

The Guardian

NOVEMBER 2016

FROM THE RECTORY

On Sunday, October 16, I preached a sermon on the topic of stewardship. In this sermon, I quoted a long passage from the book *People of the Way: Renewing Episcopal Identity*, written by my friend and teacher, Dwight Zscheile. So many people asked to have a copy of this passage that I promised to include it in this newsletter.

In this sermon, I was speaking about my ambivalence around stewardship season. On the one hand, it is a time when we as a community of faith might feel particularly vulnerable and anxious. It is risky to ask you to give and make a commitment to our common ministry not only with your gifts and time, but with your money.

On the other hand, what I appreciate about stewardship season is that it forces us to look at what is at the heart of our faith and our life together. Why do we give? Why do we show up on a Sunday morning when there are so many other things we could be doing? Why do some people choose to use their vacation time to help with recovery efforts in Baton Rouge? Why is this community and this life of faith important?

In reply, I read the following passage about Dwight's conversion to the Christian faith (in which he speaks of himself in the third person). Converts to the faith often have greater insight than those of us who've grown up in the church into what is so important and vital about being followers of Jesus, or People of the Way, as Christians were called in the early church. This story "of a boy" illuminates for me why our faith and our ministry is so important.

Let me begin with the story of a boy. He grew up in a secular home—an environment increasingly common for Americans today. Even though there was enough residual Christianity in his family for him to be baptized as an infant, the story of Jesus had long ceased to shape his family's life. He spent his childhood and adolescence in California, where the church has never been well established. This boy inhabited a narrative that dominates American life today—that you are what you earn or achieve, that identity must be cobbled together from a wide array of shifting possibilities, that you must work incessantly at securing meaning and community because these things are not given. Amidst competition, consumerism, anxiety, and opportunity, life is what you make of it, largely on your own. Underneath these swirling waters of struggle and flux lie deep currents of meaninglessness, isolation, and despair in a world where the modern myths of endless progress have been exhausted and the future is ambiguous.

This boy wasn't looking for a church—church wasn't even in the horizon of his awareness. He didn't know many people who went to church, and those few didn't talk much about it. In the California beach town where he lived, church was a minority religious option with little impact on the dominant culture. The great majority had no connection to any faith community, and non-Western religions were more popular than mainline Protestantism. People were more likely to try to find God in a walk in the woods than in an organized faith community. Those churches in town could have been the most welcoming in the world to visitors, and it wouldn't have done this boy, or most of their other neighbors, any good. *(continued next page)*

FROM THE RECTORY

God had to come to him, where he was. And God did. This happened initially outside the church, through the narratives of great works of literature by Dickens and Dostoyevsky, where the Christian story plays a central role. It happened through a high school friend who modeled a life of compassion, forgiveness and grace—a “little Christ” (to use Luther’s phrase) who didn’t even go to church. Through them and through Christians who came and knocked on his college dorm door, he discovered an alternative story, one in which every human life is precious beyond measure, created for loving relationship with the source of all life. In this story, your worth is given, not earned. Rather than bearing the weight of making it all up as you go, you find yourself in a common narrative that goes back many generations. You are welcomed into a community of unlike people where difference need not be a cause for division, as so often is the case in this world. You are offered forgiveness for your faults and errors, for the violence you do to others and this earth, and so are released to forgive others and break the cycle of hatred and retribution. You are claimed by a love and power beyond your own. You are held in the arms of grace. And in that embrace, you are freed to participate in the restoration of human community and all creation. For this boy, this was good news indeed.

*Yours in Christ,
Mary*

NEWS OF THE PARISH

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VERMONT CONVENTION NOVEMBER 4–5

Delegates, clergy, and others from the Episcopal Church in Vermont will gather in Burlington on November 4–5 to pray, listen, and discern the movement of God’s spirit in our life together. This year’s convention theme is “Love Heals,” with convention speaker the Reverend Becca Stevens.

Delegates to Convention this year are Christopher Wesolowski, Darcey Mercier, and Sarah Benton. Mary Lindquist and Thad Bennett will be attending as clergy representatives. Please keep the Episcopal Church in Vermont in your prayers for this important gathering.



PAUL MOBERLY PREACHING NOVEMBER 6

On Sunday, November 6, we will welcome back our seminarian Paul Moberly, who will preach at both services. St. Michael’s is Paul’s sponsoring parish in his process of ordination to the priesthood. This may be

the last time Paul will be able to preach at St. Michael’s, as this is his senior year in seminary. Please come and support Paul on this special day!



INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE NOVEMBER 22

All are invited to an Interfaith Service of Thanksgiving on Tuesday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m., 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 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, 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.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

STM

THANKSGIVING DAY MORNING PRAYER AT CHRIST CHURCH

Join us on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 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.

STM

NEWCOMERS TEA NOVEMBER 27

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 the first Sunday in Advent, November 27, at 4:00 p.m., at the beautiful retreat center in New Hampshire, The Lower Farm. The Lower Farm is a beautiful, newly renovated 1780s 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.

STM

STEWARDSHIP 2017: OFFERING TO GOD FROM THE GIFTS GOD HAS GIVEN US

Stewardship season is upon us as we look to the ministries we are called to support in 2017. We hope you all have received your stewardship materials and have taken time to decide on your pledge for 2017 and turned in your pledge card to St. Michael's. We continue to gratefully receive pledge cards and it is helpful for our planning to receive them sooner rather than later. Our goal this year is to receive at least 130

pledge cards for a total of \$245,000 or more to support our ministries in 2017 (a 3% increase over totals received for 2016). 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!

STM

ST. NICHOLAS DAY FAIR DECEMBER 4

The annual St. Nicolas Day Fair will be held on December 4 this year. There are a number of opportunities where you can help support this wonderful and fun inter-generational parish event!



- 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 3.
- Help out on 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.

UPDATE FROM JACK KARN

Dear Beloved St. Michael's Community,

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Philippians 1:2)

Sunny, warm days dominate the backdrop for what has already been an incredible month of mission service here in the Holy City, Jerusalem. Upon arriving on October 2, I immediately assumed my responsibilities as a Pastoral Assistant (Sacristan) at St. George's Cathedral. Eager, but having limited training in liturgical duties, I admit that I was quite nervous when I started. I made a few mistakes on the first Sunday and wrote detailed notes to learn the correct way to perform the tasks expected of me. Paradoxically, during the 9:30 a.m. service that morning, there was a shooting at a train station five minutes down the road from the Cathedral, in which three people were killed including the perpetrator. The repeated thunder of Israeli helicopters overhead and the tragic, unnecessary loss of life quickly eclipsed and diminished my concern about procedural errors made during worship.

It's interesting to be in this role, because I am so focused on making sure the services run smoothly that my experience participating in them is different as opposed to when I am sitting in the pews at St. Michael's with no assigned responsibilities. Because of the lower numbers of volunteers and servers here, I am balancing being a Lay Assistant, Usher, Lectern, Crucifer, and Counter—Jerusalem could use the St. Michael's faithful! It is quite the responsibility and task to remember to do all these things. However, attending and serving in the Sunday and weekday Eucharist and Evening Prayer services are the highlights for me. To worship God in this place, day after day, is a real blessing and a powerful, disciplined experience. To monitor the Cathedral each day and walk down the aisles of the nave when no one is present conjures humility and reverence in me imagining all those who have passed through its iron doors. I feel this inexplicable presence of countless souls who have sat in the reed-woven seats and listened to the Gospel, prayed on the kneelers for the peace of Jerusalem, and come forth to Christ's table to receive the gifts of bread and wine offered to all. All this, of course, happening less than a mile from where the events of the Paschal Mystery are remembered to have taken place.

“I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.”

(2 Timothy 1:3)

I have much to share, but I will hold off for now and write more on my blog (www.servingintheholylnd.blogspot.com) and in the next update, which will focus more on my work in the diocese, schools, and with Jerusalem Peacebuilders (JPB). Keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers.

*In Christ,
Jack Karn*

NEWS OF THE PARISH

HEARTFELT THANKS

It is with the deepest sense of gratitude that I write to thank the people of St. Michael's for a wonderful celebration of truly mutual ministry on September 25. It was a morning I will long remember and treasure, filled with the special blessing of being witness to others marking milestones in their journey of faith through confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation. I am grateful for many gifts given that day: words and music; good food (and what beautiful cakes from Sherri and Julie!); a generous Vestry present of a sabbatical time to refresh and grow next year; and best of all, the joy of being with so many people that are part of our joint stories. To Becky Anderson, I extend special thanks for her behind-the-scenes work to make it such a special day. Humbled, honored, gladdened—these words merely touch the surface of the depth of my feelings. Thanks be to God, through whom all things are possible!

Susan Dedell



ST. MICHAEL'S WOMEN'S RETREAT FEBRUARY 3-5 —SAVE THE DATE!

The women of St. Michael's are invited to gather for a retreat, February 3-5, 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.



OCTOBER VESTRY REPORT

- The Vestry meeting started with prayer. Doug led a discussion on Chapter 5, "Practicing the Journey," from *Joining God*.
- Minutes of the September meeting were approved.
- Mary presented the Treasurer's Report and announced that Jeanette Landin is stepping down from the Treasurer's position due to time constraints. Wayne Cook will step back into the Treasurer position for the time being.
- Jack Karn has received a grant which will help

him with his mission in Jerusalem.

- 2017 will mark the 200th year of Christ Church in Guilford. If there is enough interest, a "special celebration event" will be held to mark this milestone.
- Meetings have been held and will continue for Pastoral Care, Social Justice, and many other groups. New members are always welcome.
- Buildings and Grounds will be holding the fall clean-up day on November 5. The more help there is the more we can get completed.
- The Episcopal Church in Vermont Convention will be held in Burlington November 4-5.
- A "Newcomers Tea" is being planned for Sunday November 27, starting at 4:00 p.m. at the Hallelujah Farm (Lower Farm).

Submitted by Bruce Lawrence



PARISH FINANCIAL UPDATE: OPERATING INCOME/EXPENSES FOR JANUARY-AUGUST

Total Pledges Received: \$164,586 vs. Budget of \$178,500 (92% of Budget)

of which: Total Pledges Received in August: \$13,640 vs. Budget of \$19,833 (69%)

This is the amount of income from pledges alone that we have received. The first line shows the amount so far this year; the second line shows the amount for just the month noted.

Total Operating Income: \$229,666 vs. Budget of \$249,788 (92% of Budget)

This is our total income and includes rental income, fund raising (including pledges), memorial gifts, altar guild flower income, hospitality, tag sale, and other miscellaneous income.

Total Operating Expenses: \$243,953 vs. Budget of \$248,086 (98%)

This is the dollars needed to run the church, including salaries, utilities, repaying our building loan from the Diocese, outreach, rectory expenses, administrative expenses, mission and ministry, worship and music, congregation development, grounds upkeep, and snow removal.

2016 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

**CALLING ALL KIDS AND TEENS:
REHEARSALS START NOVEMBER 27 FOR THE CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT!**

Calling toddlers, children, and teens! 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 it to fit the company and adding, of course, any new elements that pageanteers invent. Recent pageants, for instance, have been blessed with flocks of free-range angels, sheep, and rabbits.

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)

- *November 27:* Talk briefly about the story and hear what role each child would like to play. What should be changed? What should we add?
- *December 4:* Run through the script with pageanteers in the roles they've chosen; start "blocking."
- *December 11:* Finish all blocking; run through with all lines assigned, with music and props. Costume check: Do we have everything we need? Should we change any costuming?
- *December 18:* Run-through "off book," with music and props.

December 23: Dress rehearsal at 4:00 p.m.

December 24: All should arrive at 3:15 p.m.; 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.

For more information and to sign up, contact Annie Landenberger, 348-7156, verbatim@svcable.net. Watch for more information and a list of other adult contacts in upcoming Sunday bulletins.

FALL TAG SALE



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

NOVEMBER ADULT FORUMS

Our Forums are held each Sunday from 9:00–10:00 a.m. in the Meeting Room. Everyone is invited, including visitors.

November 6, *Love Heals*—Join Sarah Benton and Paul Moberly, who will lead a discussion on the ministry of Becca Stevens, an Episcopal priest, social justice advocate, and founder of Magdalene, a residential community for women who have survived lives of prostitution, violence, and abuse. The women live together and support each other through the work

of Thistle Farms, a nonprofit bath and body-care business run by the women.

November 13—No Forum; Annual Ministry Fair

November 20, *Report from the Baton Rouge Group*—Craig Hammond and other work trip participants. Experiences, challenges, and rewards from the Outreach group trip to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in October.

November 27, *Expectation*—Led by Mary Lindquist.



**WINGED PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA:**

THE ROOTS OF THE SPIRITUAL NOVEMBER 12

On November 12, from 12:30–4:00 p.m., Charles Mays, Jr., will inspire, teach, and lead in an afternoon sure to be both fun and thought-provoking. Our explorations will start in the varied historical sources, including some that may be surprising, and will reach their end in the global music of today. Far from a sterile lecture, this will be an opportunity to immerse in the music itself through singing, listening, questioning, humming, clapping, stomping, and possibly shouting with transcendent joy. The spiritual has been a vehicle used to claim “personhood” by a people who were considered less than animals, and today its modes, rhythms, and forms find themselves used as a key core of Western music. I hope that you will join us as we touch our inner light and “let it shine.”

Our parish is so excited (and lucky) to be hosting an extraordinary event, and we hope many of you will be there to take advantage of this joyful and fascinating experience! Charles is a fantastic singer (three seasons at the Marlboro Festival, and the regional winner of the Metropolitan Young Artist Award), and an even more engaging teacher and human being. You need not be a “singer” or have any musical experience in order to participate and enjoy. The cost of the afternoon is \$40, and includes delicious refreshments.

For more information, visit the church website, or call the church office.

Susan Dedell

MISSA GAIA SERVICE ON ST. FRANCIS DAY



NEWS OF THE PARISH



ST. FRANCIS DAY AND THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS





ROTA FOR NOVEMBER

LITURGICAL ROTA FOR NOVEMBER 2016 • 8:00 AM AND 10:15 AM SUNDAY SERVICES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

Position	November 6	November 13	November 20	November 27
8:00 A.M. SERVICE				
Lay Assistant	Anita Crosson	Wayne Cook	Kate McGinn	Wayne Cook
Lector		Jeff Lewis		Jeff Lewis
Intercessor	Kiersten McKenney	Doug Switzer	Doug Lilly	Joanne Patalano
Sacramental Healing	Jeff Lewis	Janet Cramer	Jeff Lewis	Megan Buchanan
Usher	Judy McGee	Anne Cook	Judy McGee	Anne Cook
10:15 A.M. SERVICE				
Crucifer	Mikael Mattson	Darcey Mercier	Jeff Hiam	Liz Vick
Torch Bearers	KC Mattson Jake Mattson	Marian Wojcik Jonah Johnson	Ken Neilson Brian White	Clara Fritz Caleb Fritz
Element Bearers	Fritz Family	Sherry Stimmel Sue Dyer	Elaine Curry-Smithson Ricky Davidson	Linda Rice Chris Hart
Lay Assistant	Miranda Smith	Nancy Barber	Darcey Mercier	Sarah Benton
Lector	Carolyn Taylor-Olson	Jenn Karstad	Martin Leggott	Annie Landenberger
Intercessor	Joyce Vining Morgan	Sue Dyer	Mary Carnahan	Diana Bingham
Ushers	Sherry Stimmel Dick Burtis	Ricky Davidson Elaine Curry-Smithson	Fritz Family	Craig Hammond & Liz Vick
Sacramental Healing	Robin White-Diamondstone	Judith Hildreth	Margit Lilly	Janet Cramer
Altar Guild	Irene Burtis Judith Hildreth Sherry Stimmel	Mary Carnahan Charlene Kemp Rebecca Olmstead Zadie Olmstead	Mary Carnahan Charlene Kemp Rebecca Olmstead Zadie Olmstead	Carol Hesselbach Madelyn Howard Lynn Billington Judy Walker
Coffee Hour	Deb Jones Sue Avery Liz Vick & Craig Hammond	Rich Cogliano	Ken Jacobs	Nancy Barber
Counters	Anne Cook Judy McGee	Wayne Cook Judith Hildreth	Ricky Davidson Jared Rediske	Jeanette Landin Sherry Stimmel

If you cannot make it, please find your own replacement; then call Jeanie in the Office at 802-254-6048, ext. 104. Thank you.

NOVEMBER LECTIONARY

Sunday, November 6:

Job 19:23–27a; Psalm 17:1–9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17; Luke 20:27–38

Sunday, November 13:

Malachi 4:1–2a, Psalm 98, 2 Thessalonians 3:6–13, Luke 21:5–19

Sunday, November 20:

Jeremiah 23:1–6, Psalm 46, Colossians 1:11–20, Luke 23:33–43

First Sunday of Advent, November 27:

Isaiah 2:1–5, Romans 13:11–14, Psalm 122, Matthew 24:36–44

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-Houis, Jesse Ackerman-Houis
November 9	Ruth Tilghman
November 11	Mikael Mattson
November 12	William MacLean
November 15	Wendell Howard, Nathan Olmstead
November 16	Judy Walker
November 17	Kate McGinn, Ken Jacobs
November 18	Heddy Pomazi
November 19	George Lewis, Aiden Anderson, Christopher Wesolowski, Michael Panzer
November 20	Christine Gauthier, Eve Pomazi
November 21	Annelise Fedoruk, Amanda White
November 22	Anne Brown
November 24	Pam Crispe
November 28	Laurie Chiperfield, John Laamanen
November 30	Alfred Cramer

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

VESTRY OF
ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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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 a.m., Silent hour in chapel
WEDNESDAYS	Noon, Brief service of prayer and Holy Communion
THURSDAYS	5:30 p.m., Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer
SATURDAYS	8:00 a.m., Centering Prayer

Coming Up at St. Michael's Episcopal

NOVEMBER 12:	Winged Productions "The Roots of the Spiritual"
NOVEMBER 24:	Thanksgiving Morning Prayer at Christ Church
NOVEMBER 27:	Newcomers Tea
DECEMBER 4:	St. Nicholas Day Fair
FEBRUARY 3-5:	Women's Retreat