



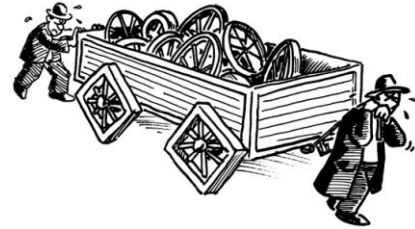
# The Gregorian Chant

Newsletter of St. Gregory's Episcopal Church May, 2010

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

As we draw near to the conclusion of the Easter season, I am reminded by the choices of readings for our worship that Easter is not just about the resurrection, but about everything that comes after. We live in the post-Easter world. I recall the person who comes to his priest asking with true sincerity, "What can I do to make sure I get to heaven?" The priest replied, "Nothing." "You mean, it's hopeless?" "Not at all. You can't do anything because it's already been done for you." Jesus accomplished our salvation for us. Now it's up to us to live into it. As we move into the season of "after Pentecost" we move into the season not focused on Jesus' life, but on the life he left behind—the life of the church, our life.

The vestry and I are embarking on what I hope will be a life-enhancing program for our community of faith. I have been talking about it, but want to take a moment to explain a bit more about it. Natural Church Development is a program that is currently in use in over 45,000 congregations in 70 countries on all six continents, ranging over every denomination. Its focus is not on church growth, but on the quality of church life. Its author, Christian Schwartz, explains that if churches strive to enhance the quality of their life, the growth happens "all by itself." He even call it the "all by itself" principle. His image is the one shown here:



As hard as they work, they make slow progress. They may say its because it is an uphill struggle, or too few helpers, but the reality is that they are working with square wheels. Trying to work on our own strength results in much pushing and pulling. When we

focus on what God has given us to work with, our strengths, our gifts, and learn how to use those to develop our weaker areas, we find the result more like this next image. Under power by the Holy Spirit, the church uses the round wheels it was given and let God go to work.



The key is to examine where we are on eight characteristics of church life to see where we are strong and where we need to develop. Then, using our strengths, we explore ways to develop our weaker characteristics. As we do this, according to Natural Church Development, growth happens all by itself.

In order to get this started, the vestry & I have identifies thirty members, trying to get a good cross-section of active ministers. They will be completing a survey to assist us in assessing where we are today. The vestry will then get the results from the Natural Church Development staff, and use that to look at where and how we want to focus our energies to be most effective in building the overall quality of our common life.

I ask your prayers for those helping us embark on this journey. Pray for those taking the survey, for the vestry, and for myself, that we may have the Lord's wisdom at work in us to help guide us where he would like us to go.

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup> so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who

believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>28</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not the result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. Ephesians 1:17-19, 2:8-10

Blessings in Christ our Lord,  
Todd+

## Youth Group NEWS

Thanks to so many of you, the youth are well on their way to funding their mission trip. They will be gathering in June with those from other congregations to start building community and a vision for the mission. In the meantime, they have moved their meeting times to after church. Look for pictures of their recent Quest weekend in the Parish Hall.

Barbara sends her thanks to the girls scouts for their help with another successful Tea. We had over 40 people sharing a delightful afternoon. Look for pictures in the Parish Hall.

## Ladies Tea

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

Taylor, Daniel, and Emily