

JUNE 2009

## Ordinary Time in a Season of Change

### From the Rector:

The theme of the season after Pentecost (technically not a season at all, just “ordinary time,” or time numbered after Pentecost Sunday) is living in the Kingdom of God. What we have learned and proclaimed in the liturgy from Advent through Trinity Sunday is now put to use in the daily round of Christian witness and service. Once again, we are shown that *orthodoxy* and *orthopraxy* are inseparable. Right belief requires right practice of that belief.

Each year at this time I am reminded that the world doesn't stand still. What was a few weeks ago a dull, grey view out the window is now verdant, lush, and crowned by blue sky. Similarly, the society around us constantly changing. The spiritual landscape of our nation is remarkably different from that of a decade ago, let alone my childhood. One example of this is the place of “nominal” Christianity – that form of religious observance which is limited to the surface of a person's life (what we sometimes used to call “Christmas and Easter” Christians).

A number of demographic and statistical studies have recently appeared in the U.S. tracking Church membership. The studies have shown, amongst other things, that the Pacific NW no longer is the “least churched” part of the country. That dubious honor goes to the Northeast now. The portion of the population identifying themselves as Christians is in decline in almost every sector, with very few church bodies seeing significant numerical increases. However, one of the more interesting facts springing forth upon closer examination of the data is this: while there are fewer people who identify themselves as “Christian,” at the same time, there are about as many people who are *active* and *regular* participants in Church life as before.

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What we are seeing, then, is not the collapse of intentional, deep faith: we are seeing the disappearance of the *nominal Christian*. This has long been forecast, but finally seems to be occurring. It will affect various Christian churches in different ways.

For one-time “mainline” churches that have raised the practice of asking as little as possible from their members to a high art (including the Episcopal Church, in quite a few places), the result will be a steady decline in membership and resources. In the case of those “mega-churches” which have tried to mix patriotism or consumerism with the Good News of Christ the same decline is forecast as a new generation of now cynical “spiritual consumers” find that mixture unappealing.

For those that come to realize we live in a new season (sometimes referred to as the “New Apostolic Era”), one having much more in common with the Early Church than with the Church of our grandparents, the coming years will mean re-structuring, re-prioritizing, and reaching new groups of people with the eternal message of the Gospel. That re-structuring is going to be painful at times. It will mean having to put the focus on intentional discipleship in a new way. We will be forced to depend on living *changed lives*, lives truly expressive of the Gospel’s power to renew rather than depend on denominational or political power.

St. Timothy’s has a long history of being on the cutting-edge in this regard. We have focussed on the “Anglican project” of living the Faith of the Ancient and Undivided Church as simply and honestly as possible in our day. Our catechuminate, worship, and spiritual life in general is based on this assumption. Anglicanism as a Faith is both deeply sacramental and biblical, catholic and evangelical. It is *intentional*, not just *institutional*.

Those churches unable/unwilling to make the transition to this New Apostolic Era are likely to shrivel up, becoming ever more irrelevant “boutique” Christianities rather than vessels for the delivery of the Gospel. At every level of our parish’s life, St. Timothy’s seeks to be part of the new era in which we find ourselves while maintaining the “Faith once delivered to the Saints” which alone can save, alone has the resources to bring the peace the world craves.

Faithfully in the Risen Christ,

Brandon Lee Filbert+



## Nativity of John the Baptist

With June comes the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24th). This is one of the great Holy Days of the Calendar.

St. John was a remarkable, powerful man. He is mentioned in all four of the Gospels. He was a true ascetic, setting the pattern for all Christian monasticism and activism to follow. His diet, clothing, and manner of life were shockingly un-materialistic even by the standards of his own day. He was a preacher of such force and immediacy that he emptied Jerusalem as the people sought the renewal of baptism at his hands. He shook the powerful religious establishment – then, as now, complacent and self-satisfied – to

its roots. He could not be bought off. He didn't "bend with the wind" on moral issues, nor did he find convenient ways to turn God's demand for complete obedience into a call for easy "self-esteem" or self-justifying blame of others. He "walked the talk," as we say today. This allowed him to "speak the truth, rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake," as the Collect for his feast day so eloquently reminds us. It ultimately cost him his life, but it had been a life worth living.



One of the most important verses in the Holy Scriptures spoken by the Forerunner is what he said of Jesus, the one to whom John's entire ministry was meant to point, when Jesus' public ministry began: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

What complete openness to God's will those words tell of! What trust! What joy and freedom he possessed to live richly and securely in God's presence, rather than meagerly in the limited confines of human egotism and insecurity! Rather than indicating "low self-esteem," John's words give us the road-map for all authentic Christian discipleship: *Christ must increase in us, while our own self-will must decrease.*

Some today try to sell the Gospel as an invitation to a spiritual "Easy Street." Not St. John the Baptist. His clear words point us to the reality of the Gospel. The Christian life is a call to a harder way of life, one that is actually impossible...if we try to do it ourselves, on our own terms. But, if we let Christ increase in us, then we find out the joyful truth: Christ has made possible the way back to real Life.

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The path to death is paved with much talk of “self-esteem” (was this not the serpent’s language to Adam & Eve in the garden?). The path to Life is paved by Christ’s self-offering on the Cross, His triumph over human sin and death in the Resurrection, and the gift of the Kingdom for all who will accept its precepts as found in the Gospel. That has been done for us. It is now up to us to respond. Our response is to acknowledge the absolute necessity of being like Christ in order to live the Life that is *Life*. To choose anything other than that is to deny Christ’s call to us, to prefer death’s icy grip to the warmth of God’s love.



Consider how revolutionary the Baptist’s message is to us in 21st century America. We automatically think that more stuff, more control, more power will be the solution to life’s problems...whether on the international, national, local, or personal levels. John’s words seem absurd to our consumerist society. And yet, all of that “more-ness” of possession and power leads us to so many kinds of emptiness today: empty homes with children left to their own devices, empty minds devoid of any deeper purpose than self-gratification, empty governance that protects those who already have so much at the expense of those who have nothing.

American Christianity, which has become (in both its “liberal” and “conservative” forms) so often a religion of comfort, is in sharp conflict with St. John’s words. We expect to be given a church, a form of worship, a host of offerings that accord perfectly with what we want. We demand a savior who will “meet our needs,” not one who will bring about our total transformation. Our love of self increases with each passing year; and still John calls out: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

As we begin the summer months, when the hours of daylight increase to their greatest (appropriately, almost coinciding with the Feast of St. John the Baptist), it is a good time to ask how much we desire to join the Great Forerunner in saying: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Do we stop and pray before we speak to something very difficult or emotional in our life? Do with think about the impact we are having on others, on the world,

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by our choices? Do we call upon Christ to guide us in our decisions? Do we blame others when we should take ownership of our own faults? Can we look the other way when wrong is done in our presence? As we look back over the course of our Christian life, do we see a pattern of taking the Gospel more seriously in our life, or do we see merely a collection of empty gestures and hollow “spiritual club membership?” In short: *is Christ increasing in us?*

The good news is that it is never too late to begin. We are told in the Gospel that God accepts those who arrive at the eleventh hour even as he does those who have worked all day (Matt. 20). The point is that we begin. So, let us make that start now. John speaks to us from the desert of our own day, our own life. If we can join in St. John’s words, even faintly, we will have begun our way to what we seek: union with God. The strength and joy of St. John the Baptist will be ours to share as we dare to “speak the truth, rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth’s sake” in our own day. In this, we will honor St. John as he would desire – by letting Christ increase in us until we become fully the people we were intended to be “from the foundation of the world.”

BLF+

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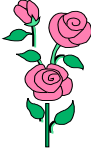

## Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network

A few years ago, churches in the Salem area formed a consortium to help the homeless in a concrete way: they offer temporary room and board for families who need to save up for first-and-last month’s rent and cleaning deposit in order to get into an apartment of their own.



The churches with appropriate space in their parish halls provide the space for beds, and they and their partner parishes provide meals. St. Timothy’s partners with Holy Cross Lutheran Church for a Host Week once a quarter. We are responsible for dinners, evening hosts, and overnight staff on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays of our Host Weeks. Sign up in the narthex to participate the week of June 14.

Talk to someone who has served in this ministry to get a feel for what it’s like. Our fall Host Week will be Sept. 6-13.

	<i>Visitation</i> 1 (tsf)  Stewardship Comm 7	<i>Martyrs of</i> 2 <i>Lyons</i>  10 am HE  Endowment Board 7	<i>Martyrs of</i> 3 <i>Uganda</i> <i>Ember Day</i> Court Child Care 9:30 Crafts 10 Diocesan Meeting 2	<i>First Book</i> 4 <i>of Common</i> <i>Prayer</i>	<i>Boniface</i> 5 <i>of Mainz</i> ❖ <i>Ember Day</i>	<i>Ember Day</i> 6 Vestry Book Study 9 Parish Work Party 9-3 Community Garden 10
<i>Trinity Sun.</i> 7 8 am HE 10 am HE	8	<i>Columba of</i> 9 <i>Iona</i>  10 am HE	<i>Ephram of</i> 10 <i>Edessa</i> Court Child Care 9:30 Crafts 10 Art & Archi- tecture 1 pm	<i>Saint</i> 11 <i>Barnabas</i>  Mission Comm. 7	12 ❖	13  Diocesan Meeting 9:30
<i>Pent. II</i> 14 8 am HE 10 am HE Birthdays Healing	<i>Evelyn</i> 15 <i>Underhill</i>	<i>Joseph</i> 16 <i>Butler</i> 10 am HE	17 Crafts 10  Potluck & Games 6	<i>Bernard</i> 18 <i>Mizeki</i>	19 ❖	20
-----Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network-----						
<i>Pent. III</i> 21 8 am HE 10 am HE Graduate Recognition	<i>Alban of</i> 22 <i>Britain</i>	23 10 am HE	<i>Nativity of</i> 24 <i>St. John the</i> <i>Baptist</i> Court Child Care 9:30 Crafts 10 Potluck & Games 6	25	26 ❖	27 Habitat Work Party 8:30 am and 1 pm
<i>Pent. IV</i> 28 8 am HE 10 am HE	<i>Saints</i> 29 <i>Peter and</i> <i>Paul</i>	30 10 am HE				

❖ Day of special devotion to be observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial.

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- |                   |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 3 James Hand      | 14 Aidan Raney    | 19 Zeek Earl    |
| 10 Marsha Atchley | 15 August Filbert | 24 Jack Hill    |
| 13 Alan Maul      | 16 Joy Coulson    | 30 Emma DeWilde |

## Calendar Notes for June

**Monday, June 1:** Stewardship Commission Meeting, 7 PM

**Tuesday, June 2:** Endowment Board meeting, 7 PM

**Wednesday, June 3:** Diocesan meeting, 2 PM

**Saturday, June 6:** Vestry Book Study, 9 AM  
Parish Work Party, 9-3; bring a sack lunch  
Community Garden Meeting, 10 AM



**Sunday, June 14:** Birthday, anniversary, and travel blessings, Prayers for healing  
Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network Host Week begins

**Wednesday, June 17:** Summer Wednesday Potluck and Games, 6 PM—  
bring a dish to share



**Sunday, June 21:** Honoring of 2009 graduates, at 10:00 Liturgy

**Wednesday, June 24:** Summer Wednesday Potluck and Games, 6 PM—  
bring a dish to share

**Saturday, June 27:** Habitat for Humanity Work Day, 8:30 AM and 1 PM—  
Sign up in the narthex



**Coming Up in September:** Parish Campout at Odell Lake, Labor Day Weekend,  
Sept. 4 - 7 — come for a night or the weekend!  
See the display on the narthex table for information  
and sign-ups.



**The summer "Green Season"** is a time for growing and spreading the Kingdom. This summer we have many opportunities to feed the hungry and shelter the homeless, and the potential for a future ministry with the Yakima Nation. Check with these parishioners to get involved!



Habitat Build: *Chuck McFerron*

SIHN Host Week: *Steve Cowgill*

Community Garden: *Pamela Lyons Nelson*

? Ministry with Yakima Nation: *Zac & Emily Harmon*

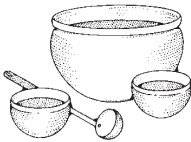
## Summer Wednesday Potlucks



**Time to mark your calendars** for the SUMMER POTLUCK SERIES!!! Once again we will be celebrating community every Weds with a potluck dinner, games for kids, families, and individuals, and the use of the wonderful BBQ we were able to purchase last year. We hope you will join us for the Kick-Off on Wednesday June 17th. Remember we are celebrating families of all shapes and sizes, including our church family here at St Timothy's, all are welcome and feel free to bring a friend.

The Parish Life Commission

## Soup Kitchen



**On Sunday, May 17th**, Rick Herrin and members of the McKay High School wrestling team, brought soup and fed 39 people on a sunny afternoon at St. Mark Lutheran Church downtown. Thank you wrestlers ! If your group would like to take a turn at soup kitchen, we need group to serve on Sunday ,July 19th.

John Hanson

## Mission Discernment



**The Mission Commission** is sending a small coalition of parishioners to the Yakama Reservation this summer. They are going in order to discern whether God is calling St. Timothy's into relationship with Mending Wings Ministries. This is the organization from which Corey and Gina Greaves visited last January to teach a Sunday School class. The commission is prayerfully looking forward to the possibility of a parish-wide sharing journey to the Yakama Reservation sometime in the future.

The Mission Commission

## Steward of the Month

Our steward for June, 2009, is Merryn Grae. Merryn was selected because of her participation with the Catechumenate. Initially she was a catechumen, preceding her Baptism and Confirmation. The following September she joined the Catechumenate team. As a Catechist she helps with planning, leads evening prayer, and coordinates the Good Friday retreat.



Merryn served on the Vestry. She is an associate of the lay order of the Community of the Holy Spirit. She currently chairs the Administrative Commission.

Merryn represents the Catechists and the important mission they have in teaching and guiding the spiritual growth of those joining our parish and those preparing for Baptism and Confirmation.

The Stewardship Commission

## Opportunity for Service



The Building and Grounds Commission is seeking a parishioner (or a couple or family) to take care of the Memorial Garden. Will Wood, who has maintained it faithfully for many years, is ready to hand the responsibility on. The job description includes weeding and keeping the Garden looking nice. If you would like more information or to offer your services, please talk to Denis Williamson (503-364-0700).

## Feeding the Hungry



During the month of June we are collecting pasta and pasta sauce for the Food Bank. During Lent we collected 207 cans of tuna, so that shows what we can do! Try to get into the habit of remembering the Food Bank when you are at the grocery store, or detail a family member to be the official family "Reminder".



**The Community Garden Committee** is deeply grateful for all the enthusiasm and help, both monetary and physical, shared in the creation of the Garden. It has been hard work, but what a beautiful and joyful site we are going to have as families begin to sow and reap healthy vegetables!

We are excited about the Community Garden events in the upcoming weeks:

- A few parishioners will set up demonstration plots to aid our Community Gardeners — some first-time gardeners — in setting up their garden plots.
- The Community Garden Committee is working on a design for the entrance to the garden. We are particularly interested in getting parish ideas for this entrance. Please talk with Pamela Lyons-Nelson if you have any thoughts on the entrance.
- Our Community Gardeners will be gardening on Wednesday evenings — the same time as our Summer Wednesday evenings at St. Timothy's. We are working with the Parish Life Commission on ideas for these evenings together.
- The Grand Opening of the Community Garden will be in June, after school is finished. Be looking at the Community Garden Bulletin Board and in the bulletin for further information about that date.
- Larry Ruhser is growing food ("Grow a Row") in two plots for the Food Bank.

We would love your input. If you have any ideas on any of these upcoming events, please talk with Pamela Lyons-Nelson.

Community Garden Committee



**Birthdays**

**As of last month**, we are having blessings for birthdays, anniversaries, and travel on **SECOND** Sundays during each service. Prayers for healing will also be offered on second Sundays

## Ministry to Seniors

The Guild of Sts. Anna and Simeon is being formed to help our older parishioners discover and/or maintain their ministry in the church, as well as offer care where needed and desired. We have chosen Anna and Simeon because of their recognition of our Lord Jesus as the son of God in Luke 2:21-38. Anna, who had never left the temple, but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying, gave thanks to God for the child who would redeem Jerusalem. Simeon, upon seeing the child Jesus, took Him in his arms and proclaimed Jesus as the longed-for light to the Gentiles.



Like these saints, our older parishioners have a powerful love of our Lord and the wisdom to share that love with us. At the same time, some have had their bodies betray them as they have aged. They may appreciate a helping hand, a ride to church, a visit, or simply a thank you for all the work they have done. We stand on their shoulders.

If you know of ways we can help older parishioners with their needs and/or their ministry, please talk with current Guild members - John Hanson, Zac Harmon, Sue Bergquist, or Paula Hartwig. If you are interested in participating in this ministry, please let us know.

Guild of Sts. Anna and Simeon

## Habitat Build



On May 17, we signed a contract in partnership with Holy Cross Lutheran Church to build a house with Habitat for Humanity this summer. The work parties have already begun. To sign up for the **next work day, June 27**, look for the Habitat clip-board in the narthex. There are morning and afternoon sessions.

Along with our 'sweat equity" we are committed to providing \$5000 toward the materials. Watch for information about how we are going to fulfill our obligation.



Summer  
Wednesday

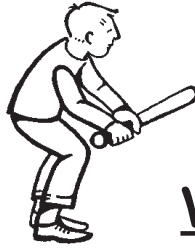
Potluck  
&

Games:

Every  
Wednesday  
this  
summer

(rain or shine)

beginning  
June 17



St. Timothy's Episcopal Church  
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www.sainttimothys.org

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