

May 23, 2019

**“Our mission is to celebrate God’s transforming Love in Jesus, by following where Jesus’ Love is calling us to serve the community”**



## Ascension This Week

**Anger**  
— from Fr Bill Baker

On Sunday, May 26

—8 am Said Eucharist

—10 am Sung Eucharist

Sunday School meets in the Undercroft at 10am

—11:00 am Coffee Hour

—2:30 pm Service at Lakeside Manor

—6 pm AA meeting

Inside this issue:

—“Anger” article from Fr Bill Baker

—Meetings and Events for the next few weeks.

—Ascension Day flyer

**God loves you.  
No exceptions.**   
The Episcopal Church Welcomes You. [www.dohio.org](http://www.dohio.org)

My friend called me this week and said she heard my sermon and that I sounded angry and judgmental. I don’t want to sound angry and judgmental, I thought. That Sunday I preached on loving our neighbor, especially in reference to the Orthodox Community who are moving into Westerleigh. A group called the Westerleigh Improvement Society attacked our Jewish neighbors and now some church leaders are drafting a letter in support of our new neighbors. I felt angry about the way the Westerleigh Improvement Society treated our brothers and sister in the Jewish Community.

When I sat down to write the sermon last week, I knew I needed to take a stance. I wanted to show my support for a group that has been persecuted and since Jesus asked us to love one another, it felt right to mention the conflict in our own neighborhood as an example. But I don’t want my tone in my sermon to sound judgmental. My friend quoted back what I wanted to say in a way that invited the listener to support our Jewish neighbors in Westerleigh, but not sound so harsh.

I immediately thanked her for her advice. However, it also begs the question. Even if we do not want to sound harsh and judgmental, how can Christians express anger and other difficult emotions in a healthy and productive way? Let me start by saying, my anger at the situation is warranted and I do not believe that anger is the opposite of love. We can love someone and express our anger at the same time, I believe.

*(continued next page)*

In fact, I believe a good preacher should talk about and model all feelings—fear, anxiety, anger, love and happiness. However, because fear and anger are often difficult for us, some of us shy away from talking about them. Let me put it this way. All the isms make me angry. I deplore anti-Semitism, classism, sexism and racism. When a group acts in a way that oppresses another group, thus causing pain, feeling anger is an appropriate response.

However, the appropriate response does not have to sound angry, even if anger motivates our actions. I want us to be welcoming of our Jewish brothers and sisters moving into Westerleigh. I want members of our church to sign the petition that will allow the Jewish Community to put up eruvs, a religious marker attached to telephone poles which are completely safe and allow the community members to travel during Sabbath. I hope that the listeners heard that on Sunday.

Or if they heard my anger and judgement, I hope that you understood where it came from. In the end, I did not intend to sound so harsh. I think my emotions got the best of me. However, I preached on love and I truly wanted to invite us all to be loving to one another. Words hold power and tone changes everything.

I am grateful for my friend's feedback. As a preacher, I need to grow and learn. I also want our congregation to grow and I believe that we do that by loving one another, but also by expressing the full range of motions in a healthy way.

Blessings, Fr Bill+



**Did you know** that Fr Bill's sermons are available from the website via a link to youtube?

Also—several issues of the newsletter are available from the home page of the website.

**It's picnic time! On Sunday, May 26, St John's church is hosting its annual BBQ. And on Sunday, June 2, the annual IPC picnic will be held at All Saints church. See "SAVE THE DATE" on the last page for more information.**

**Come One! Come All!**  
**Join Us at Church of the Ascension  
on Our Feast Day**



**When:** On Ascension Day, Thursday, May 30, 2019, at 7:30 pm.

**Where:** Church of the Ascension, One Kingsley Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10314. Telephone (718) 442-4187.

**Clergy:** Please wear cassock, surplice, and white stole.

**The Rev. Frederick Schraplau  
will be our preacher**

**A reception prepared by St. Martha's  
Guild will be served  
in the church undercroft following the  
service.**



## Save the Date: Upcoming Events for Richmond Episcopal Ministry:

**Sunday, May 26:** St. John's will have its **Memorial Day BBQ** on May 26. (Weather permitting, it will be held outside). BBQ will begin around 11:30 am—right after the 10 am mass. All members of Ascension are welcome to attend!

**Thursday, May 30: Celebration of the Feast of the Ascension**, at Ascension. The service will begin at 7:30 pm, and will be followed by a reception in the undercroft. See flyer in this newsletter for details.

**Sunday, June 2: IPC Picnic**, held at All Saints Church, beginning at 1 pm. We at Ascension are asked to bring desserts and drinks.

**Saturday, June 8: Yard Sale** at St John's.

**Sunday, June 16: Father's Day.** Please join us in a special worship service on **June 16th at 10 am** commemorating the significance of the fathers in our lives.

**Friday, June 21: St Paul's Lucky Draw Auction.** Held at Canterbury House. 6:30 pm. Admission \$5.00. Refreshments: complementary coffee, tea, cake. Hot dogs, soda, water for sale.

**Vacation Bible School this summer:** Ascension and St Mary's will work together to present VBS this summer. Information about the location, exact dates, will be available soon.

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**“Brother, Give Us A Word.”** Every day, on the SSJE website, one of the brothers gives a word that we might use as a focus in our prayer and meditation. **“Anger”:** *“We can draw solace from Jesus’s human solidarity with our natural response of anger, frustration, and helplessness as we navigate the many broken systems erected and maintained by the world. Perhaps it is in the simple and continuous practice of placing the warmth of our compassion and the heat of our anger into the hands of Christ that he accepts, transmutes, and transfigures the gift of our human help..”*— Br. Keith Nelson, [SSJE](#) You can see his full page of comments on this word on [SSJE.org](#).

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## Perspective from Meister Eckhart

If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, "thank you," that would suffice.  
~Meister Eckhart

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<http://www.ascensionsi.org/>