

## Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver!

—2 Corinthians 9:7

Stewardship Chair, Rich LeBuhn and I were having a conversation about types of giving this past Sunday. We are always thinking about good ways to explain the type of giving that is thought of as “stewardship” as opposed to philanthropic giving. Rich explains that the key difference is our gifts to the church are gifts of gratitude to God for all that we have, because all that we have is from God. We earn our monies through the application of our personal gifts and talents, and we respond to that ability with thankfulness to God. And though our annual pledges are given in support of the work we already do here, it is also in the hope that more might find themselves within the reach of abundant living through our church community.

Below are some frequently asked questions about Stewardship that were first crafted by a colleague in Rhode Island, the Rev. Scott Gunn. I have adapted them for our use and I hope you will find them helpful as you consider your annual pledge to The Church of Saint Barnabas:

### How much should I give?

There is no right answer. You should give the amount that feels right to you. When Jesus watched many people putting large sums of money into the temple treasury, he commented on the widow who put in a penny – because she was generous. It is not the amount that matters, but our generosity. If you are looking for a suggestion, you might think about starting with \$1 per week for every thousand dollars of household income. That means if your gross household income is \$40,000, you would give \$40 per week. Or you may consider a percentage (see below).

### Why do I need to pledge for the year?

There are two reasons. First, it encourages you to consider your giving in a thoughtful and prayerful way and it helps you set a budget. Second, this helps the church to set the budget for the year, so that we may continue and expand upon our programs and offerings.

## From the Rector

### I hear talk about a “tithe.” What is that?

The Bible says that God asks people to give the first ten percent of what they receive as a contribution for God’s work. This is the tithe – 10%. It is what I do with my own income. I tithe to St. Barnabas. And I consider that percent is the “thank you” I offer to God for everything I have. Not everyone feels able to tithe, but proportional giving is worthy of consideration by everyone.

### OK, what is “proportional giving?”

This is when you set aside a given percentage of your income, and give that proportion for God’s work. If you can’t start with ten percent, you can try some other percentage. This is still a proportional gift. Giving this way helps us to ensure that we are giving “off the top” of what we make. More important, it may rise and fall as a total dollar amount as our circumstances change.

### Where does my money go?

Your money funds our priests’ stipends and the salaries of our other staff. The money pays for the expenses to operate the buildings: insurance, heating oil, electricity, etc. and to care for the grounds. Your money covers program expenses (paper, supplies, and books). Some of our money is shared with the Diocese of New York.

### Why do we give money to the Diocese?

By canon (law) of the Diocese, a percentage of our operating income is sent to support diocesan ministries. These ministries include diocesan programs and staff salaries for people who serve as resources to our parish and to every parish. Some of the money from our diocese is sent to The Episcopal Church for ministries around the world. We give this money not just because it is required, but because in our tradition, congregations see themselves not as independent churches but as parts of a wider church with a world-wide mission.

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## From the Rector

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### How do I know where my money is going?

The financial affairs of our church are overseen by the Vestry—an elected group of St. Barnabas members—and the Rector. The Vestry meets once each month, usually the second Tuesday, at 7:30 p.m. and meetings are open to anyone who would like to see what is happening. In addition, our treasurer's monthly reports are available as well, detailing all income and expenses. Once each year, our parish gathers for the Annual Meeting to elect the Vestry and to approve the budget. In short, our financial operations are completely transparent. There are no secrets, and you are welcome to speak with any Vestry member, our treasurer, or our priests at any time.

### How do I pledge?

You can complete a pledge card. You should have received one in your letter from Rich LeBuhn. If you don't have a pledge card you can pick one up on any Sunday or just contact the Parish Office and we'll get you a card right away. This year, as we have in the past, we ask that everyone return his or her pledge cards on or before December 11th, 2011 so that we may prepare our budget for 2012 appropriately and realistically.

### How may I give money?

If you choose to use weekly envelopes, we will send you a supply for the year. If you would prefer to pay by cash or stock transfer in one transaction, please be in touch with Sue Stanley in the office.

### What if I have trouble paying my pledge?

You can change your pledge at any time. Just call the parish office.

### I have other questions, what do I do?

Talk to our Stewardship Chair, Rich LeBuhn or another member of the parish. Any member will speak with you. You are also very welcome to speak to the priests. We are all happy to answer questions and share our own experiences.

—Nora †

# Embracing Prayer

We have had some interesting conversations about prayer lately.

A couple weeks ago St Barnabas held a series of conversation over dinner or tea about prayer and about 40 people participated. I learned that almost all of us pray in one way or another (even if it is just a quick prayer for a parking space). Our discussions have got me thinking about the way we pray together as a church community has changed the way I feel about my connections to you and to every person I pray with and for.

For over a year we have prayed for Sarah, Shane and Josh who were in prison in Iran. Their names were on our prayer list for as long as they were captive in a cell, waiting to stand trial. We prayed for them every week, so often that their names became printed as part of our form for the Prayers of the People—almost a permanent fixture. About couple weeks after Shane and Josh were released from prison and returned home to the U.S., I saw them walking down the street. I recognized them from their pictures in the paper and in the news and as they came closer to me, I began to smile, ready for them to smile back in recognition. Although we had never met, for a split second, I believed that Sarah, Shane, and Josh knew me. To them, I was another person on the street but because I had prayed for them, said their name every week for over a year, they became part of me. We have a connection (even if they don't know it).

From the  
Assistant  
Rector

This is what praying for another person does: it builds a bridge, strengthens a bond, creates a space with in us and between us. Praying for others is a form of embrace, momentarily embracing the lives and needs of others. Somehow

this works when we pray for dear friends and total strangers, because when I passed the three former prisoners on the street I felt that they would know me. The wonderful part is that they don't need to know me for us to have had that connection.

Since that day that I walked past Sarah, Shane, and Josh, I have been thinking about all of the people we pray for in church on Sunday. I don't know most of those people and I often don't even know what circumstances they are facing. But I have an image of a string going from my heart to God and then to that person. And strings go from your hearts, to God's, and then to that person, too. And because there are so many of us and so many people that we pray for, there is a big tangle of string everywhere that somehow criss-cross together into a holy hammock, a place where we hold all of the people we pray for in a divine embrace.

Prayer doesn't just benefit the people for whom we pray. Prayer changes us, too. I am so grateful that we can pray with and for each other. May God grant us the things that are best for us, even good parking spots! Amen.

— Lindsay †

## New Spiritual Reading Group

On **November 17, at 7:00 pm** a small book group will be gathering to continue the conversation on prayer that was begun at the Adult Christian Ed. events in October. We will be reading Section 1 of the book, "*The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See*" by Richard Rohr with light conversation to follow. Copies of the book can be picked up in the office for \$15. †

## From the Music Department

“WOW!” seems to be the consensus of opinion for those who attended **Chris Houlihan’s organ recital** here on Sunday afternoon, October 23. With just the first piece, the “Allegro” from Widor’s Symphony VI, the organ got a thorough work-out. He was completely in charge of both the music and the instrument, as he blazed through a volley of 16th notes in hands and feet and at a formidable tempo. Other music on the program, the “Andantino” from a Debussy string quartet, the “Second Fantasy” of Jehan Alain, and “Comes Autumn Time” by Leo Sowerby, gave us a feeling for the quiet and expressive side of his playing and personality. His comments prepared us nicely for the pieces that were to come, and much of this music proved that his playing could be of a

deeper and more musical nature than just a bunch of fast notes. The final selection on the program was Franck’s “Grande Piece Symphonique.” I’ve always had the feeling that, as a composition, this lengthy piece has some great moments but maybe a few not so great ones, but he made it hang together, and it held my interest throughout.

Finally, I will observe that it was an afternoon of pretty serious music of the French vintage. There were no lollipops here but some different and unusual repertoire. It was all fascinating, however, because it was played with vitality and musicality. You had to listen and think, but it was an enjoyable kind of listening and thinking. What a talent! I am sure that, if you pay attention, you will hear a great deal more of him, and I am so pleased that we were able to get him here.

Now I must say that this mission was accomplished only with the help of several generous “angels,” who did much to underwrite this recital. Even with our suggested donation, without these “angels,” we would have had a serious shortfall in meeting Chris’s fee. As it

turns out, we “made” \$10. (Yes, it was that close!) So I thank the “angels” for their generosity in making possible this occasion. Also I must thank **Nora** for her help with the program formatting; **Mary Merryman and Mary Stevenson**, who presented a beautiful reception (worth the price of the donation right there); **Ann Jones and Chris Mitchell**, who worked at the door; and, of course, **Sue Stanley**, who always helps with whatever needs doing. As I said in the program, “It does take a village to produce a recital.”

### COMING EVENT:

The Canterbury Choir is rehearsing for our special Christmas program, “Reflections on Christ’s Nativity.” If you might like to sing with the choir for just this program, would you speak to me, and I will tell you about rehearsals.

**REFLECTIONS ON CHRIST’S NATIVITY**, the special Christmas concert by the Canterbury Choir, will be performed on Sunday afternoon, **December 11 at 5:00 PM**. Please mark your calendars. †

—Donald Butt

## The Hagberg Sisters: A St. Barnabas Legacy

Dorothy and Caroline Hagberg were as much a part of Irvington as the Town Hall Theater, or the Burnham Building, or for that matter The Church of St. Barnabas, where the two sisters worshiped for at least half a century. They were raised in Irvington, schooled in Irvington and worked in Irvington as well. Caroline handled mortgages at the old Irvington National Bank & Trust Company that has long since evolved into a local branch of Chase Bank. Dorothy was the secretary to the Principal of Irvington Schools—all twelve grades, which were then housed in what is now the Main Street School. Before that, according to their old friend, Billie Jeanne Sanders, Dorothy had worked for the old Burnham Company in the building that now houses the library.

Legacy is the operative word to describe the Hagberg sisters. They drew strength from St. Barnabas as faithful attendees at the 8:00 am service. For years, one or the other of them kept the parish books. Charlie Bates, a long-time friend, remembers that for many years, the two of them took care of tallying up the weekly plate

offerings. Lou Lustenberger recalls regularly stopping by their house on Croton Place in the village where they had organized the church’s monthly bills. Caroline, he said, “would have everything laid out on her kitchen table, and I would sign the checks that she had prepared—without question.”

Rev. Nora Smith remembers them when she herself was growing up in Irvington. “But it was when I met them again at Tarrytown Hall (the continual care facility to which they retired) that I came to know their charm and their sincere devotion to everything they were passionate about, which in Caroline’s case included Yankee baseball.”

Their passion also embraced St. Barnabas. Dorothy passed away in June of 2010, and after Caroline followed her this past August, they left behind their joint appreciation of what the church had done for them in the form of a bequest of approximately \$350,000.

Dorothy and Caroline Hagberg left no family survivors—either children or siblings. So the decision to leave a substantial portion of their joint estate to the church they loved was not a conflicted one. For others, however, such a decision might well be—especially if they do not want to give short shrift to their children, or to other worthy causes

to which they feel loyalty. Fortunately, the law provides for a number of ways in which that can be done. Life income gifts, charitable annuities, remainder trusts and gifts of property or retirement funds are among the options individuals might consider as they make their estate plans.

Not every bequest has to be as generous as the Hagbergs’ but all are meaningful. Those of us who have been around St. Barnabas awhile will recall Russ Bouton, who left the church \$11,000, and Roz Pelletier, who bequeathed \$10,000.

A good source of information on estate planning options is the Episcopal Church Foundation, whose web site ([www.EpiscopalFoundation.org](http://www.EpiscopalFoundation.org)) has detailed explanations of the various strategies available. There are also brochures you can pick up in the parish lounge.

The Hagbergs’ gift was specifically designated for the parish’s Permanent Property Trust, St. Barnabas’ financial nest egg from which the Vestry is able to draw down a specified amount of income each year. Thanks to Dorothy and Caroline, our nest egg just grew by a significant amount. And for that, we must all be grateful. †

—Barry Seaman

# InCommon

**The Church of St. Barnabas**  
**15 North Broadway**  
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The Rev. Nora Smith, *Rector*  
The Rev. Lindsay Lunnum, *Assistant Rector*  
Mr. Donald G. Butt, *Music Director*  
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**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Church of St. Barnabas, Irvington is a Christian community, grounded in the Episcopal tradition, which celebrates the love of Christ through regular worship, fellowship and music. Our goals are to grow in faith, both within ourselves as individuals and by welcoming others from a variety of backgrounds and stages of life, and to reach out and share God's abundant gifts with others.

## "The Doors and Doorways of Irvington"

Despite knowing there would be tough competition at the Irvington Historical Society's 2011 photo contest, I decided I would enter when I saw that the subject was "The Doors and Doorways of Irvington." How could I help but enter the contest after walking through the beautiful doors of St. Barnabas for the past 16 years? The photo entries on display were all so beautiful. I only voted for my own pictures after my daughter Laurel said, "Are you crazy? Of course you should vote for yours!" My son Sebastian said "It's a nice picture of the door, but it would look better if all that stuff were cleared away." That such a lovely space used for storage is what I think is intriguing about the photo. Most people never see the door. You have to walk into the north transept and past the organ pipe room to get to the entrance on the Broadway side of the Church. It is definitely worth the walk to see the door and the lovely mosaic pattern of bricks surrounding it. There's an assortment of "stuff" stored year 'round in the entranceway: an old snow shovel, stacks of clay flower pots, two rows of pew candle poles, a few bags of ice melt, the wooden "grid" for locating spaces in the Memorial Garden, two large wooden crosses, and a wooden podium with a big brass eagle on top. I have a soft spot in my heart for that little entranceway with its beautiful mosaic brickwork on the walls; it's one of my favorite spots. One year the sexton and I lugged four huge Christmas trees from the backyard and wedged them into the little hallway to get them inside before the snow started to fall. I definitely recommend a walk to see the door and the adjacent wall that bears the word "PEACE" in large brick mosaic. I was surprised and pleased to win an honorable mention for my photograph. And I can't wait for next year's contest. I'm hoping the topic will be: "The Best View from an Irvington Office Window." I figure I'm a shoe-in!

*Peace,*

*Sue Stanley, Office Administrator, St. Barnabas*

