



Simple Gifts

By Mother Laurie



- I want to be more connected to God.
- I want to pray more/better.
- I want to become more spiritual outside of church.

We are often spiritually restless—we want ‘more’, as the phrases above suggest. What if the solution was as easy and convenient as...eating?? In fact, how many of us have to eat every day? Ahhhh, the show of hands is universal! How many of us regularly do something *else* while we eat such as drive, watch TV, read, talk on the phone? Ok, I admit my hand is up. We are distracted eaters.

The ability we have to gather, to break bread, to nourish and to rest every day is both common and extraordinary, and each meal provides an opportunity to nourish not only our bodies, but our spirits as well. Grace. The simplicity of the unmerited gift from God is what we also call our prayer time before we eat. We are acknowledging that ‘all things come of thee, O Lord,’—in other words, *all* that we have is a result of God’s grace.

When we say grace, we are stopping for the momentary awareness of abundance, we are stopping to say thanks, we are stopping to claim a moment of peace, we are acknowledging that our relationship with God is essential, maybe even more essential than the meal we are about to enjoy.

If you don’t usually say grace, here are some good guidelines:

- Keep it simple and focused: Thank God for something specific—the extra moment to take a deep breath, the family or friends you eat with, the homemade soup or other food.
- Be consistent: Try to pray before *every* meal, even breakfast. Maybe you are in a different place for each meal—the car, your workplace, home—and that brings your prayers to each of these places as well.
- Breathe: Consciously slow down, let your body relax, release concerns and responsibilities for just one moment—or give them to God even before you begin your grace, or as part of your grace.

Ok, now for the beneficial, but challenging, suggestion:

- Hold hands: We are, like the Trinity itself, built for community. The simple action of touching hands during prayer, much like the sign of peace in church, communicates clearly that we are connected to each other. We do it to remind ourselves that we are connected in love and fellowship, even for a moment.

I know I pray for a living (sort of) but long before that was true, one of my favorite moments of family life was the moment of stillness and connectedness that happened as we held hands around the table. One of my favorite moments? Mother’s Day 2013. Sitting in a noisy, downtown pub and holding hands with my now-adult boys as they bowed their heads for grace.

Gratitude, humility, prayer, nourishment, love, family, God, connection, spirituality...grace.



Celebrating 250 Years *of Faith Serving The Community*



On Sunday, May 19th members and friends of St. John's continued to celebrate the church's 250th Anniversary by processing from the Drumm House, where the roots of our church began. The weather may not have been perfect but it did not dampen the spirit of those who walked in fellowship. What a blessing it was to have a young boy of six, who just had received his first communion, to individuals in their ninety's, representing strong past and future servants of God.

This special Sunday journey moved into the church where a 1662 communion worship service was celebrated.



*Photos taken by
Sandy VanSlyke
Debra Kolsrud*



Sending a card.....

Steven Datz
Valley Health Services
690 W. German St. Rm107
Herkimer, NY 13350

Gladys Simek
Palatine Nursing Home
154 Lafayette St.
Room 113B
Palatine Bridge, NY 13428

Audrey Baird
Wells House
201 W. Madison Ave.

For those in the Military:

Ryan R.	Christopher J.
Connor W.	Ethan L.
Andrea H.	Guy H.
Ian S	Nicole B.
Nicole B.	

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Someone you know has suffered a loss, had an illness, is lonely or in need. Someone you know has reason to celebrate. Someone you know - needs you to reach out to him or her.

Prayer List as of the end of May

Donald G.	Evie Z	Carter
Margaret T.	Danny	Jared
Amy & Josh	Bishop Ball	David
Barb M.	Nicholas M	Christopher.
Dick S.	Betsy P.	Maggie G.
Connie B.	Elinor B.	Luis D
Jeff F. Mike	Betsy	Elacqua Family
Cori S.	Owen M.	Veronica N.
Julie C.	Gretchen J.	Kendall E.
Eric G.	Holly A.	Emma H.
Eleanor J.	Henry M.	Denise

Individuals may be added, or removed, from the prayer list by calling the church office.

Oh Lord, grant those who have died the joy of Your Presence, and us who are living the happiness of knowing this.

Clark Easterly, Sr.
3/7/1926 - 3/19/2013

Cynthia DePuy
12/19/1932 - 4/17/2013

Julia Ehle 8/4/1949 - 5/2/2013

Gaal Rathburn
4/8/1922 - 5/2/2013

Our Christian sympathy to
those in our church who have lost loved ones:

Ronald Reuss
(Brother of Walter Mitchell)
George Ecker
(Father of Kelly Lawlor)



A celebration of Baptism –
April 28, 2013

Hope Elizabeth LoDestro
(pictured)

Also baptized was
Myah Rayne Spaulding

A Summer Prayer

Long warm days
The pace of life slows
A time for picnics
and rest in the shade
Lord, help me to rest awhile
in the cooling shade of your
presence.
Slow down my restless heart
and fill me with gentle
compassion for all your people.
Amen.

Author Unknown



June 9th Holy Eucharist at 5pm with Potluck to follow

June 16th Martha Ross Small Scholarship Day

July 21st Mother Laurie and the Men's Quartet at Caroga Chapel

August 17th 250th Shared Event at Johnson Hall

August 25th Hand Bell Choir at Caroga Chapel

Sept. 8th 250th Worship Service, 4 PM. The Rt. Rev. William H. Bishop Love, Bishop of Albany, Celebrant will be joining us for an afternoon service with reception to follow at St. Patrick's Lodge

Sept. 22nd Friendship Sunday and Ice Cream Social (the beginning of Sunday School!)

HOLY EUCHARIST/HEALING SERVICE

12:05 PM to 12:30 PM

Holy Eucharist is celebrated every Wednesday with the opportunity to receive Healing Prayer after the service.

**Wednesday at St. John's
BIBLE STUDY**

10:30 AM

What to pack on vacation!



Don't leave God at home!



Don't forget to check out St. John's website at
www.stjohnsjohnstown.org

There is a wealth of information for members and visitors, and more is being added each week. You can find out about upcoming events at the church, check copies of Sunday's Bulletin, weekly readings, the St. John's Prayer List and see

photos of recent events. Please send suggested changes, additions, etc., to Lindsay at the church office stjohnschurch@frontiernet.net

Also visit our Face book page from the link on the website!

From the Stewardship Committee... A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who was able to share their time and talent for the Day of Service on Saturday, May 18th. It was a beautiful day to beautify our church and we got a lot done. Interesting how cheerful the faces were while doing some hard work ... As promised, in our recent bulletin insert, below is the full text of a stewardship story from Bruce Rockwell, an Episcopalian parishioner from Massachusetts.



Dan Cameron and Mike Lawlor give their gift of carpentry.



Natalie Baxter and Rory McGrattan help out with the plants.



Jackson Riddle has a true **green thumb** under those gloves!

“Giving Until it Feels Good.” Before I became aware of a theology of stewardship, I was, as the wonderful woman to whom I am married would say, a *miserly banker*. I was employed by a bank, and I was a bit of a miser. I had no understanding about generosity, especially when it came to money. I thought my money was mine since I had worked hard for it and had earned it. I believed in the old adage *give until it hurts*. I gave little away because I had a low pain threshold. More importantly, I thought security and happiness came about through acquiring and holding on to money. All that has changed, and I am so thankful to God that it did!

For me, now, stewardship has everything to do with my relationship with God. Before, I had no real relationship with God. My spiritual life was dead. To the extent that I was an effective banker, it was because acquiring and holding on to money was very important to me.

Then God broke through in my life in a most miraculous way. God sent messengers into my life who witnessed to me about their rich spiritual lives and about the close, loving relationship they had with God. They described *tithing*, by first becoming an intentional proportionate giver, as an essential discipline in their spiritual journeys.

The power of their witness started me on my spiritual journey. I knew they had something very precious, something I did not have. I wanted the same kind of rich, spiritual relationship with God they had. So I embraced the discipline of becoming an intentional proportionate giver. I became a tither, not because it says to in the Bible, but because that level of giving began to express my level of love and thanks to God.

I believe that stewardship is everything I do after I say, “I believe.” It begins with my acknowledgment that all that I have and all that I am is a gift from God. Life is a gift from the loving God. Each day is a new gift from the generous God, a new opportunity in my journey to strive to be more faithful each day. My talents, those things I enjoy doing and do well, those are a gift from God. Stewardship means discovering these gifts from God, developing them, and deploying them for God’s use in the world. Finally, even my money, that money for which I seemingly worked so hard, that is also a gift from God. To prevent money from controlling me, I need to offer God the first 10% of my money, as an offering of love, sacrifice, and thanksgiving. When I make offerings to God, I am drawn into a closer relationship with God.

The spiritual life that was once dead and nonexistent grows richer each day. I feel the Grace of God in miraculous new ways in my life. I know Jesus Christ to be my Savior, and I feel Christ walking beside me in life each and every day. I feel empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit as God gently pulls me out of “my comfort zone,” helps me use my gifts to do God’s work.

My spiritual journey, this wonderful gift for which I thank God every day, would never have started if some other loving Christians had not given me the most precious gift one person of faith can give to another. They gave me the gift of their story, their faith journey. The power of those stories empowered me to begin my own journey. I thank God for those wonderful messengers, those evangelists. I thank God for God’s love, generosity, and forgiveness.

One last thing. I no longer believe in the adage *give until it hurts*. I now believe in *giving until it feels good*. It feels good to give generously. It feels good to make joyful offerings to God.

Bruce Rockwell - Springfield, Massachusetts

Saturday, August 17th 11:00-3:00 St. John's church will be partnering with the State Historical Site Johnson Hall in celebrating our 250th anniversary. On the grounds of Johnson Hall several teams from the British Brigade will compete in an 18th century cricket match. Our own St. John's team will be in the exhibition. Come celebrate with your church family and our community. Games will be provided for all ages along with prizes. Bring a dish to pass for our annual parish picnic.

J-Time will continue thru June 30th. We continue to be blessed with many enthusiastic children who are enjoying their experiences in J-Time. Parents we thank you for bringing your children to J-Time and allowing us the honor to teach them and guide them into an ever-deepening relationship with God. **Please mark your calendars:**

All of our J-time students will be recognized during the 10:00am service on **June 23rd**. Our deepest appreciation and thanks are extended to all of the teacher volunteers who give so generously of their time and talents to guide the children in their ever developing relationship with God. As we are looking forward to next year, keep us in your prayers as we seek ever improving ways and methods to ensure the children know that God loves them and that St. John's is their spiritual home. If you have any questions or concerns contact Lee Miller-Natola: 705-8469 cell, or Pam Vedder-Miller: 762-6719



Chapel Time: Will be held for children ages 4 and up, July 14 through August 25, 2013. Volunteers are needed to deliver short object lessons during the sermon. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Hawkins Room. Chapel Time will take place in the Hawkins Room and are intended to simply engage the children in age appropriate learning related to the gospel lesson of the day. Two volunteers are needed for each lesson. Lessons will be prepared and emailed to volunteers a week in advance or more if possible. Volunteers will be responsible for providing supplies for the lesson if needed. Supplies will be simple as

will the lessons. If you have any questions or concerns contact Lee Miller-Natola: 705-8469 cell, or Pam Vedder-Miller: 7626719

First Communion 5/5/2013 started with the baking of the bread for all to partake in.



May God's Blessings be with them always....



Natalie Nicole Baxter
Elliot Michael Haverly
Emilia Ruth Haverly
Jackson James Haverly
Gage Joseph LoDestro
Lucy Christine LoDestro
Rory Howard McGrattan





Almost Heaven

Teen Mission to West Virginia

June 29 – July 6, 2013

We leave in just about a month for Winfield, West Virginia to take part in a Reach Work Camp. We will live in the local high school, sleep on the floor, be fed in the cafeteria and work all day helping people repair their homes. Last year's teams installed roofing, built new porches, painted, put in floors—hard work in the hot summer. St. John's teens have worked hard to raise money for the trip, and through the generosity of the parish, the Women of St. John's, Friendly's, McDonald's, Brown's Ford, Forget Me Nots in Mayfield, and Bobbi Jo Haverly (candle sales)—they have raised nearly \$3000. This has required commitment and dedication and we are proud of them.

Thanks to parents and other guiding lights in their lives for getting them where they need to go, and supporting them through all these activities.

Please pray for our teens: Whitney and Noah Western, James Hannahs, Jenna Christensen, Marissa Miller and McKenzie Bellen And pray for our adult chaperones: Pam Miller, Roger Rhodes and Mother Laurie



Pictured above: our 2012 missionaries – Lee Ann, Whitney, Kyle and James.

Colossians 3:17 - And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

GRATITUDE

To everyone who attended the Spring Fling – all who worked with Bonnie Valachovic and Leslie Buggeln-Bosworth in organizing it and to our own “Dancing With The Stars” Marilyn and Art Batty.

- The Outreach Committee thanks all who supported the African Team Ministries sale. We were able to raise \$553 to support this worthy cause!



- Thank you for all of the support with the variety of fundraisers to support St. John's Youth's Mission Trip! Not only have they help with the money needed - they have been “fun” raisers as well!

- To Dr. Bob – choir and bell members!

God gives us numerous gifts – we are thankful for the gift of musical abilities that each of you brings to our weekly and special services.

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.





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Monday – Friday

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