Confirmation classes later in the day. The sessions will be excellent for "seekers" as well as those who have not reviewed the basics since their own Confirmations! (Join us on June 2nd and June 9th for Parts 2 and 3.) Held in Tuttle Hall; coffee is served.

CONFIRMATION CLASS FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS CONTINUES - Led by the clergy in preparation for the bishop's visit on Sunday June 16th. Both youth and adults will meet today in the Reception Room at 12:45 for a light lunch, and then break for their separate sessions.

COMING SOON

MAY 6 - OUTREACH MONDAY POTLUCK SUPPER - Please join us from 6:30-8 pm for prayer, a fellowship meal, and to find out about upcoming Outreach projects. Bring a dish or a beverage to share and a non-perishable item for our Grace Church food donation baskets. This month enter through the 802 door of the Parish House and proceed to the Church where we will begin with Evening Prayer for Mission followed by a meal in the Reception Room.

MAY 12 - EPISCOPAL CHARITIES SUNDAY - This day, to be observed across the diocese, provides a wonderful opportunity for parishioners to **join together to help those most in need**. Especially in these very difficult economic times, food pantries and soup kitchens are finding the number of hungry people they serve skyrocketing. 100% of each offering goes directly to support parish-based feeding programs in the diocese. EC donation envelopes will be inserted into your Sunday bulletins. Contact episcopalcharities@diocesenyc.org or 212-316-7575 for more information.

MAY 12 - THE SUNDAY FORUM 10 AM - IN TOLSTOY'S LIVING REALM New School professors Nicholas Birns and Sara Winter discuss *In Tolstoy's Living Realm*, Winter's new film on Leo Tolstoy, his love of the natural world and his deep Christian faith. Takes place in Tuttle Hall; coffee is served. **NEXT WEEK, MAY 19 - TOLSTOY'S ALYOSHA THE POT** Nicholas Birns

presents Tolstoy's masterful short story, *Alyosha the Pot*, and discusses how it reveals the author's views on Christianity and death.

MAY 14 - OPEN DOOR MINISTRY SPRING RECEPTION -

All current and prospective members are invited to attend the Spring Reception on Tuesday, May 14 from 7-9 pm in the Reception Room. Members of the group give their time (just 2 hours per month!) to answer questions and provide a friendly welcome to weekend visitors to Grace Church. No experience is necessary! Contact [Singleton Cox](#) with any questions.

MAY 18 - QUIET DAY WITH MARY MAGDALENE

Sponsored by the ECW and hosted by Artist and Spiritual Director, Heather Sisk, with Poet MacKerrow Talcott. The day will involve **meditating on sculpture and poetry dedicated to the life and witness of Mary Magdalene**. We'll draw away from the sensational aspects of her story and into deeper relationship with the Spirit. Periods of quiet will allow for prayer and or journaling. Please bring a journal and a lunch, and join us on Saturday May 18th from 10 am-3 pm in the Reception Room.

MAY 20 - FAMILY FAITH FORUM - Parents of school-aged children (2-16) are invited to participate in a monthly evening of conversation with their peers. Mark your calendars for Monday, May 20th at 7pm. Details to follow. Email [Melissa](#) for more information.

MAY 23 - NEWCOMER RECEPTION - All newcomers to Grace Church in the past year are invited to a wine and cheese reception on Thursday, May 23 from 6-8 pm in the Reception Room. **Come to meet other newcomers and members and to catch the spirit of Grace Church.** *To help us with planning, we ask you to [RSVP](#), including the number in your party, by Monday, May 20.*

MAY 30 - ECW PARISH WIDE MEETING - All women of Grace Church are invited: 6:30 pm in Tuttle Hall for a meeting and "No Pressure" Pot Luck (bring something savory or sweet to share if you can - no pressure!) Please try to attend this last meeting before the summer. On the agenda: "Women's work days" for June and July! Christmas Fair 2013 and much more!

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