

The Guardian

NOVEMBER 2017

FROM THE RECTORY

**O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.**

**Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.**

**There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.
-Psalm 104:24-26**

The Practice of Delight

I will never forget the first time our son Jonah laughed. He was our first child, adopted when he was two days old. Kurt and I had much to learn about caring for a newborn and I remember the long-suffering patience of this poor baby looking up at me as I tried to change his diaper for the first time. It felt like he knew we didn't really know what we were doing, but he was forgiving even then. The first three months of his life were an education for sure and luckily we didn't make any fatal mistakes, but there were plenty of surprises. I remember distinctly being with Jonah in our living room in our house in Hawaii. He was sitting in his bouncy chair and I was doing some work on my computer. Our two dogs, Gertie and Jean-Luc, started to play, chasing one another around the living room. Then I heard a sound I had never heard before. I looked over at baby Jonah and he was laughing. It was the most wonderful sound! I couldn't help but laugh too, amazed that even as an infant, he understood at some level that the dogs were playing and having fun. This play delighted him as his laughter delighted me.

Although we don't count delight as a spiritual practice, I think we should. I would argue that God created the world to delight in it and I have no doubt that God does

delight in it and in all its creatures. Psalm 104, part of which I quoted above, is a Psalm of delight. The Psalmist is in awe of the goodness of God's creation. The great Leviathan, says the Psalmist, "God made for the sport of it." When we delight, we are participating in God's joy; noticing our delight makes us grateful.

So, what delights you? Where do you find delight in your life? I've been delighting in my walks through the woods this fall, at Bibi's random and funny observation at dinner last night, at the light streaming through the stained glass windows at church, at the feeling of riding my bicycle through town. The mere act of noticing these things gives me delight.

November is a time when we are asked to reflect on what we are thankful for. We may even have a tradition of speaking our thanks when gathered around the table for Thanksgiving. It is not a bad practice, but the question can also come to us with a tinge of guilt and obligation; we say what we think we should be thankful for instead of reflecting on where we really are finding delight in our lives. I wonder what would happen if we asked instead, "What delights you?" or "Where do you find delight in your life now?"

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

DEEP HOPE: STEWARDSHIP FOR 2018

Stewardship season is upon us as we look to the ministries we are called to support in 2018. We hope you all have received your stewardship materials and have taken time to decide on your pledge for 2018 and turned in your pledge card to St. Michael's. Our goal this year is to receive a total of \$270,000 in pledges and at least 135 pledge cards. We continue to gratefully receive pledge cards and it is helpful for our planning to receive them sooner rather than later. If you have not received your stewardship information, please let St. Michael's know, or pick up extra stewardship materials in the back of the church on Sunday mornings. Many thanks to you for your generosity and love for this community of faith!


**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VERMONT
CONVENTION, NOVEMBER 3-4**

Delegates, Clergy and others from the Episcopal Church in Vermont will gather in Ludlow on November 3-4 to pray, listen and discern the movement of God's spirit in our life together. This year's convention theme is "Declare Dignity" with convention speaker, Donna Hicks.

Delegates to Convention this year include Karen Guthrie, Jeff Hiam and Deb Jones. Mary Lindquist, Duncan Hilton and Thad Bennett will be attending as clergy representatives. Please keep the Episcopal Church in Vermont in your prayers for this important gathering.

**FALL CLEANUP, NOV 4**

Please bring your work gloves, leaf blowers, rakes and garden tools to help us clean up our church yard on Saturday, November 4th, beginning at 9 am. There is a garden bed above the nursery school playground that is especially thick and in need of a good clean out. Please join us. Rain date November 11th. Hope to see you then! Building and Grounds Committee

**COME CELEBRATE THE SAINTS AMONG US
BRUNCH AT ST. MICHAEL'S ON NOVEMBER 5**

Come to a brunch (gluten-free and vegetarian options) for both the 8 o'clock and 10:15 attendees on November 5 after the 10:15 service, around 11:45. It is a chance to enjoy good food and meet people you may not know. To honor the occasion of All Saints' Day, during the brunch there will be a time for people to share about and celebrate saints in their lives - living or deceased, church member or outside guest. If the saint in your life is local, be sure to invite him/her so that they can receive our gratitude and blessing!


**NEWCOMERS TEA, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12
AT HALLELUJAH LOWER FARM**

All those who are new to St. Michael's in the last year (or still feel new to St Michael's) are invited to a Newcomer's Tea on November 12 at 4 pm at the beautiful retreat center in New Hampshire, The Lower Farm.

The Lower Farm is a beautiful, newly renovated 1780's farm house. You can check it out on the website, <http://www.hallelujahfarm.com>. There will be food, drinks, a warm fire and good company for all ages (children are newcomers too)! Please let us know if you will be attending by signing up at church or by contacting Mary Lindquist at mary@stmichaelsvermont.org

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

**ALL SAINTS' DAY CELEBRATED ON SUNDAY,
NOVEMBER 5**

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. – Paul's letter to the Ephesians

On November 5, St. Michael's will celebrate the Feast of All Saints' at both the 8 am and the 10:15 am services. During this service, we will remember those saints who have gone before us and loved ones who have died, as well as recognize ourselves as those 'saints' who have been called to follow Jesus with our whole selves. On this day, we will remember in our prayers those who have died during the last year.

- If you have people you would like to be named in the prayers, please add them to the book in the back of the church.
- If you have pictures of loved ones who have died whose lives you want to give thanks for, we will provide two tables in the chancel area (in front of the altar and in the corner) as a visible reminder of the saints who have come before us for vice.
- Because this is a major feast day, we will have incense at the 10:15 am service

**ADULT FORUMS FOR NOVEMBER**

11/5 - "Report from Diocesan Convention" -- This annual report will be led by the convention delegates from St. Michael's. Come and hear about continuing and new programs and activities at the Diocesan level.

11/12 - "The Politics of Disarmament" -- This Forum will be led by Meg Mott, Professor of Politics, Marlboro College. The November 12 Forum on the Second Amendment is the first of two related forums; the November 19 Forum on gun regulation will be led by Ann Braden, founder of GunSense Vermont. Important enough to be given almost top billing, the right to bear arms has always played a central role in the American system of justice. Without a robust militia in the states,

argued the Framers, the Federal Government could easily lean towards tyranny. While the current Supreme Court has not worried so loudly about tyranny, it has started to read this constitutional right as a fundamental liberty of individuals. What does it mean when a bulwark against tyranny becomes an individual right?

11/19 - "Gun Regulation" -- In the wake of the massacre in Las Vegas, many of us are asking what can be done. Ann Braden, founder of GunSense Vermont, will talk about gun regulation, the successful campaign in 2015 to regulate at the state level, and how we move forward.

11/26 - "Unpacking Christ the King Sunday" - Wouldn't Jesus be embarrassed by such a designation? Why did the Church decide to create the image of King for Jesus in the first place? Do such images help you to hear what Jesus is saying? If not, what images work better? Phillip Wilson will lead.

**YOU ARE INVITED! SACRAMENTAL HEALING
TEAM RETREAT, NOVEMBER 11**

On Saturday, November 11, the St. Michael's Episcopal Church Sacramental Healing Team will gather for discernment, recommitment, practice, prayer, and silent reflection. We extend an invitation to any member of the parish who may feel called to join us in this ministry. This is a wonderful time to learn more about the power of prayer and the healing ministry.

This Retreat is an opportunity to get an overview of sacramental healing at St. Michael's and to practice with the team in listening, creating prayers, anointing with sacred oils and discussing confidentiality, creating sacred spaces, self care, and peer sharing in the name of Christ. We will gather at 9:30 AM at the Church on the 11th and lunch will be provided. We will conclude our sessions at 4 PM.

If you feel called to explore joining this ministry team, please contact Janet Cramer (jfcvermont@gmail.com) or Carolyn Taylor-Olson (oltayols@gmail.com), as well as at Church on Sundays.

WINTER MEALS FOR THE HOMELESS

Groundworks Collaborative is a Brattleboro non-profit organization dedicated to helping the poorest of our community members. This organization runs Morningside Shelter, the Brattleboro Drop-in Center and the Overflow Shelter, a winter shelter for homeless people in our area. St. Michael's parishioners have been helping with meals at the Overflow Shelter for many years. We have once again committed to providing a hot meal for 25-30 hungry people, including main dish, bread, salad, beverages and dessert, one evening a month for the coming winter months.

All the meals we provide will be on Mondays, and all (except Dec.) will be the 3rd Monday of the month. So, Nov. 20th, Dec. 11th, Jan. 15th, Feb. 19th, Mar. 19th, and April 16th will be our dates.

In the past we have been asked to make pasta main dishes- lasagne, macaroni and cheese, etc. - on our nights. Generally some meat in the dish is very much appreciated, though a small amount of vegetarian food should also be prepared. The hot dish (casseroles) can be cooked at home and brought to the Shelter ready to serve.

Usually parishioners team up with others to provide the meal- one person or family brings the main dish, others bring the other dishes, and some of them go to the Shelter to serve the meal to the participants. There will be sign-up sheets in the Church Common Room starting next week on which you can sign up for any part of a meal on any date. I will be in touch with you about further details regarding quantity, what will be needed, where to deliver it, and so on.

As you may have heard, the Overflow Shelter will not be downtown in the Baptist Church any longer. For this winter it will be housed in the former Austine School campus on Maple St., Brattleboro, a 5-7 minute drive from downtown. I will be going there for an orientation this week and will have more specific information on the location and facility setup after that meeting.

This is a fulfilling and humbling form of service. The grace, humor, and appreciation of the participants are an awesome gift to those of us who have prepared and served the meal. Please consider helping out with this ministry of St. Michael's! For more information, or to sign up for a date for any type of food contribution, please contact me or sign up in the Common Room at Church on Sunday.

Blessings and many thanks, Liz Vick
ebethvick@gmail.com / 254-7060

STM

INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

All are invited to an Interfaith Service of Thanksgiving on Tuesday, Nov 21 at 7 pm, held at the First Baptist Church, 190 Main Street in Brattleboro. Leaders and members of various faith communities will be involved, sharing from their own traditions. There will be singing and choirs of all ages.

This service is an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for the amazing support and generosity of neighbor to neighbor in our community and to recognize in the midst of all the ups and downs of life that we have many blessings to share. An offering of non-perishable contributions will be accepted at the door to benefit the Brattleboro Drop-in Center. This service is sponsored by the Brattleboro Area Interfaith Clergy Association.

STM

THANKSGIVING DAY MORNING PRAYER AT CHRIST CHURCH

Join us on Thanksgiving Day (November 23) at Christ Church in Guilford for a Thanksgiving Morning Prayer service with hymns. Coming together to give thanks to God is a beautiful way to begin your Thanksgiving, and you will still have plenty of time to go home and cook! All are welcome.

CALLING ALL KIDS AND TEENS FOR THE CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT!

Rehearsals start November 26

Join St. Michael's Christmas Eve pageant and help bring the Nativity to life for our parish! We've been doing our own Vermont Nativity for several years now and will continue to do so, modifying to fit the company and adding, of course, any new elements that pageanters invent. Recent pageants, for instance, have been blessed with flocks of free-range angels and sheep, a couple rabbits and various goats.

Here are the roles we need to fill: innkeeper's assistant, innkeeper, Mary, Joseph, Angel Gabriel, Baby Jesus, angels, shepherds, wise wo/men, starbearer, and readers (all 8 to 19-year-olds are welcome as readers!)

We'll rehearse: Sunday mornings 9:00-10:00 a.m. (during Sunday school) starting...

November 26: Talk briefly about the story and hear what role each child would like to play. What should be changed? What should we add?

December 3: Run through the script with pageanters in the roles they've chosen; start "blocking."

December 10: Finish all blocking; run through with all lines assigned; with music and with props. Costume check: Do we have everything we need? Should we change any costuming?

December 17: Run through "off book," with music and props.

December 23: Dress rehearsal at 4 PM.

December 24: All should arrive at 3:15; the pageant is at 4:00 p.m.

We invite youth from outside the Parish to join in, too. Kids: if you have friends from school or the neighborhood who'd like to be part of the pageantry, please encourage them to come to do so. Your directors are, once again, Annie Landenberger, Miranda Smith and Susan Dedell. For more information contact Annie Landenberger, 348-7156, verbatimvt@gmail.com.

Photo from the House
Blessing for Duncan and
the Walk-In Clinic on
October 15.



**“Listening for God through
the Heart, Soul, and Spirit”
Advent Workshop on Discernment and
Decision-making**

What would it be like to experience God’s guidance and support in everyday decisions as well as with major life choices? How do we discern God’s voice in our lives from other competing voices? Come learn a practical framework and method for accessing your deepest wisdom about what it means to follow God by listening for guidance in your decisions. Bring a decision you are currently wrestling with for reflection.

The workshop will be co-led by Duncan Hilton and Sarah Moore, a graduate of Harvard Law School and Divinity School and founder of Decision-making from the Soul (<http://www.dmsoul.com>). The workshop will be at St Michael’s on Saturday, December 2 from 8:45 am – noon. Coffee and light refreshments will be served.



DID YOU KNOW?

- On Sunday mornings during the 10:15 service, child care is available.
- We have hearing assistance devices available at the back of the church. Please talk with an usher if you would like to try one.

**ST. NICHOLAS DAY FAIR, DEC 3 –
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

The annual St. Nicholas Day Fair will be held on December 3 this year. There are a number of opportunities where you can help support this wonderful and fun inter-generational parish event!

- Help provide snack food for the coffee hour/light lunch
- Help out at the individual craft tables. If you would like to create and organize your own craft activity, we welcome that. Or, we can provide you with a craft activity to supervise. Help set up on Saturday, December 2.
- Help out the day of the event.
- Donate some of the items needed for crafts. Please place these items in the designated container in the Common Room.
 - Pine cones – any shape or size but the larger the better;
 - Large containers of Creamy Peanut Butter;
 - Bag of bird seed;
 - Recycled Christmas cards;
 - Recycled yarn or ribbon.

If you can help with any of the above, contact Lydia Taggart at lydiafin@comcast.net or find sign-up sheets in the Common Room.



**ST. MICHAEL’S WOMEN’S RETREAT -
SAVE THE DATE!**

The women of St. Michael’s are invited to gather for a retreat, February 3-4 at the Lower Farm. This will be a chance for the women of St. Michael’s to come together in reflection, prayer, play and conversation. We hope women of many different ages will join us for this wonderful opportunity. More information to come.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY:

Working to Respect the Dignity of Every Human

Following the January 2016 viewing at St. Michael's of the Trinity Institute Lectures on Systemic Racism, a number of people pledged to keep the discussion going. This was the beginning of the Social Justice Ministry. Soon we adopted the following mission:

The MISSION of the Social Justice Ministry of St. Michael's Church is to make real Jesus' vision of justice and love for all people as children of God, following where it leads and accepting its cost.

While we support direct response to people in need, the focus of this ministry is identifying and confronting the underlying systems that perpetuate inequality and discrimination. This year we have decided to focus specifically on the system of racism that has existed in this nation since its origin and is alive and well today. At times it is so subtle we cannot even see it at play. Yet, at other times, such as in Charlottesville, it stares us in the face and screams its ugly presence. Racism is so pervasive that it is hard to know where to start. But, with the increased incidents of hate and violence we do not have the option of doing nothing. Both the National Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Vermont have made racial reconciliation and justice a major focus. This year the Social Justice Ministry hopes make clear why "Black Lives Matter," as the sign in front of St. Michael's proclaims to all who pass by. In fact some people have been attracted to St. Michael's specifically because of that sign and what it stands for.

The newly constituted Ministry includes the following people: David and Pam Carr, Janet Brocklehurst and Sissi Loftin, Megan Buchanan, Jeff Hiam, Jean Smith and Phillip Wilson. We welcome additional people to serve on this ministry. If you have questions or an interest contact Phillip Wilson. Email: phillip@svcable.net

The Social Justice Ministry exists as one way for us at St. Michael's to live out our Baptismal Vow in an intentional way "striving for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being." Book of Common Prayer

PHOTOS FROM MISSA GAIA, OCTOBER 8



OUTREACH MINISTRY

St. Michael's Vestry has selected Social Justice and Outreach as the November "Ministries of the Month", for which we are grateful. While the Social Justice Ministry focuses on addressing the root causes of social inequality, the Outreach Ministry strives to facilitate and support parishioners' individual ministries. Outreach is the steward not only of money, but also of opportunity. This is the focus of the annual Joel Hill Ministry Expo that Outreach organizes every October where as many as thirty or so ministries are celebrated. This October we embraced 31 ministries at the Expo.

The Mission Statement of the Outreach Ministry reads as follows:

The Outreach Committee of St. Michael's Episcopal Church initiates, and supports efforts through which we, committee and parishioners alike, can manifest our Christian beliefs by helping those in need, locally, nationally, and internationally through charitable organizations. This work involves not only our "treasure", but also our "time" and "talents."

Additionally, Outreach bases its work on the tripod of needs of heat, shelter - physical and environmental-, and food insufficiency. The funds at Outreach's disposal come from a number of sources. The primary source is the annual allocation of Parish funds decided by the Vestry. This sizable resource is disbursed by thirds among local, national, and international causes. The second important source of funds emanates from the two annual Tag Sales. Outreach receives 50% of the proceeds

and distributes them exclusively among local causes. A third source of funds takes the form of special fundraising enterprises, such as Heifer Parade parking, Pancake Supper, Strawberry Spectacular, Greek Dinner, and special 'colored envelope' solicitations, such as the recent Hurricane Relief collection.

By now you will have noticed the "Gratitude Jar" in the Common Room. We have much to be grateful for, especially in this particularly gruesome hurricane and wildfire season. You are invited to take a post-it note, write a few words that express your particular gratitude of the moment, post it on the tree, and drop a coin or two into the Gratitude Jar. The Youth Group has designed the tree and will empty the jar periodically and decide where to donate the proceeds.

The Outreach Committee will occasionally sponsor a working field trip to help another community recover from disaster. Recent examples are the trips to Baton Rouge and to New Orleans. We will certainly explore ways to help areas stricken by Harvey and Irma.

Current members of the Outreach Ministry are: Janet Cramer, Alix and Julia Fedoruk, Craig Hammond, Judith Hildreth, Shirley Hodgdon, Jeanette Landin, Laura Lewis, Brian Morgan, Joyce Vining Morgan, Lori Palmer, and Susan Wilson. Please feel free to approach any of these individuals to learn more about the Outreach Ministry. New members are always welcome. We usually gather in the Meeting Room at 5:30 pm on the first Monday of the month.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

THE FALL TAG SALE

“Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.” Deuteronomy 15:10

We close another tag sale with a sigh of relief of a job well done. The scripture verse above reminds us of the reason we set our sights on ensuring that those in need will be able to find those things necessary to use in their homes and clothe their families – and no one need be turned away if unable to pay. We had plenty of clothing, linen and housewares that were donated at the end of the sale to the Swap, Experienced Goods, Groundworks Collaborative and Planet Aid.

Many thanks to all those in our congregation, as well as friends of our church, who volunteered countless hours of their time in work to get the sale assembled and ready to roll and broken down and hauled away. Thanks, too, to you who donated funds and items for the sale and baked goods and your thoughts and prayers. We made a total of \$4,725.41 – not bad really!!

Thank you! Lucia and Judith

Thank you,

Lucia and Judith

The Tag Sale

(To the tune of “I’ve been workin’ on the railroad”)

We’ve been workin’ on the tag sale
all the pre-sale week.

We’ve been workin’ on the tag sale
Pricin’ items the shoppers seek.

Can’t ya feel the anticipation’
of those waiting at the door?
OK everyone to your stations,
giving smiles, help, and much more.

We have worked at the tag sale
selling lots of different things,
Packin’ sheets, pants, rings and blings
Cashing out at lightning speed.

We have worked on the tag sale
to provide for those in need.
Selling bargains and good food,
the masses we will feed.

It’s 10:30 again, fill up a bag,
Closing another sale,
Look for us next spring,
We’ll be here, without fail

Judith Hildreth, October 8, 2017

SABBATICAL REFLECTIONS

Susan Dedell

A little over a year ago, in honor of my 25th year serving as your music director, the parish generously gave me the blessing of a 2 month sabbatical and some funds to use at my discretion during that time. So, for 8 weeks, I took a break from “the bench” and got the experience of having an extended vacation. It was indeed very refreshing, and I want to begin my reflections on our experiences by saying a huge THANK YOU to all of you, especially the vestry and Mary, for making this possible. In addition, I want to thank these great music subs: Karen Guthrie, Mayu Allen, Christopher Wesolowski, and Bruce Griffin. Their work made my leaving guilt-free because I knew they would serve you so well.

Here are just FIVE GREAT THINGS ABOUT MY SABBATICAL:

1. Uninterrupted time with Paul
2. Wonderful visit to the Abbey of Regina Laudis
3. Fascinating and complex travel in Sicily and the island of Pantelleria
4. Lightened brain load for a nice stretch of time
5. Returning to a much loved community and home with renewed appreciation

1 and 4: Uninterrupted time with Paul and a lighter brain: no explanation needed!

2. We were introduced to the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, CT by our former student (and Choir School member) Ellie Jamieson and her mother, Tara. This community of Benedictine women has an organic farm, small orchard and sheep from which they make cheese; a vibrant arts program of both stunning visual art as well as performing arts (including a summer

stock musical theater program founded and funded by the late Patricia Neal); and a serious study and use of Gregorian chant. We loved our time with them and made some good friends of Mother Angelina and Sister Francesca. We intend to go back for a working holiday sometime in the coming year.

3. Sicily -- where to start?! I went there expecting great food and fabulous wine and to satisfy a long and curious fascination with this largely agricultural island nexus of ancient civilizations and religions. Sicily’s cuisine and architecture in particular are rightly famous for their fusion of Arabic/Christian/Jewish/Greek/Norman cultures, and I was mightily intrigued to see if this might be carried over into societal realms as well. Of course, I wondered what kind of music we might hear, either by intent or accident.

We stayed at three different “agriturismo” estates, a wonderful way to travel in much of Italy. Ours were selected for their beauty and overall quietness, and they were each wonderful in every way. We were also fortunate to have been given a personal introduction to the owner of a small, highly regarded vineyard in the shadow of a still lightly smoldering Mt. Etna. We spent one beautiful day there in the company of the owner’s mother, who first welcomed us with a repast (food still definitely makes the gold standard in hospitality!) and then walked through the fields and groves with us as she told us about the history of her family throughout

the years. Old aristocratic families are a tiny minority, but they still own and run most of the beautiful agricultural estates (all three of ours had been in the families for hundreds of years). Their sense of Sicily is strong and proud.

We discovered another side, however, as we travelled in



SABBATICAL REFLECTIONS continued

our rental car throughout the country. We were frequently lost and just as frequently terrorized by the combination of insanely fast driving habits with impossibly narrow, steep, shoulder less roads. But we did get to see a wider range of the country, off the beaten tourist paths. Poverty for the general population is the norm. Public education is not very well funded, so, for instance, students have to buy their own materials, or do without. Corruption and apathy play a seemingly unwavering part in the problems of ugly, shoddy overbuilding and the ever-present problem of trash removal and roaming feral animals. We experienced many huge and sometimes bewildering contrasts through our travels, from extreme beauty of natural scenery and simple stone buildings to mounds of trash of every kind and unfinished (therefore, untaxed) concrete housing that seemed to encircle most of the mountain towns. On the streets, we frequently felt a sense of wariness in casual encounters, but we also experienced over-the-top hospitality and warmth.

Oddly, we heard absolutely NO music other than a mixture of American pop in one place. In all of the churches we visited, I tried to scope out the organs -- but amazingly, I discovered only one place that boasted of a regular organist. Many of the instruments I saw, including those in the UNESCO sites, were damaged and even boarded up. The one service we attended, in the small town of Milo, featured a baptism, but we noticed that the young family and their friends did not participate in the Eucharist. The priest sang a couple of the liturgical propers, as did a lusty alto voice in front of us (thank you!) -- but there was no other singing or music of any kind.

Pantelleria island was a quiet haven, closer to Africa than to Sicily itself. The beautiful black lava houses, with their white domes, are truly beautiful and reflect their Arabic roots. We stayed in one for 5 days, complete with Mediterranean view, and heard the only sound of the ever-present breeze the entire time. I finally came to understand the magnificence of capers here!

#5. Returning home is always wonderful, but this time we came back with a truly renewed appreciation for our community and friends, for our choice of work, for our home, and -- hugely -- for our faith community. One of my biggest learnings from this sabbatical was that following Jesus is indeed a much needed missional calling, whether we do it through music, preaching, teaching, healing, or giving. And, I came back convinced that this is the primary work that I am called to do and that doing this work is what gives me true life. Sicily's strengths and problems represented to me what happens when the spiritual dimension of our lives becomes seemingly irrelevant, sadly, often because of the organized church's inability or unwillingness to manifest and empower love, to make a stand for human dignity and for the holiness of creation. In a sense, the shuttered organs that I saw symbolize something very important: an instrument that serves only its own glory is destined to become dust.



I am grateful for the time spent to learn these lessons. I am grateful for the beauty of the azure Mediterranean Sea and for the chance to slide off the rocks of Pantelleria into the salty warm water. I am grateful for a wild kitten that adopted us for a time, giving us the gift of trust. I am grateful for homemade ricotta, for flinty Etna whites, and for soft, fruity olive oils. I am grateful for singing nuns riding a tractor. I am grateful for the power of the volcano, for the rolling wheat fields of central Sicily, and for the green hills of Vermont. I am grateful for a traveling companion who still makes my heart flutter. But mostly, I am grateful to be a known child of God, given this time in this place, with you -- my fellow siblings -- in the House of the Lord.

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES

“Outlasting marble and brass”

The History of the Church Pension Fund

by Dr. Harold C. Martin

published by The Church Hymnal Corporation

New York 1986 6 ½ x 9 312 pages

Once upon a time in Merry England there existed in the countryside a class of clergy known as “sporting parsons.” Having married opportunely, they could afford as a consequence to slough off the dreary day-to-day parish duties upon an over-worked and under-paid curate while they rode to hounds and shot with the local squire at his high pheasants.

Here all too often, and without the foresight of their sporting brothers across the Atlantic, clergy have tended to marry for love—an admirable if rarely profitable undertaking culminating in times past in an impecunious retirement. Recognizing this, the Very Reverend William Lawrence, the eminent Bishop of Massachusetts, began to consider a solution. The Bishop was a man of consequence (Theodore Roosevelt had been his house guest at the Lawrence home on Brattle Street in Cambridge next to the now-defunct Episcopal Theological Seminary when the president returned for their twentieth-fifth college reunion), and, more consequentially, a man of the cloth fortunately imbued with a business sense. The need to provide clergy (and their widows and orphans) with retirement income had been an issue from the very beginning of the denomination. The question that beset the church was how to best accomplish the solution to the vexing problem that confronted it then in the early years of the twentieth century. Heretofore, parishes and dioceses had attempted to provide for their retired clerics. The results were not reassuring. Further and potentially troubling for the future, there appeared

to be a declining interest of young men in entering the Episcopal clergy, likely attributable to the attractions of more lucrative professions and businesses.

In 1917, Bishop Lawrence began the quest to convince the recalcitrant among the faithful, both lay and cleric, of the need to establish a fund to this end. His vision was a Church-wide fund with required payments from every congregation. With remarkable foresight, he gambled that to be successful the fund raising campaign not only have a dollar goal but a termination date. If the goal was not met, contributions would be refunded. His concept is still in place today for major fund raising campaigns.

He enlisted prominent businessmen in his campaign (notably J. P. Morgan), but the bishop was the moving force. Throughout the year he travelled across the nation promoting his concept until fatigue began to force the elderly bishop to slow his frenetic pace. But success attended and, instead of the initial five million dollar goal, eight and one-half million had been pledged.

The peculiar title of the book is an extract from a complimentary letter from a retired Baltimore clergyman. The accomplishment of creating the pension fund will create a monument, he wrote, “that will outlast those of marble and brass.” Given the recent demise of our baptismal font, he had a point.

Robert R. Anderson

NEWS OF THE PARISH

LOAVES AND FISHES

At every serving, Ray comes in after the first rush of diners. He stands patiently with his arthritic hands folded in front of him. He always says, "Could I have one to go Ma'am." I once suggested that he might like to stay and eat and be with others. "I'm embarrassed to eat because of no teeth," he replied. So, each day at service he comes in and asks for one to go. He begins to talk a bit more. "I can eat two meals from all you give me! Thought I had skin cancer for 6 months. My father died of skin cancer. When I finally saw a doctor, he gave me an antibiotic for 14 days. Boy do I feel stupid but in 14 days I'm cured!" One day he handed me a folded check. I thanked him and put it in my pocket as I was serving. After service, I opened the check. Laboriously written with his arthritic hands was a \$10 check made out to Loaves and Fishes and in the "for" space at the bottom was written for "kindness."

"For Kindness" means that serving meals is just the tip of the meaning behind Loaves and Fishes. We provide over 150 hot servings two times a week. We also give out frozen meals, serve a hot meal to the Children's Centre at Centre Church, and have a weekend meal program for staff and families at that center. It is the community meal on Tuesdays and Fridays that provides space to eat, to talk, and to be present. Knowing people's stories as they get to know us is part of "the kindness."

We could always use more help from the St. Michael's community. We get financial help from the Outreach Team, as well as individual donors. Our costs are mostly through purchases from the Vermont Food Bank. We have recently upgraded the kitchen with a commercial stove, convection oven, commercial refrigerator and reach-in freezer. We were able to accomplish these improvements with grants and the kindness of others. We have a "cool bot" room, like a walk-in cooler, facilitated by Joel Hill's memorial gifts. Currently the "cool bot" room needs to be renovated because of the moisture destroying the plaster.

We have a host of other ways friends from St. Michael's can get involved. Some from St. Michael's are already

helping and involved and I've included their names here.

- Baking desserts for Tuesday and Fridays. We can supply the ingredients. (Joan Pinilla, Hollis Carlisle and Charlene Kemp)
- Containers to freeze leftovers for give away on meal days. (There is a box in the Common Room for pick up) Devin Starlanyl, Becky Anderson and Susan Wilmott)
- Warm clothes, socks, boots and candles for give away
- Vegetables and fruits from local gardens (the Morgans)
- Mondays: help unload from Price Chopper at 11:30 (Lloyd Graf)
- Wednesdays: Food Bank drop off at 11:00 (Lloyd Graf)
- Wednesdays: help organizing our food shelves and freezers
- Tuesdays and Fridays: come help prep food, cook, serve and cleanup (Lloyd Graf, Lynn Billington, Bill Ames) 7-1. Come for an hour or two; it'll all be helpful and appreciated
- Fridays: help pack weekend meals for families, 8-9 (Charlene Kemp, Hollis Carlisle)
- Tuesdays and Fridays come and join us for a community meal and conversations 11:30-12:30

I look forward to talking with you and helping you find a way to support Loaves and Fishes. You can contact me at 254-2761 or rtilgh09@aol.com

With kindness,

Ruth Tilghman

LOAVES AND FISHES NEEDS YOUR HELP

We need your recyclable containers that would be good for freezing dinners for people to take with them. There is a box for recyclable containers in the common room of St. Michael's. We need bakers and dessert makers for Tuesdays and Fridays. And of course, we can use your help with food prep and donations!

Contact Ruth Tilghman 254-2761, rtilgh09@aol.com

NEWS OF THE PARISH

PHOTOS FROM THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS, OCTOBER 8



IMPORTANT DATES

- November 5 – All Saint’s Day observed
- November 12 – Newcomers’ Tea, Hallelujah Farm, 4pm
- December 2 (Saturday) – “Listening for God through the Heart, Soul, and Spirit”: an Advent Workshop on Discernment and Decision-making
- December 3 – First Sunday of Advent; St. Nicholas Day Fair
- December 9 (Saturday) – Greening of the Church
- December 10– Advent Lessons and Carols
- December 16 (Saturday) – Choir School Festival of Lights, 4 pm
- December 17 – Longest Night Service, 4 pm
- December 24 – Advent IV and Christmas Eve
- December 25 (Monday) – Christmas Day
- December 31 – Christmas Lessons and Carols / New Year’s Eve
- January 6 – Ordination to the Priesthood, Duncan Hilton
- January 20-21 – Workshop of Centering Prayer and Welcoming Prayer by Father Bill Sheehan
- January 28 – Annual Meeting
- February 3-4 – Women’s Retreat

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

NOVEMBER LECTIONARY

Sunday, November 5

Celebration of All Saints' Day –
Revelation 7: 9-17;
Psalm 34: 1-10, 22; 1 John 3: 1-3;
Matthew 5: 1-12

Sunday, November 12

Wisdom of Solomon 6: 112-116 or Amos
5: 18-24; Wisdom of Solomon 6: 17-20
or Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18;
Matthew 25: 1-13

**Sunday, November 19**

Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18;
Psalm 90: 1-8, (9-11), 12;
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11;
Matthew 25: 14-30

Sunday, November 26

Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24;
Psalm 95: 1-7a;
Ephesians 1: 15-23;
Matthew 25: 31-46.

CELEBRATIONS

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 1 Willow Hesselbach
November 2 Patrick Meyer
November 3 Rich Melanson
November 4 Tian Ragle
November 5 Kierstan Landin
November 8 Miles Ackerman-Hovis,
Jesse Ackerman-Hovis
November 9 Ruth Tilghman
November 11 Mikael Mattson
November 12 William MacLean
November 15 Wendell Howard, Nathan Olmstead
November 16 Judy Walker, Taytum Rose
November 17 Kate McGinn, Ken Jacobs
November 18 Heddy Pomazi
November 19 Christopher Wesolowski,
Aiden Anderson
November 20 Christine Gauthier, Eve Pomazi
November 21 Annelise Fedoruk, Amanda White
November 22 Anne Brown
November 24 Pam Crispe
November 28 Laurie Chipperfield, John Laamanen
November 30 Alfred Cramer

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

November 2 Irene & Richard Burtis
November 13 Rosie & Matt Wojcik
November 29 Jessica & Chris Mattson



The Guardian is published monthly by St. Michael's Episcopal Church. News items, announcements, articles, etc., should be submitted to jeanie@stmichaels-vt.org by the 15th of the month for consideration.

***The Guardian* Mailing List:** Contact Jeanie Crosby with address changes or requests to be added or removed from *The Guardian* mailing list. jeanie@stmichaels-vt.org or 802-254-6048.

printed on recycled paper 100% post consumer, PCF



ST. MICHAEL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

16 Bradley Avenue
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301-8429

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BRATTLEBORO, VT
PERMIT #18

The Guardian

a Christ-centered community of practice awakening to the abiding presence of God



Our Worship Together

SUNDAYS 8:00 a.m., Quiet service of prayer and Holy Communion
10:15 a.m., Prayer, music, and Holy Communion, with childcare

WEEKDAY MORNINGS 6:00–7:00 a.m., Silent hour in chapel

WEDNESDAYS 12:00–12:30 p.m., Brief service of prayer and Holy Communion

THURSDAYS 5:30–6:30 p.m. Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer

SATURDAYS 8:00 a.m., Centering Prayer