



The Messenger

St. Gabriel the Archangel Episcopal Church

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Vicar's Corner

***"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* John 10:10b**

"God is generous, God will give us more than we need to do what God calls us to do, more than enough. Ours is a lavishly generous God." This is amazing, simply amazing. I was so taken by the image, that I almost forgot to take notes. Jon White, Susan Kirshner and I heard these words together during the Church Growth workshop led by Charles Fulton, which was held in Salem mid-April of this year. Charles Fulton serves as Director of Congregational Development for the National Church, a position he has held for some time. He shared stories of church growth and of church death; he talked of cyclical realities, and challenges. He reminded us that understanding our mission is the first step in determining our direction. Our mission, to take the message of Christ into the world, can be lived out in many ways. Determining the "heart" of the faith community is essential. We have come together in this place for a reason. We each have chosen St. Gabriel's as our faith home; God has created community out of us and invites us to grow in understanding with one another and to build a course of action.

June 6th could be one of the most important dates of the year. Your BAC needs your help, and we ask that you share your evening with this community of faith. We will gather at 6:30 and will be done by 8:00. We will have the opportunity to dream out loud, to notice common threads and see the heart of St. Gabriel's made real.

I made my first visit to St. Gabriel's in the fall of 2004, and was welcomed immediately. During the coffee hour, people shared their affection for the church and for one another; dreamed out loud about wanting to grow; and added that things should never change. I have pondered that challenge for a while, now, and was intrigued when Charles Fulton addressed this very issue. He talked about the need to be intentional about growth, being aware of keeping lines of communication open. Feeling heard and known is essential to feeling "at home" and if care is taken to ensure communication, one can feel "at home" in any size church. Faith communities are, after all, living things and all living things must change. Planning for change, as a community, is one key to healthy growth.

We have work to do, but it can be the most exciting work we have ever done. Plan for the 6th of June and pray for the work we are called to do.

Remember, *"ours is a lavishly generous God"* – waiting to help us unfold in mission and ministry.

Blessings,

LouAnn+

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Home communion is available for those who are unable to attend Sunday worship service. Contact Jeanne Koppel at 503-520-0240 to arrange for an appointed time.

The Mission of St. Gabriel the Archangel Episcopal Church is to share the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and to help each other on our spiritual journey with God.