



Voices

Newsletter of EMMANUEL CHURCH in the City of Boston

WINTER 2012

Where We Find Sanctuary



“Sanctuary is the holiest part of a sacred place. [It] is also a place of refuge or asylum, a place of immunity from arrest. That definition of sanctuary is much more interesting to me: hospitality, safety and shelter.” — Pamela Werntz

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Read back issues of *Voices* at
EmmanuelBoston.org

From the Editor

Searching for Sanctuary

The words on the cover are taken from the feature by Pam Werntz (page 4). We've come to expect witty and insightful messages from our rector, but her piece on the meanings of sanctuary exceeds those (very high) expectations. In this issue, Carolyn Roosevelt's review of *The Merry Recluse* expands on the story she began in an earlier review of the book *Let's Take the Long Way Home*. If you'd like to see the first review, check Carolyn's blog. Jaylyn Olivo offers two pieces: a musing on finding sanctuary and a psalm of praise celebrating why she loves Emmanuel. Betsy Bunn and Pam contribute features about the Care Commission and the New Sanctuary Movement, two examples of what I'm calling "the wider sanctuary". In her article, Betsy tells a story about Elinor Keiffer, a member of the community who died in August. We include "The Geology of Love" and "Migration," poems written by Elinor's daughter, Susan.



Any discussion of Emmanuel's sanctuary must include a reference to the 150-year-old stone building at 15 Newbury. Julian Bullitt explores the systems and structures within and without the building and is able to get some interesting photographs, two of which we include here. Stewardship co-chairs Penny Lane and Jim Bartlett offer a clear explanation of Emmanuel's budget, and Paul Guttry, Clerk of the Vestry, brings a lively report on the deliberations and doings of the Vestry during 2011. Michael Scanlon's "Warrant" is a playful invitation to Emmanuel's annual meeting on January 29, but the need for everyone's participation is serious.

My best to you,
☪ Margo

On the Cover

Upper left: The Rev. Pamela Werntz celebrates the Eucharist in Lindsey Chapel during the summer. Upper right: A Common Art participant shows off her knitting work during Common Art's weekly art making session held in the Parish Hall. Lower left: A Sukkah, or temporary shelter erected by Boston Jewish Spirit during the Jewish festival of Sukkot. *Photo by Becky Daroff(beckydaroff.com)*. Lower right: A view of Emmanuel's main sanctuary from the organ loft. *Unless noted, photos on the cover by Matt Griffing. Illustration on page 12 by Michael Scanlon.*

Voices Is Going Green

Starting in January 2012, readers of *Voices* will receive the newsletter in electronic format. Print editions will be available on the welcome table, and anyone who wishes to continue receiving the print version through the mail will be able to request that option by emailing Keith Nelson, Parish Administrator, at parishadmin.emmanuel@gmail.com: or by calling 617-536-3355 x 11.

Any Good Books Lately

The Merry Recluse: A Life in Essays
Caroline Knapp (Counterpoint, 2004)

Gail Caldwell's book about her friend Caroline Knapp, which I reviewed last month, has led me to *The Merry Recluse*, a collection of Knapp's columns and articles put together by her friends after her untimely death in 2002. I was curious to meet Knapp in her own words. Not surprisingly, I found her much as Caldwell describes her: bright, and a great writer; fragile, and a loner; self-absorbed, and deeply wise about the world.

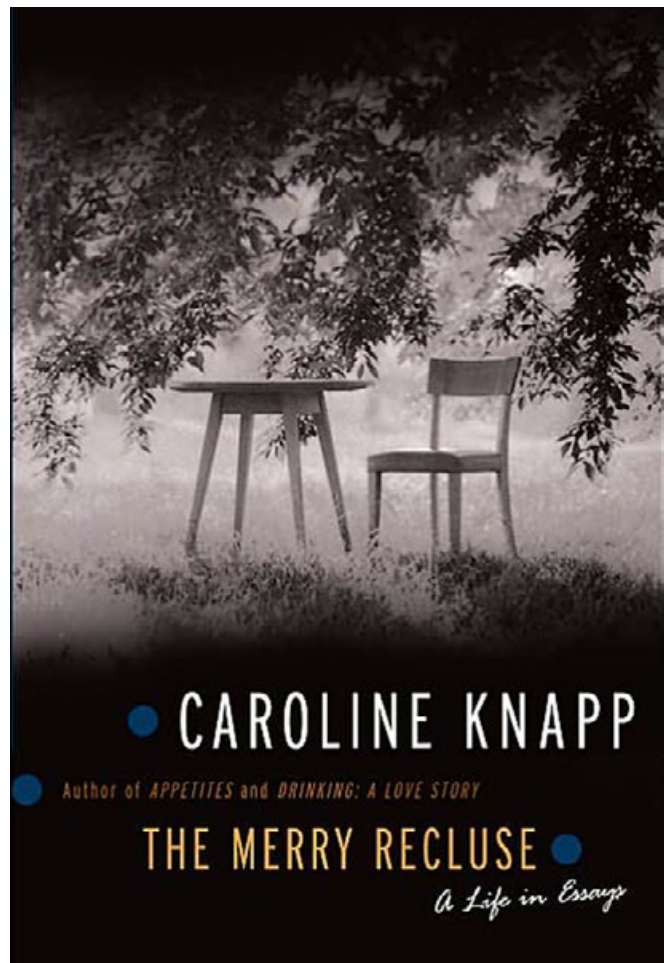
Still, this doesn't sound promising, does it? Like trying to read the older books by Anna Quindlen or Ellen Goodman; hasn't the world moved on? Perhaps. But on the public side, her concerns are as real as ever. There's a sexual harassment piece from the second anniversary of the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearing, and an early reaction to 9/11: "The people I talk to feel an odd, almost adolescent yearning for leadership, craving and mistrusting it in the same breath. Some of us feel compelled to reach out – give blood, light candles, sign petitions, anything! – and simultaneously compelled to retreat, edges of paranoia leaking in, talk of terrorists in the backyard."

And on the private side, there are fascinating paradoxes, like the public nature of her privacy itself. Of her own sexual harassment experiences as a recent college graduate: "I went out to lunch with him and got drunk with him and let him kiss and paw me. It's disgusting to me in retrospect, and shameful, but I honestly didn't know what else to do." It takes considerable charm to complain about feeling unsophisticated without sounding phony; it takes plenty of courage to confess to fear.

Knapp's resolute honesty is what saves all this from preciousness, for me. She quit drinking in February of 1994, in her early thirties, so she had, she says, a lot of growing up to do. There's a lifetime of emotional work in the seven years covered by this collection: her parents' death, her history of anorexia, her affair with alcohol, and her acceptance of her solitary state as a way of life, which grew to include friends, a boyfriend, and a dog.

Fortunately, Knapp is also funny, mining the rich lode of her own insecurities: "Last week, I had an I-suddenly-sense-my-lips-are-too-thin day. I also had a since-when-have-my-pores-been-so-cavernous? day, but not at exactly the same time as the bad-lip day. Whew! Can you imagine what that would have been like? It would have turned into an I-have-to-stay-home-and-hide-under-the-bed day, no question."

I'm struck by how lucky it is that Gail Caldwell and Caroline Knapp became friends when they did. Here's Knapp, shortly after they began taking their dogs for walks together: "I've



tended to be the sort of person who believes that walking doesn't really 'count' as a form of exercise, that you're not really working out unless you hurt. But it occurs to me now, perhaps for the first time, that the heart is a muscle in many respects, and needs attending to beyond the gym." This is hard-won wisdom, and I'm grateful for it.

– CTR

Carolyn's reviews can be found at
<http://anygoodbooks-mixedreviews.blogspot.com>

Some Meanings of Sanctuary

sanc·tu·ar·y

I have vivid memories from my childhood of my father, an iconoclastic United Church of Christ minister, being a guest preacher at various churches from time to time. He was fond of picking up a very large pulpit bible, dropping it from about chest-high so that it made a deafening smack on the floor. Then he would say to the startled congregants, “what is Holy about this Bible is not the leather binding or the gilded paper.”

That’s what I thought about when I began to contemplate sanctuary—the holiest part of a sacred place. Sometimes the whole sacred place is referred to as a sanctuary the way we call our largest worship space at Emmanuel Church “the sanctuary.” But what makes it sacred or holy is not the stonework or the woodwork or the stained glass.

Sanctuary is also a place of refuge or asylum, a place of immunity from arrest. That definition of sanctuary is much more interesting to me: hospitality, safety, and shelter. I hope that Emmanuel Church is that kind of sanctuary for you – a haven of hospitality, safety, and shelter. And what I hope even more is that Emmanuel Church provides you asylum from a culture steeped in messages of self-absorption and small-mindedness, asylum from cynicism and disaffection, from the tyranny of scarcity.

One of my teachers used to say, “I’m not much but I’m all I can think about!” I want Emmanuel Church to provide immunity to that kind of arrest. I hope that Emmanuel Church is a refuge from that kind of thinking. I hope that Emmanuel Church can be a place where we can continue to connect to our nobler selves, to stop playing small by being a part of something big.

I especially hope that we can continue to stretch our capacity to be uncomfortable – at the very least to take turns being uncomfortable in our sanctuary – with our sanctuary. You should know that if you are always or even most often comfortable at Emmanuel Church, I believe that I am clearly not doing my job as your spiritual leader.

Perhaps you know the four-fold blessing written by Sister Ruth Fox, OSB. It is frequently my prayer for all of you and for myself.



May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.
May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression,

and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God’s grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.



– plw



“I hope... that Emmanuel Church provides you asylum from a culture steeped in self-absorption and small-mindedness.”

Warrant for

EMMANUEL CHURCH *in the City of Boston*

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 29, 2012

12:30 PM in the Parish Hall

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE

- 1** TO RECEIVE and act on: the minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting; the report of the Treasurer for 2011; the 2012 Budget; and the 2011 Annual Report, including the report of the Rector, the Wardens, and the chairs of the commissions and committees.
- 2** TO ELECT: Officers; Vestry Members; Delegates to Diocesan Convention, Deanery, and Episcopal City Mission.
- 3** TO TRANSACT such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

The clerk is directed to serve this warrant by posting an attested copy thereof at the doors to the usual public entrances to the church at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting.

Paul Guttry, Clerk of the Vestry



A BIG ENOUGH SANCTUARY

The safety, hospitality and shelter of sanctuary are found within the 150-year-old stone structure at 15 Newbury, but we strive for a larger place of sanctuary, for a community, city and world more hospitable and safe.

NEW SANCTUARY MOVEMENT

The New Sanctuary Movement is a coalition of interfaith religious leaders and participating congregations, called by our faith to respond actively and publicly to the suffering of our immigrant brothers and sisters residing in the United States. We acknowledge that the large-scale immigration of workers and their families to the United States is a complex historical, global and economic phenomenon that has many causes and does not lend itself to simplistic or purely reactive public policy solutions.

We stand together in our faith that everyone, regardless of national origin, has basic common rights, including but not limited to: 1) livelihood; 2) family unity; and 3) physical and emotional safety. We witness the violation of these rights under current immigration policy, particularly in the separation of children from their parents due to unjust deportations, and in the exploitation of immigrant workers. We are deeply grieved by the violence done to families through immigration raids. We cannot in good conscience ignore such suffering and injustice. Therefore, We Covenant To:

- Take a public, moral stand for immigrants' rights
- Reveal, through education and advocacy, the actual suffering of immigrant workers and families under current and proposed legislation
- Protect immigrants against hate, workplace discrimination, and unjust deportation

Denominational/Interdenominational National Leadership in this work includes people who identify themselves as: Unitarian Universalist, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, United Methodist, Union of Reform Judaism, Interfaith Worker Justice, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Quakers, Evangelical Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist.

For more information about local action, visit <http://www.bostonnewsanctuary.org>

—*plw*

A STORY FROM THE CARE COMMISSION

The Care Commission at Emmanuel is a loosely organized collection of people who make themselves available to help members of the community when there is need. In giving of themselves by such acts as driving, preparing food, doing errands, reading aloud, listening, visiting, these Emmanuelites often receive gifts as well.

A long time parishioner at Emmanuel gave such a gift before she died recently. A number of Emmanuelites were privileged to spend time with her regularly during the many months she spent both at home and in residential hospice care. Near the end of her life she looked around the room one day and said, "Well, I bet you'd find six or eight Lamed-Vavniks at Emmanuel almost any Sunday. Not always the same ones though." Met by the blank stares of her visitors, she told us this story:

An ancient Talmudic legend teaches that there are always at least 36 people who stand in the presence of the Shekhina, which is the compassionate aspect of God. They may be from any station in life: men, women, rich and mighty or poor or homeless. They usually do not know who they are. Their gift is that they have deep compassion and can feel and hold everyone's pain, though they are unable to alter its course. It is said that the people of the world are able to continue to exist because these thirty six people walk the planet, and that if just one of them were lacking, the sufferings of humanity would poison even the souls of the newborn, and humanity would suffocate with a single cry.

May we give thanks for the life of Elinor and for all the gifts we are blessed to give and to receive.

—*Betsy Bunn*

At a Memorial Service held for Elinor in November, her daughter Susan read the two poems on the facing page.

Musings: Finding Sanctuary

This summer was filled with family and friends visiting us in the Berkshires, lots of wonderful singing at Tanglewood, and periodic visits to Boston to see two friends in hospice care. Both friends have now passed. They'd each been a friend for more than 20 years, and it was hard to watch them fail, though both were lucid right to the end and gracious in sharing themselves with friends. In fact, if I can emulate them when my own time comes, I'll have done well. Jan had struggled through a rash of serious illnesses over the last two decades, but she made it her business to welcome visitors, engage us in conversation, and give of herself in ways I found comforting even as I thought I was the one comforting her. Elinor was as enigmatic in her last days as she'd been as long as I'd known her, a wry wit, a formidable intelligence, a complex and fascinating woman. Time spent with her was time to be treasured. After such joy and such loss, it was very good to

come back to Emmanuel yesterday, to hug old friends, to sing old hymns, to hear Pam's amazing take on a thorny passage from Matthew (having just said to Carolyn "what in the world will she do with that?!?"), to listen to Schütz and Bach, and just to be in that loving community. Something about most of the churches we visited in Italy over the last three weeks made me turn tail and run – what I perceive as a false piety, a pretentiousness in the accoutrements of catholicism, the church's self-satisfied richness contrasting with the poverty of her people. Emmanuel is no less a beautiful space, an architecturally proud building, a monument to human genius than those places I visited. Perhaps if I'd gotten to know the communities that worship there, I'd have come to see a place actually built to the glory of god and not a monument to the brilliance of man. Perhaps I'd have found sanctuary there as well.

–*Jaylyn Olivo*

Migration

I came from your womb
to the broad neon avenues,

from the lake of memory
to the lit sea, where I took my place

amid the cacophany of birds.
But you are the fountain

out of which I arose.
You are my root.

And wings and water
are agents of return.

From your last bed
you reach for my hand,

its scarred wrist extended,
like god eternally

reaches through space to touch his creation.

–*Susan Kieffer*
November, 2011

The Geology of Love

A subtle text permeates stones,
a recitation of continents
folding into mountains and splitting into lakes,
of the births of oceans,
of forces stronger than atom bombs.

Those same forces move the land
beneath this sunlit room in Cambridge
where you sing bits of songs
to which you danced with your young husband,
and which you hummed to your infant daughter

who, now in the middle of her life, releases
your hand as your singing ceases,
and rising to gather dirty dishes
and sweep fallen petals
from the shadows of vases, sees

how like the soft sea you breathe,
and how like the gentle earth you sleep.

–*Susan Kieffer*
November, 2011

Why Emmanuel Gives Me Hope

Emmanuel Music was joined by the Boston Children's Chorus for the service music. The kids, if you'll pardon the expression (most of them were taller than I am), sang an introit or invocation or whatever we called it, a rocking spiritual. The EMI choir sang the motet (Tallis) and the communion words (Loosemore). There was a naming ceremony/baptism of the daughter, Sofia Chaya (wisdom & life), of an orthodox Russian Jewish man and Romanian orthodox Catholic woman who were married at Emmanuel a couple of years ago. Pam Werntz and Mark Newton were the priest and rabbi, respectively, in this amazing service – joyous start to finish, with even Sofia Chaya laughing through the whole thing. I guess none of that was amazing for Emmanuel, given our alliance with Boston Jewish Spirit and the participation in each other's services that's been a regular feature of life here for the past 5+ years. But wait – communion was followed by the morning's cantata, for which our conductor, Ryan Turner, not only conducted but returned to his role as soloist for the tenor aria, since the designated tenor-du-jour had lost his voice and was unable to sing. The looks in the congregation as Ryan picked up his score from the conductor's stand and turned to begin singing were priceless. The very unorthodoxies of the whole endeavor give me hope that barriers can be torn down, that like hearts and minds can be joined across the divides of disparate faith traditions, that our assumptions about who we and others are need not dictate how we revel in each others' lives and break bread together. It was a wonderful morning. I'm still basking in its glow.

–Jaylyn Olivo

Stewardship 2012

The Budget: Dreams into Dollars

Stewardship co-chairs, Penny Lane and Jim Bartlett, spoke at the service on October 23, launching the pledge drive for 2012. They provided a clear explanation of the two sides of any budget: income and expenses.

What are the sources of our funds? (Penny)

I worked for many years at WGBH and one of the things I did there was develop budgets. When I first learned that this was part of my duties, I was a little worried because I didn't think of it as one of my more highly developed skills. But our Budget Director, a wonderful and wise woman, said something that demystified the entire process for me. "Budgets," she said, "are merely the translation of dreams into dollars."

At Emmanuel Church, the income part of our budget comes, essentially, from three sources: **Our annual draw from the endowment**, which we have been reducing steadily in recent years to get back to a prudent 4 to 5%, accounts for about 12% of our total income; another 28% comes from the **space usage fees** paid by our organizations- in- residence and the multitude of outside groups that rely on our building. In terms of budgeting, those two areas are known quantities. We can reasonably predict the dollar amounts they provide.

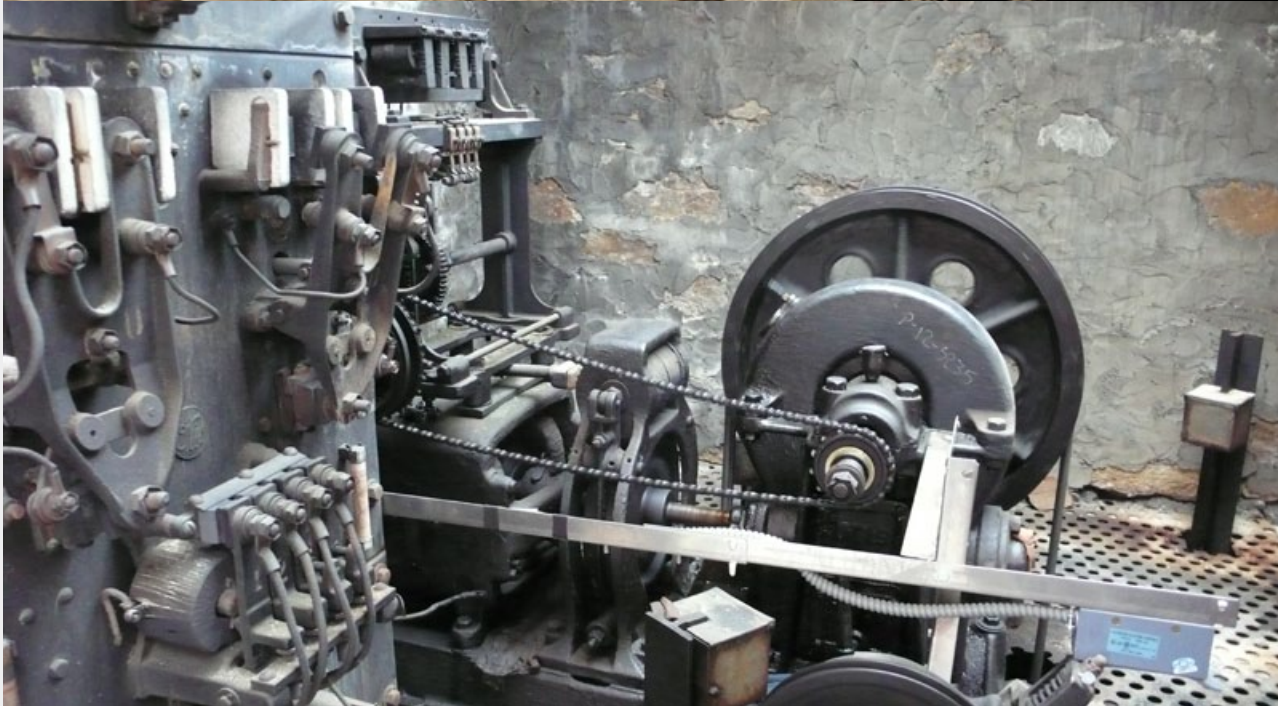
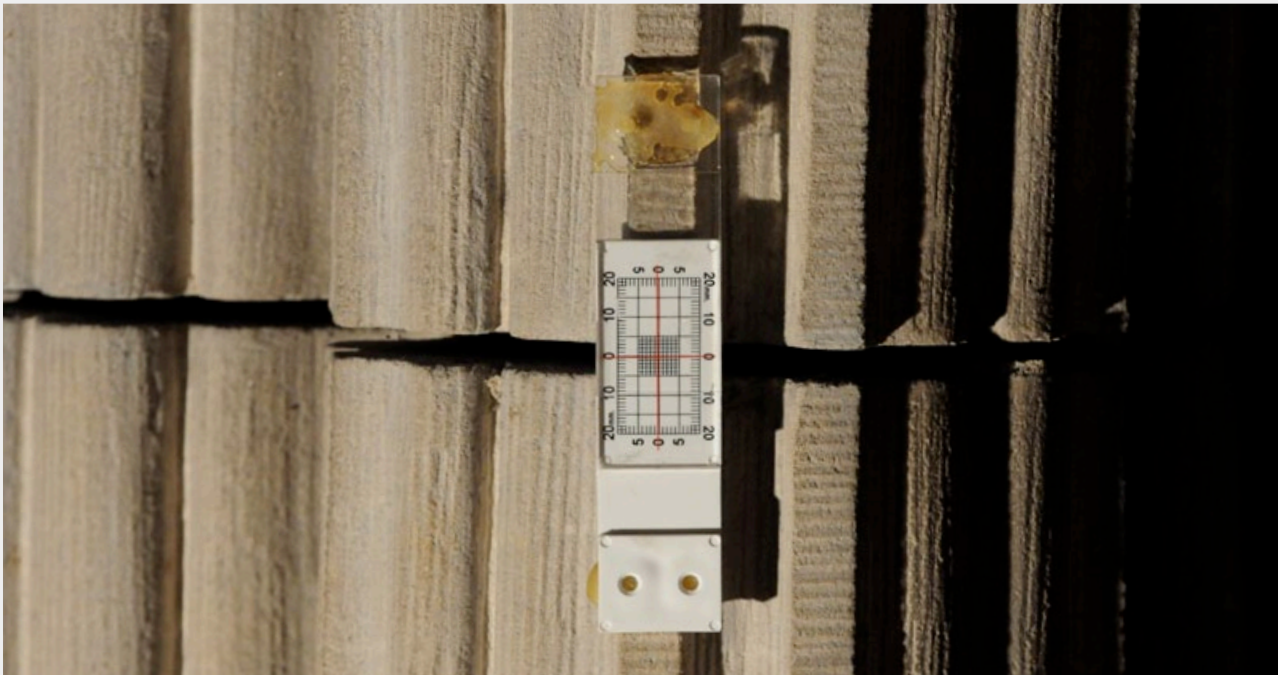
But the largest portion of our revenue by far – 60% – comes from our **pledges and other gifts**, and it's a little more difficult to anticipate what those dollar amounts will be. That's one reason why pledges are so tremendously important for us. Our pledges allow us to plan and budget appropriately for our staff and programming

How does Emmanuel use its funds? (Jim)

Pledges provide the core funding for **Spiritual and Community Life and Growth** – for our rector, her staff and the programs and outreach of Emmanuel Church. At this point, our staff is overburdened and undercompensated. With your generosity, we can increase our programs and fairly compensate and augment the staff.

Diocesan Assessment A prudent (4–5%) draw from our endowment fully funds our contribution to the Diocese of Massachusetts to support the work of the greater Episcopal Church.

Building Usage fees allow us to maintain the old, architecturally complex building that is the tangible presence of Emmanuel Church in the City of Boston.



Top photo: Around 2004, crack motion monitors were placed on four of the Sanctuary arches. We (Julian Bullitt and Michael Scanlon) have been checking these and will install additional monitors before reconstruction begins at 4–6 Newbury Street. This photograph shows one of these after the Virginia earthquake. Even though the pointing has come out from between the stones of this arch, the stones themselves have not moved. Bottom photo: Our elevator dates from 1927. It does not come to the right level on each floor all the time. The motor and control system, pictured here, are of the original design complete with a DC motor and many original parts.

– Julian Bullitt.

VESTRY DOINGS AND DELIBERATIONS

Previously in this space, my able predecessors as Clerk have been very thorough in providing details of Vestry meetings and motions. I'm going to take a slightly different tack and talk a bit about how I experience serving on the Vestry, then provide a sampling of our work this year. I hope to make the Vestry a little less mysterious, a little more accessible, and perhaps pique the interest of anybody who might be interested in being involved. It can be really fun, satisfying, and rewarding – but never, ever boring. How many things can you say that about?

Pam starts our meetings promptly at 6:30 p.m. with one of a variety of eclectic prayer offerings. Recent openers have included a reading of the poem I thank you god by e.e. cummings; Prayer for a Vestry by Rev. Elizabeth T. Wade; and leading the group in singing Great Is Thy Faithfulness.

“Notably, the placement of Bible study in the Vestry agenda is not accidental. Pam prefers to have it right in the middle of our time together and immediately before the most challenging thing on the agenda...”

From there we make our way through an agenda that has been crafted by the Executive Committee at its previous meeting. Thankfully Pam is a stickler for Vestry meetings ending on time, so each item is allotted a number of minutes, a schedule we adhere to pretty closely. After a series of short informational announcements and updates on projects in progress, we approve (or revise and approve) the minutes from the previous month's meeting.

Typically there's one more item that merits substantial discussion (topics vary from finance to commission work, to our relationship with the Diocese) before we have Bible study, which is generally based on the upcoming Sunday's scripture readings. She asks for volunteers to read the verse three times. After the first time, she asks, “What do you notice?” and we discuss. After the second reading, “What speaks to you?” and after the third, “What difference will this make?” We comment and ask questions of each other and of Pam; Rick Stone is also quite a Biblical scholar and makes a great contribution.

Notably, the placement of Bible study in the Vestry agenda is not accidental. Pam prefers to have it right in the middle of our time together and immediately before the most challeng-

ing thing on the agenda, typically a substantive item that is likely to require some thoughtful and possibly difficult deliberation. Recent examples include the budget, discussion of vestry norms, communication in general, the finance report, feedback on the vestry retreat, and stewardship.

The remainder of the meeting includes something called Temperature Taking, during which Pam asks what Vestry members are thinking about and what they're hearing from the congregation: concerns, complaints, news, feedback in general. It's a great forum for creative thinking and making connections between disparate bits of information that inform the Vestry's work. Afterwards, Pam asks if there are any items that need to go on next month's agenda, and then she offers a closing prayer.

As I mentioned earlier, Vestry meetings end on time, with seldom more than 10 minutes of 'overtime.' Speaking only for myself, there is something about knowing a meeting will end on time that makes me much more willing to participate!

Having provided an overview of Vestry meetings, I wanted to hit some of the high points of the year so far, based on a quick review of the minutes. In no particular order:

HIGH POINTS FROM THIS YEAR – SO FAR

As most of you know, we have the luxury of having a former Bishop in the congregation: *Clark Grew*. We've all enjoyed and benefited from his preaching, but you should also know that he has asked the Vestry's permission to attend meetings. He's been a regular and welcome presence. In addition, he has been assisting Pam with pastoral visiting and functioning as a chaplain to staff and their family members. With Derek Knox, he is exploring Adult Education projects.

The amazing *Building Commission*, currently composed of Julian Bullitt, Paul Curtis, Dale Flecker, Nancy Mueller, Nancy Peabody, Michael Scanlon (chair), David Silverstein, Allen Thompson, and Mary Ann Upton. The subgroup of Julian, both Nancys, and Mike, together spend at least 40 hours per week doing careful, skilled, and enthusiastic work to preserve and protect our lovely old building. They perform historical (and sometimes archaeological) research; climb under, on, and over the building; compare and solicit bids from contractors; and a lot of other things I simply don't understand! Just a few areas in which they have made substantial contributions are the heating system, the electrical system, and sanctuary lighting.

Several months ago we were approached by *Oikocredit USA*, whose website describes it as “a worldwide financial institution that promotes global justice by empowering disadvantaged people with credit.” After some discussion, the Vestry felt that Oikocredit’s mission aligned well with Emmanuel Church’s, and the Finance Commission has decided to invest \$10K (about 1% of our general endowment) with them.

Tenancy agreements. The organizations with whom we share our building are a vital part of the spiritual life and financial health of Emmanuel Church. We have paid special attention to our ongoing tenancy agreements with Boston Jewish Spirit, Emmanuel Music, Spring of Boston, and other building-mates.

After much research and discussion, *Community Work Services* took over building maintenance duties this August, having had the cleaning contract since January. Their work thus far has been so effective that we did not need to hold a fall cleanup!

Newbury Street presence. The *Green Team* has given us beautiful frontage and gardens; if you stand outside for just a few minutes, you’ll see neighbors and tourists stop to enjoy it; they also read our outdoor signage and learn about what goes on at 15 Newbury. However, since we’re one of the only places on the street that allows smoking, we have what can only be described as a butt problem. However, our thanks go to new member Don Moran, whom you’ll see outside policing the area. Please say hello and thank him!

The Vestry joyfully supported *Tom Bartlett’s application for postulancy for the Diaconate*. Keep him in your prayers as the Commission on Ministry and Bishop Shaw discern next steps for him.

Parish administrator. A subcommittee of the vestry was formed to assist Pam in replacing new mom Barbara Kroft. We hired *Keith Nelson* during the summer; please welcome Keith.

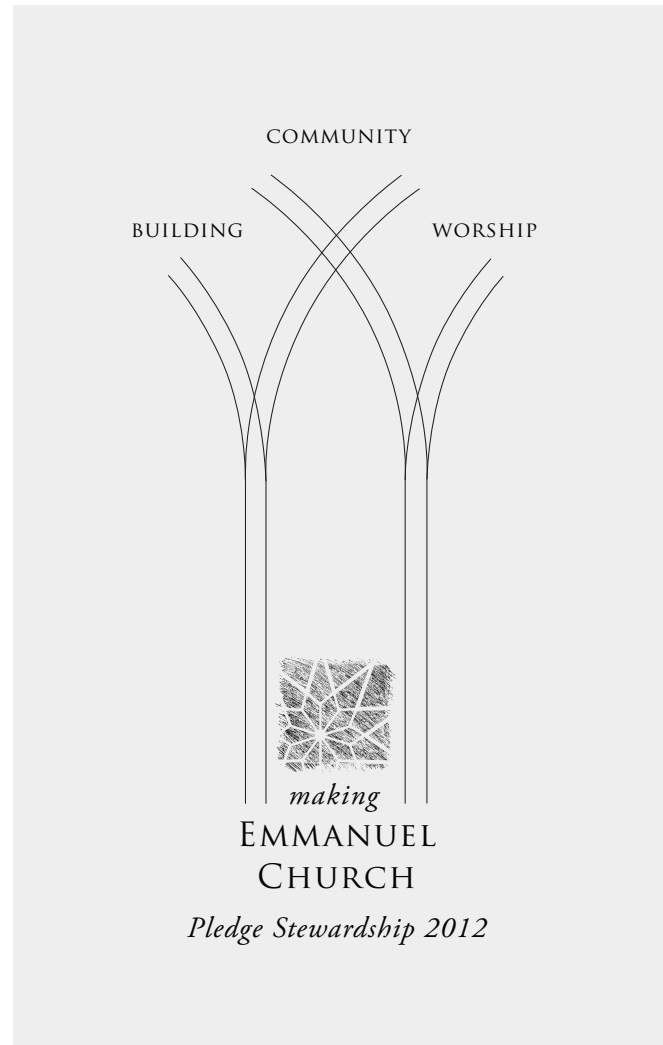
Pledge Stewardship. At this writing, we’ve had the kick-off pulpit pitch for Emmanuel’s Stewardship Campaign for 2012, ably presented by Stewardship Co-chairs Penny Lane and Jim Bartlett. The campaign has included beautiful testimonials from other Emmanuelites and we are anticipating a strong pledge season.

Ted Southwick has a three-year residency agreement for his *carpentry workshop in our basement*. We hired him to refinish the Parish Hall floor and stairways leading from the lobby and to repair the gouged threshold of the Parish Hall.

In closing, though 20 years ago I didn’t even know what a vestry was, I am continually surprised at how much satisfaction I get from being on the Vestry of Emmanuel Church. I believe strongly in our mission, and I feel a deep connection

to this community and to Pam Werntz and her ministry. As a friend of mine would say, they “feed my soul.” If any of this somewhat-guided tour of the Vestry strikes your fancy, or you just want to learn more – talk to one of the Vestry persons listed in the bulletin and on page 2.

– Paul Guttry



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