

The Guardian

March 2019

FROM THE RECTORY

An Embodied Faith

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body. - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

A few years ago I was leading a chapel service for young children and telling the story of Palm Sunday, Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem riding a donkey. In order to illustrate the actions of the people waving palms and laying their cloaks on the ground in honor of Jesus, I took the stole from around my neck and laid it on the ground.

In that moment I experienced this story in a new way. While I had read and heard the story of the people laying the palms and the cloaks on the ground many times, I now knew in my body the sense of humility, honor, surrender and hope that they may have felt in this action. And I knew it in and through my body.

At the beginning of February, 19 women gathered for a retreat at Hallelujah Farm. The title of the retreat was "This is my body," based on the words of Jesus at the last supper. We came together to explore and experience how we connect with God and our faith through our bodies.

We experienced so much in the 26-hour retreat: yoga, sound bath, deep reflection of our bodies at different stages of life, Zumba, prayerful wine/cider tasting/savoring, traditional and nontraditional prayer postures and finally an embodied Eucharist service.

It was fascinating to hear women's insights about these experiences. The body practices had such a deepening effect on our relationship with God and one another that we felt as if we'd only just begun to explore practices that could bring greater wholeness and integrity to our lives.

We also lamented that the Christian tradition in the last few centuries has done such a poor job of engaging the body. With our theology of creation and the incarnation (God taking on human flesh in Jesus), it seems strange that our faith and our worship is not more embodied. I am hoping that we can find ways to redress this imbalance at St. Michael's.

One way we are further exploring the theme of the body is in our Adult Forums during Lent. We will be doing a series on engaging the senses in our worship and in our faith. I invite your thoughts, experiences and ideas in this endeavor!



FORUMS FOR MARCH

The Lenten theme in March is talk about the five senses: sight, taste, touch, sound, smell. We have commitments from some leaders, but not for the whole series and are still working on dates. Below is the description of the March 3 and 10 Forums. We will publish each topic in the Sunday Bulletin and in the eblasts. Stay tuned!

March 3: "Lenten Practices" -- Please join the Discipleship and Discernment leadership team for a continuation of our rule of life offerings, with a focus on Lenten practices. This forum will include discussion of the practices of self-examination and repentance, fasting and self-denial, and will focus especially on the daily offices from the Book of Common Prayer as a way to pray, read, and meditate on The Word.

March 10: "Sound and the Sense of Hearing" -- As part of the Lenten series of celebrating our senses and how these gifts embody the experience of our Christian faith, Margery McCrum and George Moore will offer a forum on hearing and experiencing sound. They will explore how God calls us -demanding our attention through the fanfare of trumpets, the whirring of angel wings and the word - to be in relationship and dialogue with the Divine. By raising our voices in song and prayer, we respond to God's call.



SUNDAY MARCH 3 DURING COFFEE HOUR "PREPARING FOR LENT: CRAFTING CROSSES, ANGLICAN ROSARY BEADS, PRAYER BAGS"

With a desire to prepare our hearts and homes for the mystery of Easter, the Ministry of Disciple-ship and Discernment will be offering Lenten activities during coffee hour on Sunday, March 3.

All ages are invited to assemble and finish a beautiful wooden cross crafted by our parishioner Bruce Lawrence. These can be brought home to use as a focal point for prayer during Lent. Darcey Mercier will also be offering a lesson on how to use the Anglican rosary beads. She will have plenty to give away for those interested in incorporating this practice in their prayer life.

All may gather additional take-home Lenten crafts and prayers to use for each Sunday of Lent. Rosie Wojcik, Megan Buchanan, and Jeff Hiam have sewn cotton tote bags for transporting these materials home. The bags can be decorated at the event and our hope is to use them again for other liturgical seasons. We invite you to join us as we anticipate the coming of Lent!



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 6

Ash Wednesday services will be offered at 7:30 am, 12pm and 5:30 pm on Wednesday, March 6 at St. Michael's. Ash Wednesday is the first day of the Season of Lent. It occurs 46 days (40 fasting days, if the six Sundays, which are not days of fast, are excluded) before Easter. Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert. Lent originated as a mirroring of this, a special season of devotion as preparation for Easter. This service includes the imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist. All are welcome.

SHROVE TUESDAY, MARDI GRAS, BUTTER WEEK AND ... PANCAKES?

Joyce Vining Morgan

On Tuesday, March 5, the day before Ash Wednesday this liturgical year, we celebrate Shrove Tuesday. So the day before Lent begins, we Christians are reminded that we are entering a season of penance. Shrove is the past tense of the word shrive, meaning to hear a confession, assign penance and absolve from sin – so our predecessors in northern Europe and the British Isles dedicated this day to cleanse the spirit in preparation for the penitential season of Lent, with its fasts and solemnity.

Elsewhere in Christian Europe, people occupying remnants of the Roman Empire inherited customs from popular Roman festivals welcoming spring with raucous merriment. Rather than forbid the merriment, religious leaders adapted it into a prelude to Lent and it evolved into Mardi Gras ("Fat Tuesday") in France and Carnevale in Italy. Preparation for Lenten fasting became the opposite of restraint and penitence.

Meanwhile, to the East, Russian Orthodoxy required extremely rigorous Lenten fasts and even forbade eating meat during the week before Lent. There the pagan Slavic celebration of the end of winter led to "Maslenitsa," or "Butter Week," and served as the last week of socializing, singing and dancing, and above all using any remaining stock of butter, eggs and milk to make blini – a crepelike pancake served with a multitude of fillings and as round as the sun (thus, as it happens, a representation the chief Slavic pagan god Volos).

So yes, pancakes. In England, too, eggs and butter and milk would be forbidden in the Lenten fast as was meat, and thus became an edible symbol of culinary delight before Lent began. Shrove Tuesday became Pancake Day.

Mardi Gras came to French-occupied America, and in New Orleans now extends from Epiphany, or Twelfth Night, to Shrove Tuesday – which may be how the traditional French "King Cake" of Epiphany became the King Cake of Mardi Gras, decked in purple (for justice), green (for faith) and gold (for power).

Masks and costumes have been associated with Shrove Tuesday celebrations for centuries. And even today the masks commonly seen in New Orleans on Mardi Gras are the same types popularized by the two-to-three-week-long Carnivale in Venice that culminates with Fat Tuesday. But masking and costume-wearing in New Orleans also has a specifically American history, as it was another way for revelers who were officially excluded from the festivities to join in, by concealing their identities – making Mardi Gras inclusive even during the Jim Crow era.

So we invite you to join your fellow parishioners at 5:00 to 6:30 on March 5th for pancakes, sausage, fruit and fellowship. Wear masks and costumes if you like – we'll be decorating masks at coffee hour on Sunday, March 3. And if you hear a song about "blini" coming from the kitchen, it's all about the pancakes.



IT'S TIME TO SIGN UP FOR ROCK POINT CAMP!

Rock Point is in Burlington, Vermont and is the camp run by the Episcopal Church in Vermont. St. Michael's offers partial scholarships to all the kids from St. Michael's who would like to attend. If you would like a partial scholarship for your child or children, the deadline is April 30. Please let Mary Lindquist know if you are interested in a scholarship. The website with the registration material is at www.rockpointvt.org/camp

TAG SALE MINISTRY GENERAL MEETING MARCH 17, 11:30 AM

All interested people are invited to the general meetings of the Tag Sale Ministry, held monthly. The meeting this month will be on Sunday, March 17, at 11:30 AM in the Meeting Room. Come hear about the core leadership group's planning, organizing, and developing strategy and share your thoughts about the work ahead.

ST. MICHAEL'S TUESDAY EVENING LENTEN SERIES BEGINS MARCH 12, 5:15 - 7:15 PM

"Listening for God's Call": Discernment for Lay People

How do we listen for God's call on our life? How do we recognize and follow Christ's voice as revealed through the wisdom of our own heart, soul, mind, and spirit?

Each Tuesday evening in Lent, Duncan Hilton and a team of parishioners who have been studying discernment will lead a workshop. The team has been studying *God's Voice Within: The Ignatian Way to Discover God's Will* by Mark E. Thibodeaux, *Discernment* by Henri Nouwen, *Inner Compass: An Invitation to Ignatian Spirituality* by Margaret Silf and other books and resources. We hope to share what we have learned and continue to learn and practice discernment with you. This Lenten Series is for anyone who wants to:

- Get in touch with your inner wisdom, heart and soul
- Learn about discernment and prayer practices in the tradition of St. Ignatius

All programs are located at St. Michael's Episcopal Church. Come to any or all parts of the evening. All are welcome. Each Tuesday will include:

- Supper in the undercroft from 5:15-6 pm
- Workshops in the Meeting Room, from 6 7 pm
- Night Prayer, from 7 7:15

Workshops:

- March 12: What is Discernment? How do we know when it is God speaking? Led by Duncan Hilton and Darcey Mercier.
- March 19: Establishing a Prayer Practice: Two-Way Prayer. Led by Darcey Mercier
- March 26: Gospel-Based Imaginative Prayer. Led by Joanne Patalano.
- April 2: God's Voice Within and Decision-Making from the Soul. Led by Cary Gaunt and Duncan Hilton.
- April 9: Pray-Dreaming and Coming to a Decision: Led by Cary Gaunt and Duncan Hilton



HELP NEEDED FOR THE LENTEN SUPPERS

At 5:15 p.m. on Tuesdays during Lent, we will gather for a community supper before the Lenten program. This year we will again have soup and homemade bread. We hope to also serve pizza and salad. We need help to make this happen! Please sign up if you can:

- Make a pot of soup (2-3 people to bring pots of soup to share)
- Make a salad

- Bring 2 large cheese pizzas
- Help set up at 5:00 p.m. (set tables and set out food)
- Help Clean up (clean up food and dishes)

Signups are available in the Common Room

Thank you for your help!

Ruth Tilghman & Rosie Wojcik



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

We had a wonderful Annual Meeting on January 27th. Many thanks to those who provided food and helped clean up from a delicious lunch. Thank you also to Paul Dedell who helped with the set-up of our new Undercroft sound system.

Congratulations to Judy Davidson, Ricky Davidson and Christy Fritz who will each serve three-year terms on the Vestry and to Jenny Karstad, Bruce Lawrence and Carolyn Taylor-Olson who will be delegates at the Diocesan Convention and the Bishop's Electing Convention in May.

Carolyn Taylor Olson will serve as Senior Warden and Ricky Davidson will serve as Junior Warden for the Vestry in 2019. Thank you to all who are serving!

LETTER OF THANKS FROM TOM MOUSIN

Dear Sisters + Brothers,

The prayers and many expressions of love I have felt coming from the St. Michael's community over these last two months have contributed greatly to my healing.

I am feeling stronger and more mobile every day, and anticipate that within several weeks I will be back to work.

I give thanks to God for the ways in which your love for me and Thomas has continued over time and space. God bless you as you carry out all your ministries.

Love, Tom



FORMER ST. MICHAEL'S RECTOR THOMAS BROWN ELECTED BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF MAINE

On February 9, Thomas Brown was elected as the 10th Bishop of the diocese of Maine. He served St. Michael's as rector from 2000 to 2009. In Peter McGuire's February 9 article for the Portland Press Herald, Thomas is quoted as saying "A big thing that stood out for me is that the people of Maine wanted someone to articulate their faith in Jesus while still remaining open to people of other faith and no faith." He said, "That seems like a great gift of the people in the Episcopal church and something I've been engaged in for two decades."

The Episcopal News Service says "The diocese made history with the election. Brown will become The Episcopal Church's only openly gay and married bishop currently leading a diocese. He is married to the Rev. Thomas Mousin, who is currently the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Charlestown, a neighborhood of Boston." In this March issue of The Guardian, see Tom Mousin's letter of thanks to the people of St. Michael's

for their help following the accident in which he was hit while crossing a street several months ago. His sister is St. Michael's parishioner Gwen Mousin.

Pending consent of a majority of the bishops with jurisdiction and the diocesan standing committees, Thomas Brown will be ordained and consecrated on June 22nd at St. Luke's Cathedral in Portland. Presiding Bishop, Michael B. Curry will officiate.

Note from Mary: It is so exciting to celebrate Thomas Brown's election to become a bishop. As I said on Sunday, February 10, you the people of St. Michael's should feel very proud. You called Thomas to be your priest in 2000; this was Thomas' first parish as an ordained person. You formed him, nurtured him and called him to be a leader in the church. Now, with the gifts you nurtured and formed, he will go on to lead the people of Maine and the wider Anglican Communion as a Bishop. Hurray!



FIVE REFLECTIONS ON DISCIPLESHIP AND DISCERNMENT

Duncan Hilton

It has been a month full of action and reflection. Here are a few thoughts and questions that have surfaced (even articles referenced without hyperlinks can be found on the internet for your own reading):

- 1. Anti-Racism and Discipleship Bishop Ely assigned Michael Eric Dyson's book "Tears We Cannot Stop" to all clergy last fall. Dyson is a professor of sociology at Georgetown and a Baptist minister. The book is written as a sermon to white people about racism in America. It ends with a "benediction," practical suggestions about what white people can do to heal racism in the United States. According to the St Augustine Prayer Book, the "Parts of True Repentance" are 1) Contrition 2) Confession 3) Satisfaction. Satisfaction is "action that, as possible, makes amends to others and changes one's behavior." What Dyson offers is, in a sense, what "satisfaction" might look like for White Christian Americans for hundreds of years of institutional racism. I have been wondering how to build these actions into the spirituality of the discipleship groups.
- **2. Christian Sexual Ethics** The cover article of last month's Christian Century was an article by Nadia Bolz-Weber called, "Talking With My Children About Sex Without Shame." It was adapted from her recently released book, Shameless: A Sexual Revolution. She was also profiled in the Feb 8, 2019 edition of The New Yorker. Bolz-Weber is a progressive Lutheran pastor in Colorado. Over a few years she led a progressive congregation of a few members to grow in numbers to thousands of members. Immersed in Colorado in an Evangelical Christian "purity culture" around sex, Bolz-Weber sets out to "build a sexual ethic around human flourishing rather than around rules encoded by men centuries ago," as The New Yorker summarizes. Reading the articles (I haven't yet read the book) I wonder about sex and discipleship in Vermont. How do we talk about and live by an ethic that supports human flourishing and honors tradition and scripture. How and what does the church

teach that differs from what a young person learns in public school?

- **3. Life-Cycle of a Team** On January 12 we had a daylong missional training attended by about 20 people who broke into four teams (there's now a fifth team of sorts that has emerged as well). What's happening a month out? The most helpful answer I have is connected to something I learned from a fellow parishioner and social worker a few years ago about the four stages in the lifecycle of a team: 1) Form, 2) Storm, 3) Norm, 4) Perform. According to this model, when people come together on a team, there is the initial excitement about the project that propels people to come together. In the "Storm" stage, new people may join and initial members may drop off. The group realizes that it may need to shift its goal or focus. As the team works through these challenges, there is an opportunity to develop deeper trust in one another. In the "Norm" stage, the membership of the team stabilizes and the roles on the group become clear, as does the group's mission and strategy. In the "Perform" stage, the group gets into action. The missional teams are currently somewhere between stages 1 and 3, doing the important and hard work of forming, storming, and norming. Next month, on March 23, they'll all come together again as they move toward "Perform."
- 4. Leadership and the Bishop Election Over the last ten years, the Episcopal Dioceses in New England, Province 1, have declined in membership by an average of 21.8%, with the Diocese of Vermont averaging slightly higher (https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/19540). I wonder what type of leadership is required from a bishop at this moment. A few years ago I read a helpful paper by Gil Rendle who is an author, consultant, and staff member at the Texas Methodist Foundation. It was called "Waiting for God's New Thing: Spiritual and Organizational Leadership in the In-Between Time." He argues that the church needs

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

FIVE REFLECTIONS ON DISCIPLESHIP AND DISCERNMENT con't

to have three different conversations. The first is about maintenance – how to support and honor congregations who are declining. The other two conversations are in Rendle's words:

- "To improve the congregational form of organized religion because there remain those who are drawn to congregations as a means to follow Christ. Add to this fact, the reality that the current form of congregations is unsustainable as a denominational system. Improvement is clearly needed to survive in this new world."
- "To create new forms of faith communities that will better self-organize and will seek a deep theological and spiritual connection. . . while wanting (or accepting) only a long and loose tether to the institutional rules of that tradition. Creation is clearly needed in order to thrive in this new world."

Rendle outlines how these conversations differ and how each requires a different type of leadership. I wonder which conversation is a priority in the Diocese of Vermont and if/ how a bishop can facilitate each simultaneously.

5. New Monasticism in Vermont – At the end of last month I spent three days visiting my friends Mark and Lisa Kutalowski at their homestead in Thetford. Like generations of Vermonters before them, Mark and Lisa live off-the-grid in a yurt, heating and cooking by woodstove. They also lead wilderness trips, including the Episcopal Province 1 canoe pilgrimage down the Connecticut River the past two summers. Unlike generations of Vermont homesteaders before them, Mark and Lisa pray the daily office five times a day based on the Benedictine tradition and are active in their local Catholic parish. Over time they hope to develop a more formal ministry of hospitality on their property. You can read about their ministry here: http://www.metanoiavt.com. About ten years ago, a movement began in the church called "New Monasticism." Movement leaders summarized the "12 Marks of a New Monasticism" in Sojourners (https://sojo.net/magazine/january-2007/12-marks-new-monasticism). One can see many of the new monastic marks in Mark and Lisa's ministry, especially commitment to a disciplined contemplative life and care for a plot of God's earth. I wonder if there are new monastic expressions God is nurturing here in southern Vermont.



SUMMARY OF JANUARY MEETING OF THE VESTRY

On Thursday January 17, 2019, the Vestry gathered for its monthly meeting. All members were present.

- Janet and Mary opened the meeting with prayers.
- The outgoing Vestry members (Judith, John and Lynn) reflected on their experience over the past 3 years. We also thanked Joanne, who will be stepping down from her position as Vestry clerk, for her dedicated service.
- Duncan and Jeff provided updates on the Ministry for Discipleship. Discipleship groups are planning exciting projects addressing important concerns from climate change to animal rescue and more.
- The Vestry approved a letter of support for Jeff Hiam moving forward in the ordination process to become an Episcopal priest.
- Wayne reviewed an encouraging end of year Trea-

- surer's report which showed income to be 103% of budget and expenses to be 96.5% of budget.
- Thank you cards were sent to many parishioners who devoted themselves to helping with Holiday services and the Bishop's reception.
- The Vestry approved the Annual Parochial Report to the General Convention of Episcopal Churches.
- Mary gave the Rector's report and reminded of the Elder Luncheon to take place on Tuesday January 22 at 11:30 am. Annual meeting will take place on January 27.
- Judith provided the Warden's Report and offered the closing prayer.

Sincerely, Mark Horton



FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES

The Greatest Drama Ever Staged by Dorothy L. Sayers Published by Hodder & Stoughton London 1938 5" x 7" 48 pages

Many of us are best familiar with Dorothy L. Sayers as the author of the eleven Lord Peter Wimsey novels. During the 'eighties, the BBC televised several of the novels as a part of their tribute to the female English mystery writers of the twentieth century. The part of Wimsey was played by the zesty Ian Charmichael and subsequently by the droopy Edward Petherbridge leaving the viewer perplexed by the casting. The author claimed that Lord Peter was a cross between Fred Astaire and Berty Wooster! It has been alleged by historians that she had fallen hopelessly in love with her debonair character and that the men in her life suffered accordingly.

She was the daughter of a parish cleric and graduated from the female Somerville College, Oxford, the setting for her Wimsey novel "Gaudy Nights". She produced a son out of wedlock (who until her death was unaware she was his mother). She married in 1926, settled for life in Bloomsbury, and began working as an advertising copy-writer. She is credited with originating the slogan "It pays to advertise."

She was far more than a detective novelist. To acclaim, she translated Dante's "Inferno." She wrote several plays with Christian themes. And she wrote this little volume about the Christian faith.

And it is a little volume. The publisher, in attempting to market as a salable book what is nothing more than a lengthy essay, devised clever typographical subtleties. First it is pocket-sized. Its margins are broad, the type-face surprisingly large for so small a trim size, the line length abruptly short, and the leading between lines astonishingly generous. Behold, sucker, a book!

Writing about how God transformed Himself into human form the author wrote the following: "The Christian faith is the most exciting drama that ever staggered the imagination of man. For what it means is this, among other things: that for whatever reason God chose to make man as he is—limited and suffering and subject to sorrows and death—He had the honesty and courage to take His own medicine. Whatever game He is playing with His creation, He has kept His own rules and played fair. He can exact nothing from man that He has not exacted from Himself {as Christ Jesus}. He has Himself gone through the whole of human experience, from the trivial irritations of family life and the cramping restrictions of hard work and lack of money to the worst horrors of pain and humiliation, defeat, despair, and death. When He was a man, He played the man."

Possibly, in the author's thinking, God is rather akin to a proper game-playing English gentleman who would never improve his lie in the rough or cut off another at a fence in his zeal to be forward to the hounds. God, like Wimsey, could not consider bending the rules to ensure Himself victory. This, to such fellows as Wimsey, makes Him a decent chap, a sportsman, and clubbable, and well worthy of support and acclaim.

The second (and concluding) chapter is titled "The Triumph of Easter." The author deals with the tiresome subject of sin and this is a dense, dreary, and complicated exposition which takes the potential fun out of the subject.

Robert R. Anderson



Photos from the Women's Retreat





Photos from "Hymn Sing at the Gathering Place"





VESTRY

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EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

MARCH 2019 LECTIONARY

MARCH 3:

Exodus 34:29-35, Psalm 99, 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2, Luke 9:28-36,

MARCH 10:

Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16, Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13

MARCH 17:

Genesis 15:1-12,17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35



MARCH 24:

Exodus 3:1-15, Psalm 63:1-8, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Luke 13:1-9

MARCH 31:

Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

MARCH CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

March 2	Susan Kochinskas
March 3	Christine Hart,
	Kiersten McKenney,
	Callan McDowell
March 5	Joshua Fritz
March 6	Wayne Cook
March 9	Martin Leggott
March 10	Gabe Reynolds
March 11	Teri Robinson,
	Marie Lawrence
March 14	Mimi Lilly
March 15	Benson Bobrick,
	Jeffrey Hiam
March 16	Chris Chapman
March 19	Karen Guthrie
March 20	Bob Walker
March 21	Robert Kochinskas
March 22	Bruce Lawrence
March 24	James Wilmott,
	Joan Pinilla,
	Margery McCrum
March 25	Kate LeBlanc
March 28	Tom Woodbury,
	Elizabeth Moore
March 29	Braeden Smith
March 30	Craig Newbert
March 31	Jan Bennett

ANNIVERSARIES

March 7 Elizabeth Vick & Craig Hammond March 12 Nancy & Jeffrey Durborow March 23 Kate & Dana McGinn





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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