

The Guardian

JANUARY 2019

FROM THE RECTORY

A Gathering of Elders

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, *
according to thy word;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, *
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, *
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

The words above were spoken by Simeon in the second chapter in the gospel of Luke. Simeon, advanced in age, had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he saw the coming messiah, the “consolation of Israel.” These are the words he says when meets the baby Jesus, brought by his parents to the temple. Simeon is joined in recognizing Jesus’ importance by the prophet Anna, who was an 84 year-old widow who “never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day.”



This is a precious story to me, partly because there are so few stories of older people in the Bible. Yet here we have a story of elders who are the prophets of their time. They are the ones who have the wisdom to recognize what God is doing in Jesus, even as a small baby.

We at St. Michael’s are so fortunate to have a truly intergenerational community. People of many different ages gather on Sundays and other times in the week to worship, serve and minister. These last couple of years we have focused a lot on what it means to be followers of Jesus at this time and in this place. While this has been exciting and rewarding, it has meant our focus has been looking ahead to the future and emphasizing newness and innovation; and these themes tend perhaps to be more oriented toward younger generations.

The interesting thing about the story of Simeon and Anna is that in their old age they were able to recognize that God was doing a new thing more than those who were younger than them! In the spirit of Simeon and Anna, I feel called to gather with the elders of our church more regularly for conversation, connection and counsel. I hope if you are an elder of the church, you will participate!

For the first of these gatherings, I invite elders to a lunch at St. Michael’s on Tuesday, January 22 at 11:30 am. During this gathering I’d love to hear what is on your hearts and minds in terms of our ministry at St. Michael’s. Would it be possible to gather on a regular basis? If so, what would these gatherings look like? What would be nurturing to your spirit? And how can we at St. Michael’s listen to your wisdom and insights?

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

COME CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY WITH BISHOP ELY ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

This year's Epiphany Feast will be *extra special*, because this is the day the Bishop of Vermont, Tom Ely is doing his FINAL official visitation to St. Michael's.

Bishop Ely will preach, celebrate and confirm and receive 12 PEOPLE – At 8 am, Judy Davidson; at 10:15am, Megan Buchanan, Christy Fritz, Clara Fritz, Caleb Fritz, Jonah Johnson, Kierstan Landin, Linda Marcille, Don Marcille, Margery McCrum, Nancy Tierra and Brian White.

There will be two receptions this year: one following the 8 am service and one following the 10:15 am service. Instead of the Adult Forum in the Meeting Room that day, the Bishop will speak to folks in the Undercroft.

This is a very important day of celebration!

NEWS OF THE PARISH

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

A huge THANK YOU to all who have contributed to the 2019 Stewardship Campaign. In October, we set a goal of raising \$265,000 and receiving 140 pledges. As of December 18, we have received 132 pledges for a total of \$249,558.

We also have received 13 new pledges. We are still hoping to reach our pledge monetary goal and hope if you haven't pledged, you will do so soon. We are so grateful for your generosity and your support.



BUDGET REVIEW MEETING, JANUARY 20

Those of you who would like the opportunity to review St. Michael's budget for 2019 and ask questions prior to the Annual Meeting are invited to a choice of two budget meetings on Sunday, January 20. The first meeting will be at 9 am in the Undercroft (especially for 8 am folks and anyone else able to attend at this time). A second budget meeting will be offered following the 10:15 am service in the Meeting Room.

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 27TH

All members of St. Michael's are invited to attend our Parish Annual Meeting following the 10:15 am service on January 27th.

We will elect three new members of the Vestry each for a three-year term (see below), adopt a budget for 2019, elect delegates to the Bishop election and to the Diocesan Convention and receive reports of St. Michael's various ministries. In addition, we will view our annual slide show highlighting life at St. Michael's in 2018. Childcare will be available.

The Annual Meeting is an important overview of the past and future of our ministry together. Please make every effort to be present!

NEWS OF THE PARISH

VESTRY CANDIDATES

**Judy Davidson**

I joined St Michael's about three years ago because of my interest in Wisdom Christianity and in deepening my contemplative prayer practice. I had been meditating in the chapel and occasionally attending Thursday's Contemplative prayer group and decided it was time to make a commitment to becoming an active participant in the whole church. Over time, I became a member of the Pastoral Care Committee and of the Outreach Committee and also joined a Discipleship Group. I feel spiritually nourished, not just by our liturgies, the sermons and the beautiful music, but by so many activities and events here. I have come to love this church and this community of welcoming and engaged people! I hope that by serving on the Vestry that I can give back and help St Michael's to continue to grow and thrive.

Christy Fritz

I moved to New England six years ago, and was drawn to St. Michael's because of the children's Godly Play program. Soon after my first Sunday, I began teaching and serving alongside new friends, which provided deep spiritual healing and comfort. In the last couple of years, I have served on the Discipleship Leadership Team as well as the Sabbatical Planning Team.

During my time in this community, so many of you have served my family with consistent love, prayers, and encouragement.

I love worshipping with you and am very grateful to be considered as a member of the Vestry.

**Maurice L. Harris**

Hello, my name is Maurice Harris. I'm the communications minister for The Episcopal Church in Vermont, an ex-officio member of Diocesan Council, and co-convener of the diocese's Racial Reconciliation/Racial Healing Network. My husband Might and I have been members of St. Michael's Episcopal Church since July 2016 when we relocated from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Brattleboro, Vermont. Although I visit congregations statewide, I am eager for a role in my home parish that utilizes my leadership experience. I offer a spiritually-grounded perspective supporting the ministries and mission of St. Michael's as well as a strong connection to the diocese at large.

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

CHANTED DAILY OFFICE SERVICES CONTINUE**Valerie Abrahamsen**

Opportunities for chanting Daily Office services from the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) will continue in the New Year. Each service lasts approximately 30 minutes, includes Psalms, prayers and readings, and will be held in the Mary Magdalene Chapel at St. Michael's. These are services that have appeal to our non-Episcopalian friends or people who might be unable to worship with us on Sundays, so spread the word.

Compline will be offered on the first Wednesday of each month, January through June, at 7:30 pm. Evening Prayer services will take place on the third Sundays of those months at 5:00 pm. Here are the dates for your calendar:

- Compline, Wednesday, January 2, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday, January 20, 2019, 5:00 pm
- Compline, Wednesday, February 6, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday, February 17, 2019, 5:00 pm
- Compline, Wednesday (Ash Wednesday), March 6, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday, March 17, 2019, 5:00 pm
- Compline, Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday (Easter), April 21, 2019, 5:00 pm
- Compline, Wednesday, May 1, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday, May 19, 2019, 5:00 pm
- Compline, Wednesday, June 5, 2019, 7:30 pm
- Evening Prayer II, Sunday, June 16, 2019, 5:00 pm

Arriving in the chapel five to 10 minutes before the start of each service will allow time for quiet meditation and marking BCP and hymnal numbers in advance (bookmarks will be provided). Questions? Contact Valerie Abrahamsen, valabrah@gmail.com, or the Rev. Duncan Hilton, duncan@stmichaelsvermont.org.

THE BOB DRIVE

Through January 21, the Outreach Team is running The BOB Drive, an effort to supplement our parish's ongoing food offerings with a special drive for non-food items that are much needed, often not supplied by existing programs, and too-rarely donated. At St. Michael's you will find a flyer to take home which has all the information, including a list of suggested items to donate. These include cleaning supplies, hotel-size toiletries, band-aids and food wraps.

As part of the Martin Luther King Day of Service on January 21, the Outreach Team invites everyone to come help sort the BOB Drive donations and prepare them for delivery to Loaves and Fishes and to Groundworks. For more information contact Alix Fedoruk: alixf@mac.com.

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
JANUARY 20, 2019

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."
 "Letter from Birmingham Prison," Martin Luther King, Jr.



The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris will preach at both the 8:00 and 10:15 services and lead that morning's Forum at 9:00 AM.

Bishop Harris was ordained and consecrated a bishop on January 18, 2003 at Trinity Church in Boston. She serves as bishop suffragan (assisting bishop) in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, she graduated from Lewis and Clark College and holds a Master of Divinity degree from Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, which awarded her an honorary Doctor of Divinity in 2002.

Bishop Harris currently chairs the House of Bishops Pastoral Development Committee and the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Investment Group. She is on the board of the Old North Church Foundation and serves as vice president of Episcopal City Mission. She is the immediate past president of the Massachusetts Council of Churches and currently serves on its Working Board and Advisory Committee.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OF SERVICE
Monday, January 21

St. Michael's Social Justice Ministry along with the Outreach Team joins efforts of people all around the country as we organize a Martin Luther King Day of Service right here in Brattleboro. We have been actively contacting agencies and non-profits to ask how people could help. Lists of projects with details of time, place, and task will be available soon in the Common Room and on-line so you can sign up. Each project will have a small group of volunteers with a member of one of the organizing ministries as team leader. This is a one-day, one-event volunteer opportunity. We are starting small this year and will learn ways to involve more people in years to come.

This MLK Day of Service is putting Dr. King's words into action: *"Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."*

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

THIS IS MY BODY
St. Michael's Women's Retreat 2019
Saturday, February 2- Sunday, February 3
Hallelujah Farm, West Chesterfield, NH

This theme of this year's women's retreat is "This is my Body." These are the words that Jesus said at the Last Supper as he fed his disciples. And these are the words we hear during the Eucharistic Prayer every Sunday, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Why did Jesus choose this particular way to be remembered? What does it mean about our own bodies? How does it relate to how we live in the physical world? How do we nurture and care for our bodies and the larger body of earth?

Because this retreat will be about the body, we will be doing many "embodied" activities: yoga (with a yoga instructor for all bodies whatever your experience and limitations), a sound healing practice, walking, silence, cooking and eating. Our time together will be less about information or training and more about experiential activities and reflection. We will end our time together with a more embodied experience of the Eucharist, with the hope that praying more intentionally connected to our bodies will continue to deepen our relationship to Christ and to the physical world.

The retreat will begin at 10 am on Saturday and end by 12 pm on Sunday. We welcome all women from St. Michael's and ask that you commit to being present for the full retreat. Registration forms are available on St. Michael's website and in the Common Room. Please register by January 20. You may sign up either by filling on the Registration Form on St. Michael's website (go to www.stmichaelsvermont.org click on "news," then "announcements," then click on the link to the registration form) or pick up a registration form in the Common Room. Led by Mary Lindquist, Cary Gaunt and Chris Triebert.



Photo of the planning team of the Longest Night Service

NEWS OF THE PARISH

2019 PLEDGERS

Anonymous (x 6)
 Valerie Abrahamsen
 Patrick & Julie Ackerman-Hovis
 Greg & Kelli Allen
 Robert & Becky Anderson
 Laura Andrews
 Susan Avery
 Nancy Barber
 Betsy Morgan Bates
 Thaddeus Bennett
 Sarah Benton
 Matthew Bickford
 Diana Bingham
 Benson Bobrick
 Janet Brocklehurst & Sissi Loftin
 Jean & Matt Brodie
 Anne Wilmott Brown
 Megan Buchanan
 Fred Bump
 Andy & Elise Burrows
 Richard & Irene Burtis
 John Byrnes & Kiersten McKenney
 Pat Cameron
 John & Mary Carnahan
 Pam & David Carr
 Dianne Clouet
 Noah Coburn & Elizabeth Ruane-Coburn
 Richard & Julie Cogliano
 Wayne & Anne Cook
 Al & Janet Cramer
 Lawrin & Pam Crispe
 James & Anita Crosson
 Charles & Elaine Curry-Smithson
 The Rev. Joao d'Alcaravela & Carol Blanchard
 John Daly
 Judy Davidson
 Ricky Davidson
 Paul & Susan Dedell
 Dorothea Degutis
 Daniel Dobson
 Imogene Drakes
 Dan Drish

Susan & Paul Dyer
 Larry Earle & Jay Pomponio
 Corwin & Betty Elwell
 Drs. Don Erwin & Mary Abell
 Tom & Barbara Evans
 The Fritz Family
 Paul & Pam Gallagher
 Cary Gaunt
 Christine & Richard Gauthier
 Lloyd Graf
 Karen Guthrie
 Brian Hammer
 Craig Hammond & Liz Vick
 Steve & Laurel Harrison
 Christine Hart
 Susan Heimer
 Carol Hesselbach
 Jeffrey Hiam
 Duncan Hilton
 Shirley Hodgdon
 Mark Horton & Heather Lesage-Horton
 Wendell & Madelyn Howard
 Parker Huber
 Judy Hueber
 Kenneth Jacobs II
 Vince Johnson & MJ Woodburn
 Deb Jones & Lucia Osiecki
 Judith Junkins
 Jenny Karstad
 Charlene Kemp
 Susan Kochinskas
 Chris & Jeanette Landin
 Bruce & Marie Lawrence
 Marcia Leader
 Gregory Lesch
 Jeffrey Lewis
 Laura Lewis
 Doug & Mimi Lilly
 Jack & Margit Lilly
 Mary Lindquist & Kurt Johnson
 Don & Linda Marcille
 Paul Love
 Leigh Marthe

Alan & Judith McBean
 Margery McCrum
 Andrew & Lauren McDowell
 Judith McGee
 Dana & Kate McGinn
 Judith McGorray
 Ralph & Michelle Meima
 Steven & Karren Meyer
 Anne Montgomery
 Raquel Moreno
 Brian & Joyce Vining Morgan
 Gwen Mousin
 Linda Neilson
 Whitney Nichols
 Ladd & Lifei Osborne
 Joanne Patalano
 Robert Peeples
 Joan Pinilla
 Annamarie Pluhar
 Heddy & Zsolt Pomazi
 Dorothy & Nicholas Porter
 Jared Redisce
 Linda Rice
 Ed & Jane Sbardella
 Renee Skwirz
 Jean & Peter Smith
 Miranda Smith
 Devin Starlanyl
 William Stearns
 Marcia Steckler
 Cherolyn Stimmel
 Doug & Ann Switzer
 Lydia & Eben Taggart
 Carolyn Taylor-Olson
 Nancy Tierra
 Ruth Tilghman
 Christine Triebert
 Fred & Carol Turner
 Judy Walker
 Christopher Wesolowski
 Robin White-Diamondstone
 Michael & Susan Wilmott
 Phillip & Susan Wilson
 Cliff & Wylene Wood

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

DISCERNMENT & DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY

One of the books I've been reading this fall with the Discernment for Lay People Team (a small group that formed after last year's discernment workshop to explore how to create ongoing support for people to do discernment) is *God's Voice Within* by Mark Thibodeaux, SJ. The book provides a comprehensive but simple overview of the tradition of discernment grounded in the teachings of Ignatius of Loyola. How do we recognize God's will for our life? How do we distinguish God's voice from other voices in our culture and family?

One of the prayer practices that Thibodeaux recommends is called the Examen. It is the process of reflecting on one's day or week and noticing where one experienced consolation and desolation. The premise is that God's True Spirit leads us to consolation and False Spirits lead us to desolation. Consolation is the presence of the theological virtues - faith, hope, and love; a sense of God's closeness, transparency, and great desire. Desolation is its opposite: the absence of faith, hope and love; God seeming distant; restlessness and apathy; fear and secrecy. The Discernment for Lay People Team (DLT) will be offering more teaching and programming during Lent about how to respond to consolation and desolation and how to shift from reflecting on spirits to making good decisions. For now I offer the concepts as a way to reflect on the discipleship and discernment ministry over the last month. Many aspects of the discipleship and discernment ministry have continued to move forward over the last month - the DLT team continuing to research and plan, services happening at the Turning Point and Gathering Place, people completing their Rules of Life and discussing them through Advent as prayer partners, my completing the volunteer training at the Springfield prison, discipleship groups continuing to meet - but for the sake of brevity, I'll focus on the mission focus of the ministry.

Fifteen people showed up for 2.5 hours on the evening of Tuesday, December 11 to discuss where they sensed God was calling them in the community after the workshop on November 3. We prayed and reflected on the Annunciation and then Cary Gaunt led a time of council for people to share about God's messengers or angels in their life today and what that message was. Based on that sharing, people self-organized around climate change, the opioid abuse crisis, overcoming isolation and relationship-building across generations, living by a different rhythm and healing the heart, and animal rescue. The next step is for people to pray and discuss whether any of the groups can combine, to invite others to be involved who couldn't attend the gathering, and to plan to attend the training on **Saturday, January 12**. On that day, the groups can connect more deeply with the stories that are motivating them to action, get to know their team members more deeply and solidify their teams, and brainstorm about how to move into action. The agenda for January 12 will be based on the training that I did for five years with parish teams in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Consolation: I felt hope at the presence of five teens at the gathering, along with their mothers. God felt present in the multigenerational aspect of the gathering. I felt love as people shared honestly and openly during the council practice. At the end the group reflected on the amount of energy in the room. The *desolation* is my concern that we will move too quickly into action or too slowly, focus too much on process or too much on outcome, aim too high or too low. One of Thibodeaux's pieces of wisdom around desolation is relying on a support network. None of these fears seems overwhelming when shared and addressed with all the others involved. I hope that if you sense any consolation reading this summary that you'll reach out to me and consider attending on January 12.

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES

A Short History of the Episcopal Church
by The Reverend George Hodges
Forward Movement Publications Cincinnati, Ohio
4" X 6 1/4" 126 pages

PART THREE

In 1859, Darwin had published the "Origin of Species." Copernicus had demonstrated already that earth was an insignificant chunk of matter in the greater universe. Now Darwin demonstrated that man was only a highly-evolved species of animal. Rolling back through the evolutionary process left Genesis' explanation scientifically discredited. If the creation of our new nation and its astonishing assertions about the rights of the individual had turned history upside down, evolution was about to do the same to aspects of religious belief.

Adam Smith's book "Wealth of Nations" had been published in 1775 but its ideas were now beginning to perplex thinking people. His contention that self-interest (which led to specialization and, thus, the free market) was the basis of prosperity and happiness was a hard pill for the Church to swallow but equally hard to refute (witness the triumph of Socialism today in once-rich Venezuela which now, as a consequence, is enduring widespread starvation). Could the Church accommodate Smith's ideas?

Medicine since the Civil War had gone from medieval to modern. Germ theory was now understood. Cholera, yellow fever, and typhoid were being controlled or eliminated. Widespread childhood death was disappearing and with it the frenetic paranoia of church folk to soon re-unite their family in heaven.

Embracing the ideas of naval superiority of Admiral Alfred Mahan, an ardent Episcopalian and author of "The Influence of Sea Power on History," catapulted our two-ocean nation into global superiority. How would the Church cope with this incredible transformation from backwoods to world pre-eminence?

By the century's end, the Church had grown and prospered. The fifteen hundred clergy in 1835 had become five thousand; the eighty thousand communicants had

become eight hundred thousand. It became the denomination of choice for the Social Register. The wealthy, particularly J P. Morgan, supported it generously. Now missionary zeal sent disciples world-wide to spread the faith. Cathedrals were constructed, deaconesses trained, hospitals built, and the cornerstone of a national cathedral in the nation's capitol was laid in 1891. Church schools like pre-Civil War St. Paul's as well as the later Groton and St. Mark's spread the faith among youth. Five seminaries had been created by the end of the century: Berkeley (1850) being the first and Church Divinity School of the Pacific (1894) the last.

The twentieth century, by contrast, was relatively benign as the Church had reached a semblance of maturity. Its clergy was well-educated, sophisticated, and well-respected in the upper reaches of society. The revision of the Book of Common Prayer in 1928 allowed greater freedom of use and enrichment of services and became beloved for its elegance of phrasing and its dignity of delivery. This came to a crashing end in the 1979 revision, loudly denounced and protested by the laity. The mid-century clergy, dismayed by declining church attendance and assuming a simpler text could attract simpler folk to fill the pews, disgracefully ignored laity wishes and instituted the prosaic Book which we use today.

With the new Prayer Book came the centrality of the Eucharist and the moving of the altar to a central chancel position. The beautiful sung Office of Morning Prayer disappeared and was mourned by the literate faithful.

If the politicized Episcopal Church of today, having in the process shed its dignity, consequently no longer maintains its respect as a lofty national institution, in this writer's opinion it remains still the only denomination that a civilized person can embrace.

Robert R. Anderson

NEWS OF THE PARISH



Photo from Festival of Lights
with St. Michael's Choir School

Photo from Newcomers' Tea
at Hallelujah Farm



VESTRY

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EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

JANUARY 2019 LECTIONARY

January 6, The Epiphany:
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;
Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12

January 13:
Isaiah 43:1-7, Psalm 29,
Acts 8:14-17, Luke 3:15-17, 21-22



January 20:
Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10,
1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11

January 27:
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10, Psalm 19,
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:14-21

CELEBRATIONS

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

January 2	Robert Peeples
January 4	Maria Escalera
January 5	Andy Burrows
January 7	Carol Blanchard
January 10	Pat Cameron
January 15	Bruce Griffin
January 18	David Mattocks
January 19	Pam Carr
January 20	Miranda Smith
January 21	Linda Neilson, Lily Deleon
January 22	John Carnahan
January 23	Julie Cogliano
January 24	Melia Allen
January 26	Rebecca Olmstead, Andachew Mousin
January 28	Gwen Mousin
January 29	Paul Dedell
January 30	Megan Buchanan
January 31	Linda Parker



January 25 Neil & Anne Montgomery



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***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.

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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 am, Quiet service of prayer and Holy Communion

10:15 am, Prayer, music, and Holy Communion, with childcare

WEEKDAY MORNINGS

6:00–7:00 am, Silent hour in chapel

WEDNESDAYS

12:00–12:30 pm, Brief service of prayer and Holy Communion

THURSDAYS

5:30–6:00 pm, Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer

SATURDAYS

8:00 - 9:00 am, Centering Prayer