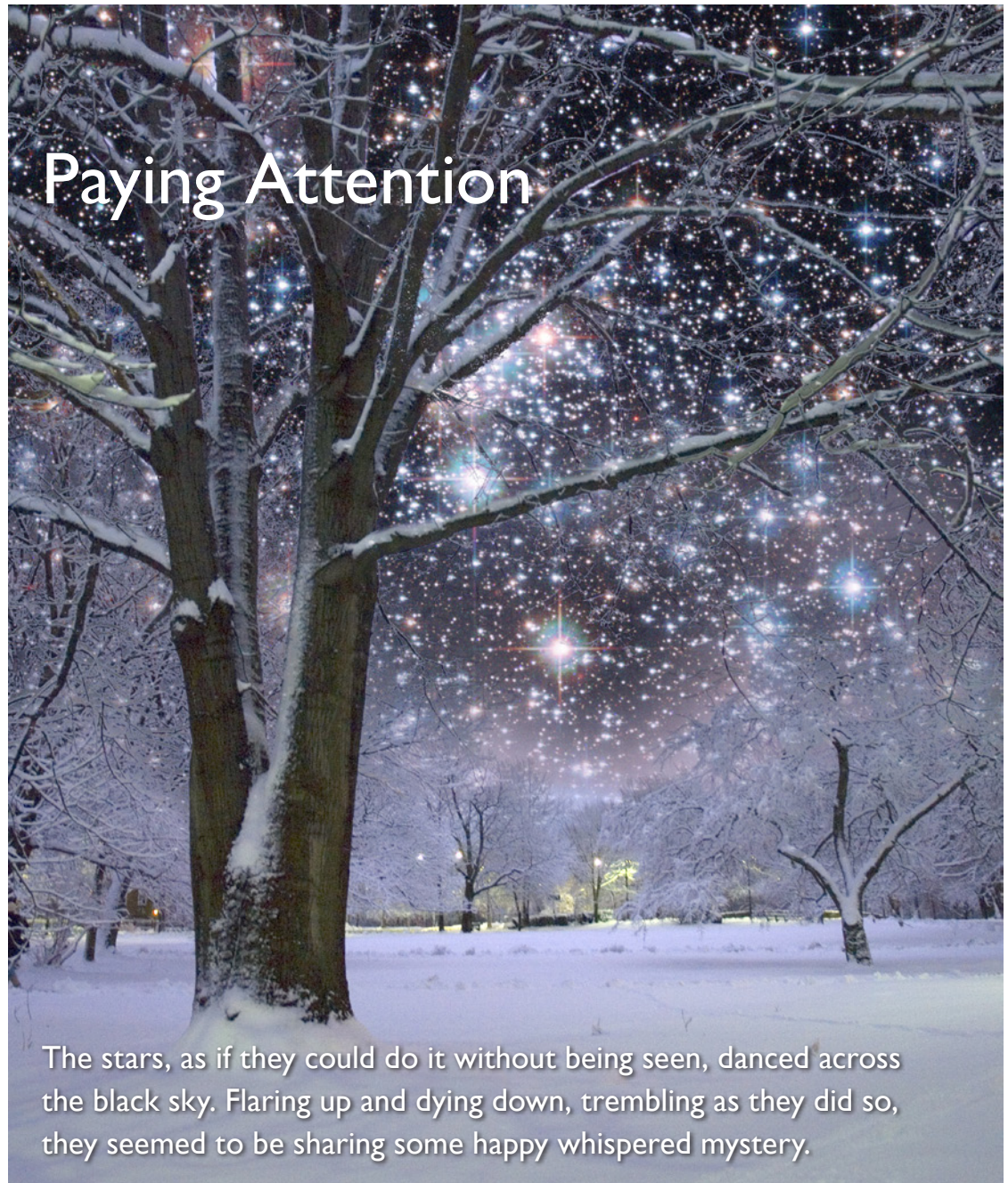


Voices

Journal of EMMANUEL CHURCH in the City of Boston

WINTER 2014



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Carolyn Roosevelt
Pamela Wertz

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Frank Bunn
James H. Fox
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Shan Overton
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Cover photo/illustration by Michael Scanlon
with text from *War & Peace*, by Leo Tolstoy

From the Editor



There are many kinds of attentiveness: living in the moment; taking care of people in need; listening closely; supporting a beloved institution... In this issue we explore some of the ways people in our community pay attention.

Sometimes paying attention means looking up. The illustration on the cover is by Michael Scanlon. It reminds me of the beauty of winter, and the wonder of stars. Pam Wertz and Jaylyn Olivo, two of our muses, contribute reflections on paying attention. Pam offers one of her favorite poems about what we want from God and what we get. Jaylyn muses about "free form" prayer.

Shan Overton writes about her recent trip to Uganda with her usual sensitivity. Her description of her own journey from expectation to recognition of a small voice is touching. James Fox contributes a wonderful piece about a very attentive cat, and Carolyn Roosevelt's "Any Good Books" reviews a story of a father's attention to his autistic son.

Art always requires special attention. Tom Barber, a physician and hospital administrator, is attentive to the people he serves, and his piece "A Hopeful Autobiography" is written in appreciation for one of the patients who died in his care. Martha Tucker's piece about awareness starts as a prose poem that cannot be contained within sentences, and expands into exultant streams of verse. We are all blessed with the musical artistry of Nancy Granert. Another dimension of artistry is evident in the illustration on page 8.

Frank Bunn's report on the Emmanuel Center's discussion series about Science and Spirituality gives a glimpse of the first meetings of this very popular series.

Our Parish Operations Manager, Keith Nelson, will be leaving Emmanuel the week of January 19. Pam gives details of Keith's departure and our new administrator, Tamra Tucker.

I am very grateful for the leadership of the Vestry and its committees. They pay attention to Emmanuel – the people, the staff, the finances, the programs, the building, and more. Vestry member Jim Bartlett reports on the Development Committee, which seeks to ensure Emmanuel's wellbeing now and in the future.

John Mears is passionate about books, and he starts a conversation about one of the latest books to "acquire" him. As always, I am delighted and very lucky to work with Matt Griffing, our very talented and very busy graphic designer.

I hope that these pieces bring you inspiration and that by paying attention you find deep meaning and joy.

Margo

Read previous issues of Voices online at
www.emmanuelboston.org/community/newsletter/

From the Rector: Too Broke?

Very early in my career I worked as an assistant to the president of a small company. He was a funny man who was fond of saying, "I'm so broke I can't even afford to pay attention!" I enjoyed this clever word play until the deep truth of it became evident when the company went bankrupt and we all lost our jobs. I learned a hard lesson about the need to pay attention – to continue to find and grow resources so that I could afford to pay attention. I look for ways to find and grow resources so that Emmanuel Church can afford to pay attention. It's just another example of evangelism – of one beggar showing another beggar where some bread is.

For me, paying attention means cultivating awareness of the beauty of holiness, of possibility, and of abundance. Paying attention means leaning into and opening up to the mystery of Love, both for myself and for others who will come after me. Paying attention means listening for the still small voice of God, or in Hebrew, the bat kol (the voice of the little girl) that Elijah heard. It also means minding the gaps between what (and how) we want, and what (and how) we get. I keep a poem about this close to me. You may recall it because I cite it all the time. It's by Sue Stock, called "Reflections After Compline":

What we want is power,
What we get is frailty;
What we want is certainty,
What we get is ambiguity;
What we want is answers,
What we get is questions;
What we want is self-sufficiency,
What we get is interdependence
What we want is permanence,
What we get is transience;
What we want is clarity,
What we get is mystery;
What we want is fantasy,
What we get is God.

There's a little book that I encourage you to pick up called, *Strength for the Journey: A Guide to Spiritual Practice*, by Renée Miller (Morehouse Publishing, 2011). In it you will find twenty short and generous essays about cultivating mindfulness through the widest variety of practices I've ever seen described in one volume: from meditation to movement, from offering hospitality to engaging technology, from individual or community prayer to art and music. Cultivating spiritual practices will help you afford to pay attention. The introduction, written by Brian C. Taylor, closes with the most wonderful advice: "Engage in practices that enliven you, not the ones you think you should do ... pray as you can, not as you can't ... Keep in mind what T.S. Eliot wrote: 'For us it is just the trying. The rest is not our business.'" — *plw*

Musings: Ripple Effects

"What a revelation! That God didn't speak English. That he wasn't up there somewhere listening to make sure that I got the words right. That whatever grand and glorious mystery infused the world with grace was here, now, all around me. That prayer was not paying formulaic obeisance, but paying attention."

– Chet Raymo, Science Musings, 11 Feb 2013

Raymo apparently grappled with the forms of prayer for years and finally found sense in Thomas Merton's writing about prayer – the idea that prayer was opening ourselves to the world around us, not praying by rote words that God was supposed to hear and heed. I have no problem with publicly, communally declared "prayer" – the liturgical formula in which the whole congregation participates. If committed to memory and recited by rote, such prayers free the conscious mind to "wander where it will" in search of more personal, heartfelt, thoughtful prayers of petition, gratitude, reflection. But mostly what, in my life, might be construed as prayer is rather free-form thought about people who cross my mind and for whom I make silent petitions to the cosmos for healing, peace of mind, or whatever they seem to need at the time and even more free-form gratitude for the gifts of my life. This happens in the garden as often as it does at the altar rail or in the choir stall. I sort of admire those who meditate, spend time in concerted prayer, practice a more structured prayer life. But I have neither the discipline nor really the desire to adopt such a practice. For now, at least, I'll settle for the practice of trying to pay attention to the world around me, whispering to myself "prayers" of gratitude, petition, and reflection and trusting that they fall on cosmic ears.

– Jaylyn Olivo

Features this Issue

2. From the Editor
3. Too Broke & Ripple Effects
- 4–5. The Still Small Voice of One Girl
6. Mr. Edward
7. Any Good Books Lately
8. A Hopeful Autobiography
9. Awareness
10. Staffing Changes at Emmanuel
11. Science and Spirituality & Meet Our Interns
12. Development Committee & Passionate About Books

The Still, Small Voice of One Girl: *Learning to Listen in Uganda*

Hearing Bach's cantatas at Emmanuel Church each week has encouraged me to listen in a whole new way. I carried this evolving aural ability with me as I traveled to Uganda to learn about the health and wellbeing of women and children.

I set off with two other American women into a rural mountainous region near the Democratic Republic of Congo. A few days prior to our arrival, a massive flood had swept away entire villages in the Rwenzori Mountains, leaving a wide plain of mud and debris in the town of Kasese, where we were staying. Kasese's main hospital had been knocked from its foundations, and the Anglican medical center we had come to visit overflowed with disaster victims as well as its regular patients. Healthy newborn babies lay in rooms with people suffering from cholera. Cancer patients requiring immediate surgery were waiting for the water to be restored so that the surgical tools could be sterilized. The lights flickered off and on, and the overwhelmed medical staff was working 20+ hours a day. They had no time to speak with us.

Funded by the Louie Crew Scholarship from The Oasis of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark (NJ), I had gone to Kasese with two other women in order to listen to and learn from Ugandan women about the good medical care and health education they had received from the center. Our plan was to hear from the women themselves and from the midwives who cared for them and their babies. But a disaster zone is not an appropriate environment for reflections about women's day-to-day lives and long-term plans—there are too many urgent tasks requiring attention. Thus, my companions and I offered as much help as we could, but spent most of our time watching the unfolding drama.

As the days passed, we spent less and less time at the medical center and more and more time in the upper class hillside neighborhood where we were housed.

While there, we met a little girl whom I will call Isabella for the sake of her privacy. She is an AIDS orphan, a child whose father is unknown and whose mother is unable to care for her due to disease and poverty. Living with distant relatives who offer her shelter, food, clothing, and basic care, Isabella has had little schooling or healthcare, and her actual age (most likely 6 or 7) is unknown. While she did not speak English and was at first very shy around us, she was curious and soaked up our language once she decided we were



Top photo: Shan Overton and two companions travelled to a rural mountainous region near the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Bottom:* One of Shan's travel companions taught a child called "Isabella" to sing and jump rope. *Photos by Shan Overton*

trustworthy. One member of our group, Sarah, a college student, spent a lot of time teaching Isabella to say words in English, which Isabella subsequently used in her communications throughout our stay. Sarah played jump rope with her, taught her children's songs in English, showed her how to write her own name, and gave her drawing paper and pens. We began to enjoy gifts of drawings and English words in a child's handwriting – as well as the happy sound of Isabella's voice echoing across the courtyard as she enthusiastically sang the new songs she'd learned.

One afternoon while listening to Isabella sing, I realized that, while I had planned to travel across two continents and an ocean to hear the voices of adult women talking about their experiences as midwives and mothers, the real situation offered something else altogether. What I actually heard, clear as a bell on that hill

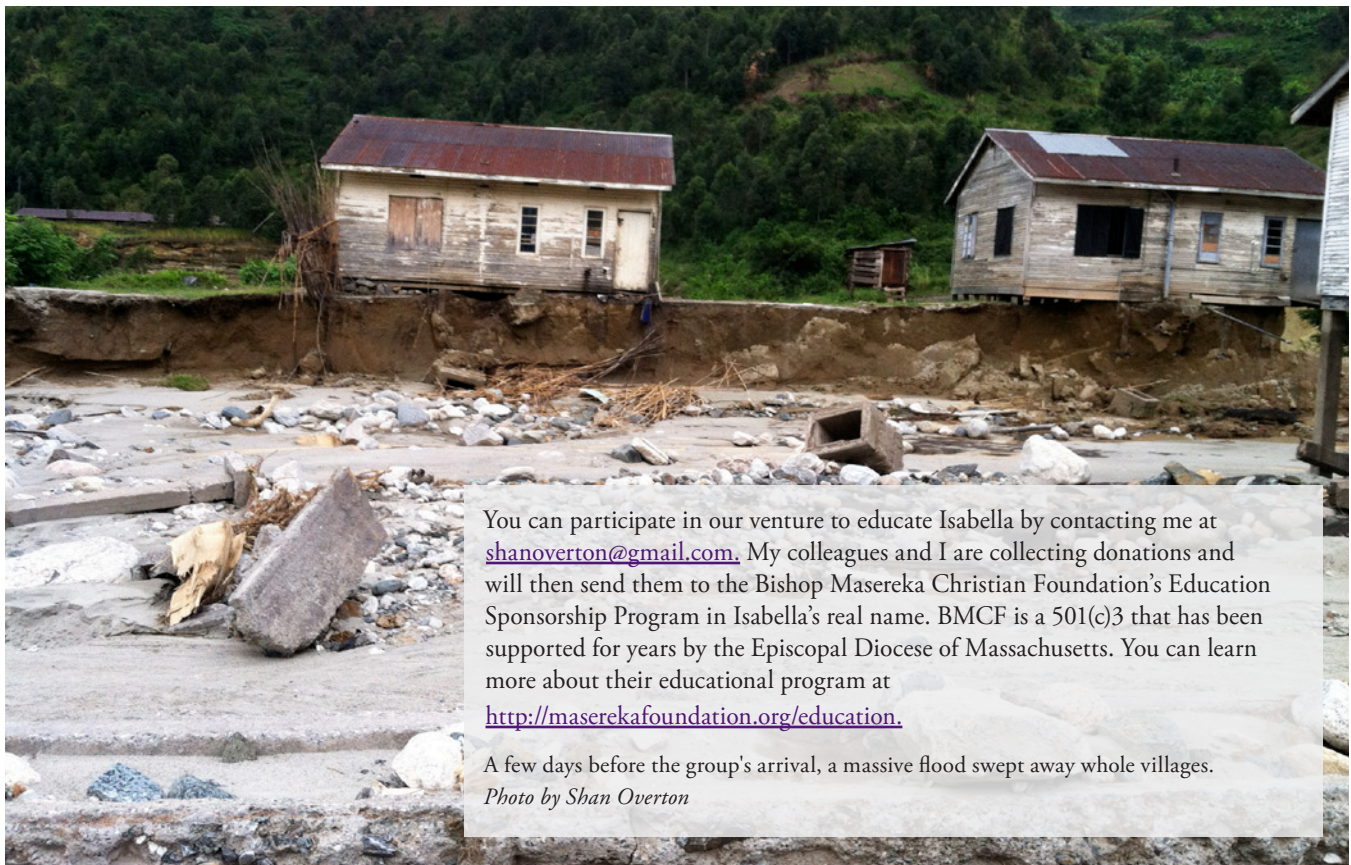
in southwestern Uganda, was the still, small voice of one little girl. I thought I was going to Uganda to get involved in systemic change of healthcare for women and infants. But, hearing Isabella's voice, I ended up being convinced that the only change – the best change – that I could effectively make was in the life of this one child.

My travel companions and I, along with some other interested supporters, have decided to make Isabella's education and health the focus of our efforts to make life better for women and girls in Uganda. We have committed to seeing Isabella through primary and secondary school as well as college and graduate school, should she wish to attend. We have also agreed to pay her health care fees (checkups, immunizations), to buy her school supplies (uniforms, pencils, paper), and to make sure she has an

adequate place to study and sleep (desk, lamp, bed, bedding, malaria net). By educating Isabella (for amounts of money so low that it seems almost absurd), we hope to help her and, by extension, to help all Ugandan women and girls. With our support, Isabella will be equipped to have a happy and productive life as an educated professional woman, and she will be in a much better position than we are to help others with stories like hers.

Listening to the small voice of Isabella has changed me. Instead of focusing on a collective voice of women and babies, I am now committed, with a group of people in my own country, to one girl. Isabella has become part of my extended family. I invite you to listen, too, so that you can make a difference in the life of this girl or others like her.

– Shan Overton



You can participate in our venture to educate Isabella by contacting me at shanoverton@gmail.com. My colleagues and I are collecting donations and will then send them to the Bishop Masereka Christian Foundation's Education Sponsorship Program in Isabella's real name. BMCF is a 501(c)3 that has been supported for years by the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. You can learn more about their educational program at <http://maserekafoundation.org/education>.

A few days before the group's arrival, a massive flood swept away whole villages.
Photo by Shan Overton

Mr. Edward

"Of things seen and unseen" – Nicene Creed

Nobody knows when it will happen, thought Mister Edward the cat. But I can. Sometimes. Two weeks ago it was that man with the face of a snarl. He was always complaining about the food, the rooms, everything. He got pneumonia. I missed that one.

Outside the dining room there was a small notice: In Memoriam with his name below it.

Nobody on the staff liked him much, except for Sebastian, the aide with the funny accent.

But he likes everybody.

Last night, for example, he gave me a little chicken with the dry stuff. He chopped it up and added it to my bowl.

Some of them can't talk much. We can never know what happens inside others. They just wander about with this lost look in their worried eyes.

Sebastian comes up and takes their hand with his big soft fingers, and says, "I know, Dear, I know ... It's all right." And that seems to settle them down.

To earn my keep, I do my best to help.

When one of the patients is in her final days, I jump up on the bed and lie next to her. I'm never sure if at that point they even know that I am there, but I think they do.

Any way, tonight it may be Miss Estes' time. The last thing she said about four or five days ago was, "I have lived long enough." Since then she has sunk into a deep sleep.

I remember before she got so tired of living here, I would get up on her lap, and she would smile and stroke my fur with the same silver brush she used on her own long, thin white hair.

"Well, Mister Edward, how nice it is to have your company today," she would say.

The last time I tried to be on her lap. It was after she had stopped talking and only ate a little yoghurt. I could feel the thin, brittle thighbones beneath her night gown. I turned my head to look at her face because she was not brushing me, and I saw that her eyes were almost closed, sunk deep in their sockets. They seemed to be staring inward into nothing.

Since living here, it has been mostly a good time. I can go where I want, sleep anywhere I want. My favorite place is on one of the easy chairs in the entertainment room. It is around the corner from the nursing station where the television plays softly all day long. I like to watch the chattering finches in their cage in the corner.

Any way, tonight I can definitely feel that some one is going to pass on, as they say. The sign for me is like a tingle that goes up my spine.

And since after supper, either Sebastian or one of the nurses or both keep going in and coming out of Miss Estes'



room. I am sure that she will depart some time before dawn.

This afternoon I was on her bed for a little while and I could hardly hear her breathe for almost a minute at a time. It came out of her like the whisper of a soft wind in a wheat field. (Maybe I was a barn cat in an earlier life.)

Any way one of the nurses pushed me off the bed where I had been lying next to the old lady's chest and sent me out of the room. A little later a tall woman came into the room with a book and stayed there for a while. Then she left the room and went back to the elevator.

Right now I am in the rec room on one of the easy chairs. The television is on with no sound.

And then I feel that tingle again along my vertebrae, stronger this time.

I hear a faint rustle of tiny wings from inside the cage in the corner.

I rise, stretch, leave the chair, and go down the hall to the end where the double doors lead to a patio.

And then it happens. A small patch of light emerges from Miss Estes' room and moves slowly, rowing brighter toward me.

I have to close my eyes as the light reaches me and passes out through the glass doors into the night sky.

A few seconds later, I open my eyes and see two nurses hurry down to her room. Sister Monica is on the phone to the doctor.

The late night shift becomes alive with its drill for the arrival of death.

I head half way down the hall and stop near the elevator.

"Where do they go?" I wonder.

And then for just a moment, I feel for the first time a sensation of something warm enter my bones, ... and then quietly leave.

After about twenty minutes, the ward returns to normal. In the end everything is so simple, so peaceful.

I return to my chair and go back to sleep.

– James H. Fox

Illustration also by James H. Fox

Any Good Books Lately

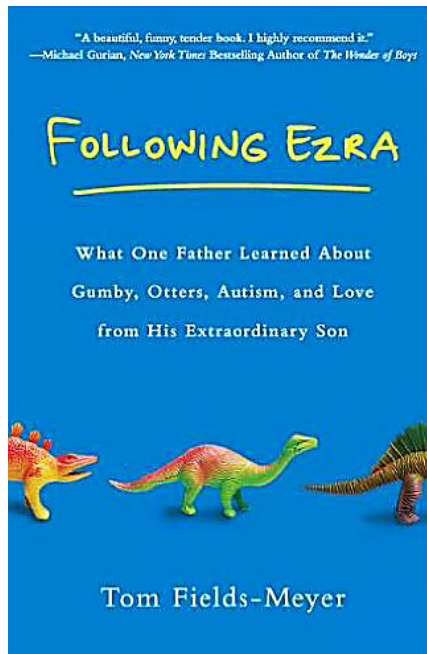
Following Ezra: What One Father Learned About Gumby, Otters, Autism, and Love from His Extraordinary Son
Tom Fields-Meyer (2011, New American Library)

Tom Fields-Meyer is a professional writer whose best story landed in his lap. He has written a wonderful memoir about the childhood of his middle son, Ezra, who is autistic. Beginning in 1998, when Ezra was two, Fields-Meyer and his wife, Shawn, have faced the challenge of raising a child who turned away from the social world in favor of various coping mechanisms, enthusiasms, and compulsive habits. Both as a journalist and as a loving father, Fields-Meyer pays close attention to what Ezra does and says; the day-to-day details are more telling than an abstract psychological or neurological theory would be.

Having had a mostly secure and successful life, Fields-Meyer is inclined to trust the powers of research and expertise, even in such a theoretically natural realm as parenting. For Amiel, the family's oldest boy, the books had answers that made pretty good sense; but, Field-Meyer realizes, "Ezra has a different kind of mind.... The wisdom we have drawn on to raise our first child so far isn't going to be effective with this one. All bets are off. We're on our own."

One of the unexpected things about Ezra is the pattern of his fears. He loves swings and merry-go-rounds, and he likes to climb in places that an ordinary child would quail from. At the same time, he finds noisy circumstances very stressful; he is alarmed by the motor of a water fountain; and he refuses to enter his pre-school classroom for the first week because he's afraid of a drawing on the wall.

He gains control of himself through extremes of organization. One of the first quirks his parents noticed was his drive to line up toy animals in precise patterns. The same drive extended his habit, a little later, of visiting animals at the zoo in a prescribed order, and later



still, to learning everything there is to know about breeds of dogs. This last has the advantage of being something that he can converse about with dog owners, who recognize their shared enthusiasm along with his peculiarities.

Ezra also makes an extensive mental catalog of various animated characters, starting with Thomas the Tank Engine, and the Sesame Street characters, moving on to the Simpsons and the complete catalogs of Disney and Warner Brothers. Fields-Meyer says, "Each obsession arrives mysteriously and unannounced, like a phantom that sneaks into our home in the night and seizes my son, snatching his focus. Nor can I ever imagine what might catch his attention next."

But whatever it is, he will try to use it to engage Ezra, to grab moments of attention and conversation, and to provide him with moments of restful order, some relief from the jangle of his senses. "Over time, though, I come to realize a reward: Ezra understands that another human cares

about what he cares about." With such connection comes a way for his parents to reach Ezra, to guide him, and help him learn to control himself.

All this goes on in the context of a vibrant family life. Shawn is a rabbi, and Ezra's brothers Ami and Noam have their own rounds of karate and violin lessons, Hebrew school, and visits with cousins. What do his brothers make of Ezra? They have never not known him; they know he's different, and they know he's their brother. This is not saintliness, but it is compassion and fellow-feeling.

A small spoiler: *Following Ezra* ends with his Bar Mitzvah, which is a signal triumph, celebrated by the village of family, friends, and teachers that has helped raise this special young man. It's a fitting wrap-up to this lovely book, a worthy entrant in the growing literature of autism parenting stories. Beginning by discarding all expectations, and all hope of ready-made answers, Fields-Meyer has found a path for fatherhood in his son's footsteps. "It wasn't about finding the right expert for my child; it was about learning to be the right parent."

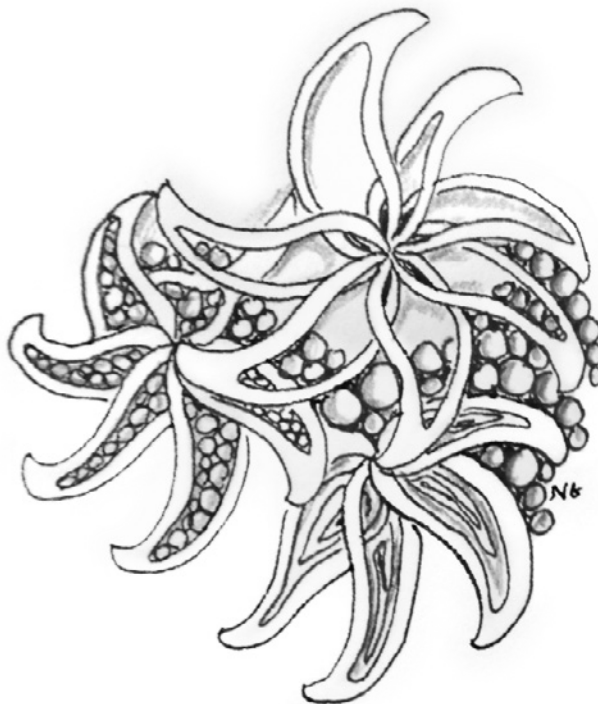
—CTR

Read more reviews on Carolyn's blog: anygoodbooks-mixedreviews.blogspot.com

A hopeful autobiography: In appreciation of Portia Nelson

- I. Life is beautiful and full of light.
I'm growing and watching.
I will make choices.
This might be hard.
- II. Life is beautiful, especially its shadows.
Watch, think, grow, worry.
I must make choices.
This is hard.
- III. Life is focus. I need glasses.
Learn, practice, worry, watch, produce.
I must live with my choices.
It is hard, but I chose it.
- IV. Life is out of focus. I fall into holes.
Work, share, reproduce, worry, watch.
I must leverage my choices.
It is hard. Did it choose me?
- V. Life is holy.
I can watch my worry.
I might choose unchoosing.
Can we choose each other?

– Tom Barber



Zentangle illustration by Nancy Granert

Awareness

I want to write about awareness but I don't know where
to break the stanza or put the periods because there are
no periods in awareness no breaks no stops just deep open
breathtaking spaciousness and minute microscopic crystal
glimpses like the redder than red weeping maple which
baptized the rock face on an October weekend when I
realized that love and tears flow mingled down to rest in
grace and my soul was waiting without knowing until
awareness beckoned and my gaze rose

Awareness is always more than
More than expected
More than planned
More than appreciated
In the awareness space of more than
Colors are more differentiated
Time is more suspended
Love is more kindled
Awareness awakens
Awareness beckons
Awareness shocks
Awareness makes us more than

– *Martha Tucker*

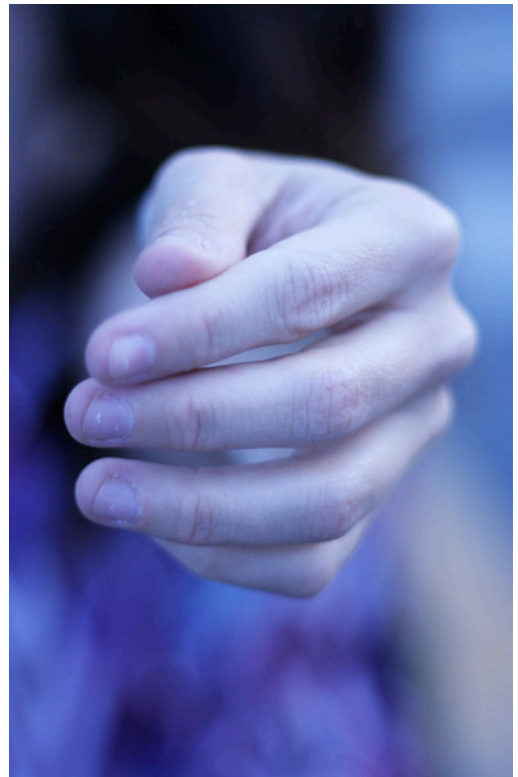


Photo by Matt Griffing

Staffing Changes at Emmanuel

Dear People of Emmanuel,

I write to let you know that Keith Nelson has discerned a call to step down as the Parish Administrator of Emmanuel Church. After much prayerful discernment, he feels confident that God is calling him to test his vocation as a monk.

In early February of 2014, Keith will begin the journey of monastic discernment as a postulant of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge (the monastic community in the Episcopal Church of which Bishop Shaw is a member): www.ssjc.org.

Keith's leave-taking brings an expected mixture of emotions. He writes, "I am grateful and hopeful as I step forward into this next chapter. I am also profoundly grateful for the opportunity to have served Emmanuel Church and for the many lessons I have learned from this rare and beautiful community."

For my part, I am thrilled for Keith and can see and affirm this call of his. I also know that we will miss him enormously, and that the transition will be bumpy, as transitions inevitably are! Keith's last week at Emmanuel will be the week of January 19.

Keith will be present with us to say farewell at Holy Eucharist on Sunday, January 19.

I am also delighted to announce that Tamra Tucker will be our new Parish Administrator.

Tamra Tucker received her bachelor's degree in Religious Studies and Non-Profit Organization Management from The University of Oklahoma in 2009. She came to Boston as part of the diocesan internship program, Life Together, and served as the Christian Education Coordinator at St. Stephen's in the South End where she worked to bridge the gap between the Sunday congregation and the after school program, B-READY. She moved forward from her year of service to run a youth program with Boston Sports Club serving over 300 students a year in swimming and water safety while serving as an associate for St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Burlington, MA. She has worked with many churches and organizations in the last three years to assist with new and fresh ways to worship. In addition, Tamra is passionate about mission in the church, which has led her to serving on the Global Missions committee, Jubilee and the Mission Tithe Matching Grant committee for the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Tamra has been greatly involved with church leadership throughout her adult life and is thrilled to begin this exciting role at Emmanuel Church.

The standard professional practice of the Episcopal Church is for a Parish Administrator not to be a member of the congregation that he or she serves. Because Tamra will now be serving Emmanuel Church as our Administrator, she will no longer be a member of the congregation.



Parish Administrator, Keith Nelson, and newly hired Tamra Tucker take a break from their work preparing for the transition to a new Parish Administrator.

Photo by Pam Wertz

*Grace and Peace,
Pam*

Science and Spirituality Discussion Group



An interfaith partnership between Emmanuel Church & Central Reform Temple

After our worship service on Sunday November 10, twenty-five members of Emmanuel and Central Reform Temple met in the Parish Hall to discuss the origin and the alphabet of life, and how it informs our spirituality.

“The Language of God” by Francis Collins was the primary text for this session. Frank Bunn began with a brief overview of what we know about the primordial synthesis of the complex organic molecules that are essential for biological function and reproduction. In addition he reviewed the remarkable revolution in our understanding of life brought about by the solving of the ultimate Rosetta stone, the sequencing of the human genome. This background information gave our discussion group the opportunity to consider how “the new biology” impacts our awe of living creatures and the place of sentient humans in evolutionary history.

The second half of the meeting was devoted to an open discussion. Howard Berman felt that few members of either Emmanuel Church or Central Reform Temple would take issue with the summary of scientific advances that had been presented and asked that we focus on our response to these insights, and how they challenge or enrich our spiritual lives. Pam Werntz pointed out that although the Collins book was scientifically authoritative, some of its scriptural references were misplaced. Many other participants then shared their views on this beguiling and complex topic and raised issues that aroused considerable interest and prospects for further exploration at subsequent meetings.

On January 12, Ted Bunn, a physics professor at University of Richmond gave a slide presentation on the “big bang” and the origin of the universe, followed by a group discussion. We look forward to other presentations and conversations. I’d love ideas for and presentations of topics dealing with the infinite variety of scientific and religious experiences.

– Frank Bunn

Meet Our Interns

We are fortunate to have the company of Evelyn Kane, Elizabeth Kelly, and Amanda Rigatti, who are studying at Lesley University. Emmanuel Church partners with Lesley’s Expressive Arts Therapy Department by providing internships. The three women participate in several activities: Common Art, the Ecclesia Ministries program that provides people who are unsheltered or marginally housed with space and materials for creative expression; the weekly “Art and Spirituality Program” that Pam leads at Suffolk House of Correction; and Cafe Emmanuel, the weekly lunch and social gathering for the members of LGTB elders community. You may have seen their blogs appearing along with “This Week at Emmanuel” If so, you know how energetic, sensitive, and articulate they are.

Learn more about our interns’ experiences in their blog, *Musings from the Margins* at: <http://www.emmanuelboston.org/category/musings-from-the-margins/>



Artistic Director Ryan Turner conducts Emmanuel Music singers during the communion motet of the Christmas Eve service.
Photo by Matt Griffing

Update on the Development Committee of the Vestry

Last spring Emmanuel Senior Warden Penny Lane asked that we form a Development Committee to assist the Vestry on matters involving the financial wellbeing of Emmanuel Church, both now and well into the future. We have formed a committee of deeply experienced parishioners: Junior Warden Frank Bunn, TogetherNow co-chairs Gail Abbey and Jim Bradley, and non-profit development professional Joy Howard. Over the past few months, we have met to clarify our goals and approach.

This is not a new initiative for Emmanuel, but it is the first formal attempt in many years to add structure and strategic oversight in maintaining the positive trend of the past five years as we have succeeded in balancing our revenues and expenditures. The timing is no accident; thanks to the outstanding success of TogetherNow, Emmanuel has once again demonstrated its incredible support and willingness to give toward a secure financial future. Our task is to do whatever we can to help all of us build on this success and keep the momentum going.

Thus our mission – as sanctioned by the Vestry in June – is to assist our lay leadership and Pam on any and all issues relating to stewardship in the broadest sense. The annual Stewardship Campaign and TogetherNow need only minimal assistance from us; we are truly blessed in both cases to have the kind of devoted leadership that ensures successful outcomes. Our committee offers only “as requested” input to these already highly organized and well executed programs.

We are also in the early stages of deciding how and when to establish a Planned Giving program to assist those parishioners interested in considering a long-term legacy gift to Emmanuel. We have an enviable history of legacy gifts that are the core of our present endowment, a vital element in sustaining our financial health. If it were not for the generosity of our forebears, this endowment would not exist; without it we could well be facing even greater issues of under-funded staff, limited programs, and deferred capital improvements. We hope to foster continuing support among those who are willing and able to build upon this cherished tradition. If successful, the result will be an ever-growing and priceless legacy of and for Emmanuel Church.

– Jim Bartlett
Chair, Development Committee of the Vestry,
Emmanuel Church

Passionate About Books

Books have always been and shall always remain my passion. I don't so much acquire them as they acquire me. Even before I could read, I thought I could. And I would spend hours immersed in every one I could pick up. Fortunately few books were ever denied. When I finally grasped the ability to read, and with the marvelous magic of the dictionary, understand the words I was reading, my adventure truly began.

While I must look in awe (or Amazon) at the vastness of all that is available for me to read, what I hope to do here is share my thoughts on some books that have recently acquired me. These pieces will not be full-blown reviews; I will leave those to people far more qualified. Rather, I hope these quick notes will encourage you to read.

The Flame of Eternity: An Interpretation of Nietzsche's Thought
Krzysztof Michalski Benjamin Paloff, translator (2012,
Princeton University Press) 248 pp.

Michalski, who died this year, uses Nietzsche's ideas, particularly his idea of the uberman – superman – to express powerful desire for the eternal and our striving toward it through love. In the nine chapters of this relatively short book Michalski takes us through Nietzsche's concepts of nihilism, time, death and God. The early chapters, I found in particular, are relatively easy to grasp. The final chapter, *Our Insatiable Desire for More Future: On the Eternal Return of the Same* took me as long to read as the rest of the book. All-in-all Michalski's writing is very clear. His arguments are well reasoned, and they flow logically from one to the next. He is making a *cri de coeur* for humans to live fully and avoid having their lives foreshortened by the acceptance of only what we are told is enough. Reviewed in NYRB 10/24/13 by Tamsin Shaw.

– John Mears

