

The Epistle *E-news*

GRACE CHURCH

in New York City



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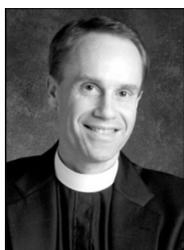
Educational Equity with GO!



Join the conversation...
The Sunday Forum at
10 am (Details at
right.)

May 18, 2014

The Fifth Sunday of Easter



Dear Friends,

Last Sunday I had a wonderful "loaves-and-fishes moment." Such an experience might be defined as the sudden, even surprising realization of God's generosity. Most of us tend to assume that life is more or less a closed system with only so many pieces of the pie to go around. If I give away any of my share, it's gone, and it won't be there for me if and when I need it later on. Your gain is simply my loss. Therefore, I need to be extremely guarded about what I give. But in the Gospel of John (6:1-14) we read about the little boy who gave his entire lunch to Jesus, even though five small barley loaves and two fish were a completely inadequate offering to feed five-thousand people. Nevertheless, Jesus took the boy's gift, blessed it, and multiplied it into a gift of abundance beyond anyone's imagining. The take-away - in addition to twelve baskets full of leftovers - was that the kingdom of God is not a closed system of scarcity, but rather an economy of plenty into which new resources come riding all the time, especially when we are willing to risk what we have. God takes our inadequate offerings, blesses them, and transforms them "out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life." (BCP, p. 368).

Anyway, back to last Sunday. You may recall that the Diocese was asking us to observe what we call Episcopal Charities Sunday. Episcopal Charities is the outreach arm of the diocese that funds parish based

FYI: The General Theological Seminary

...is now accepting registrations for courses to be offered in the Summer 2014 term and especially welcomes "General Learners" to become part of the seminary community. General Learners are students who are not pursuing a formal degree and who take courses to learn more about their faith, enhance their ministry or prayer, or delve into a theological topic. Visit www.gts.edu/.

feeding, tutoring, and mentoring programs, most of which are in poverty-stricken communities without the resources to meet the great and obvious needs before their eyes. The truth is, while I would hardly call the community surrounding Grace Church impoverished, our own GO Project receives a generous grant every year from Episcopal Charities. So in recognition of Episcopal Charities Sunday we placed envelopes in all the bulletins, and I mentioned it during the announcement time, appealing to everyone's generosity. I think it was a pretty soft sell, mainly because we have great need for keeping outreach dollars right here at 10th and Broadway. What's the point of sending money uptown to Episcopal Charities, only to have them send it back downtown to us? Why not just give it directly to the GO Project?

As the choir finished the Offertory anthem and the organ transitioned into the Doxology, the ushers brought the offering plates to me at the top of the sanctuary steps. As we finished singing, I offered them up to God and placed them on the altar. That's when I saw a handful of Episcopal Charities envelopes amidst the other gifts that people had made. And that's when I had my "loaves-and-fishes moment." You see, I've seen the figures from recent years, so I have a reasonable guess as to how much the Grace Church offering will be. It's about the same every year. Then it struck me: what Episcopal Charities sent back to us this year is **ten-times greater** than what we typically send to them. You read that correctly. The offering for Episcopal Charities that we carried up to the altar last Sunday comes back to our GO Project tenfold.

So there you have my "loaves-and-fishes moment." It is why we pray, in one of our Eucharistic prayers (BCP, p. 336), *And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee ...* If you missed Episcopal Charities Sunday, we'll have the envelopes in the pews again this week. Or, you can make a donation online by visiting their website at <http://episcopalcharities-newyork.org/>.

See you in church.

[The Reverend J. Donald Waring](#)
Rector

This Sunday, May 18th

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring
Music: The Parish Choir

11 a.m. Morning Prayer
Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring
Music: The Junior Choristers with Adults

6 p.m. Holy Eucharist, in the Chantry
Sermon: The Rev. J. Donald Waring
Music: Hymns with instrumentalists

(Service times are updated weekly
on the [website](#).)

PLEASE SUPPORT THE CHOIRS' ANNUAL JUNE RAFFLE to benefit the Choir Special Projects Fund! You can purchase a raffle ticket today at coffee hour after the 11 am service, or from any choir family or chorister. The raffle includes many amazing items such as fine wines, iPads and also child friendly items. This fund supports activities and opportunities for the choirs that are not covered by the annual budget including such projects as the 2012 tour to Prague, Vienna and Salzburg and helps us work towards our next tour to France in the summer of 2015. Tickets are \$5 and \$10. Winners will be selected on June 8th at the parish picnic. Thank you for all your prayers and support.

THE SUNDAY FORUM @10AM – CONVERSATION AROUND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY WITH [THE GO PROJECT](#) invites Grace Church parishioners to join us as we discuss the Grace Church–GO Project partnership and how, together, we work to level the educational playing field for under-resourced children in our community. Through media, articles, and conversation, we hope to spark an ongoing dialogue. Led by Olivia Nunez, Director of Community Engagement at the GO Project.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES for youth and adults resume this week. We begin in the Reception Room with a light lunch at 12:45 pm and then move to our classes.

MAY 18, JUNE 1 – NEWCOMER CLASS CONTINUES. The next of a three-part session meets on these Sundays with the Rector from 12:45 – 1:45 pm. Come to learn more about Christianity, the Episcopal Church, and Grace Church. You may join at any time. A light lunch is served in the Reception Room, and then we'll move to the Music Room for the class.

JOIN THE ECW IN OUTREACH TO *WOMEN* AT THE NYC RESCUE MISSION, which now provides emergency shelter to women after 142 years of serving only men. The ECW would like to welcome them with bags containing (TRAVEL SIZE): Deodorant, Shampoo, Conditioner, Body lotion, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Dental floss, Bar soap, Washcloth. You may also make a monetary donation to supply the above. (Checks payable to Grace Church.) ECW will have a donation table after the 11 am and 6 pm services on Sundays, May 11, 18 and 25. Also JOIN US to assemble bags on SUNDAY, JUNE 1 after the 11 am service! Contact Elana at elanafoundos@gmail.com with questions. Info and a video here: <http://nycrescue.org/womens-shelter/>

COMING SOON

MAY 20 – OPEN DOOR MINISTRY: SEEKING VOLUNTEERS! *Thirteen thousand* visitors crossed our Church threshold on Saturday and Sunday afternoons in 2013! The Open Door ministry seeks to provide a welcoming presence for them all. Please consider volunteering just 2 hours a month to support this worthy mission – and for fellowship and fun as well! To find out more, come join the Open Door volunteers at our next meeting and celebration on Tuesday, May 20 @ 7pm. RSVP to Singleton Cox at singleton.cox@gmail.com.

MAY 29 – ECW PARISH WIDE MEETING – ALL WOMEN OF GRACE CHURCH are members of the ECW (Episcopal Church Women)! Come and join us for fun and fellowship. Meet women across all services! The last meeting before the summer takes place on Thursday, May 29 at 6:30 pm in the Reception Room. Bring a "lite bite" for the table if you are able. No pressure! If you would like to be included on the e-mail list for updates and reminders of all ECW events, please send your email address to Elana Foundos.



JUNE 7, 14 REBUILDING ON STATEN ISLAND is still ongoing. Join teams from Grace Church for two parish work days, Saturdays June 7 and 14. Many

jobs for multiple skill levels are available; email [Stephen Holton](#) for more information or to sign up.

JUNE 8 – THE SUNDAY FORUM @10AM – COMEDY AND BIBLE LESSONS FOR ALL AGES The Bible Players are a "Torah Comedy Duo," (that is, comic teachers of the Old Testament) that are sweeping the nation! They will perform an interactive and hilarious show based on popular bible stories. The Bible Players love to have all the adults and youngsters see their show together as there is something for everyone! <http://www.thebibleplayers.com/>

JUNE 8 – THE ANNUAL PARISH PICNIC AND CHOIR RECOGNITION SUNDAY – All Grace Church parishioners and friends are welcome and encouraged to come to Huntington Close following the 11am service! Join us in celebration of the choir ministries of Grace Church and help bring our program year to a joyous and festive close. Suggested donation at the door is \$10 per person. There are many ways to support this event so please sign up to help on the bulletin board outside the Reception Room or contact [Melissa](#).

JUNE 30–JULY 3 SAVE THE DATE! VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING! – All children aged 4–10 are welcome for four days of Bible stories, games, and awesome activities. More details will follow soon in this space.

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