

The Guardian

JULY 2019

FROM THE RECTORY

PRAYING AND PLAYING

“Play is the exultation of the possible.” - Martin Buber

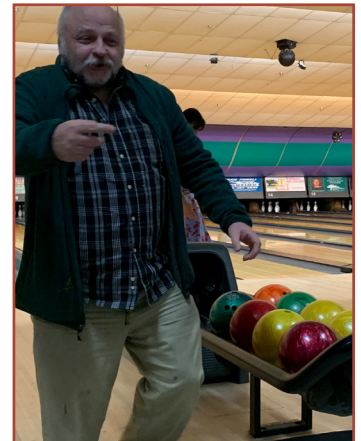
Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice! – Philippians 4:4

Part of the theme of the sabbatical renewal time from last summer was “Play and Pray” and while I was absent from St. Michael’s, there was a wonderful event with this title held at Hallelujah Farm. Since that time I’ve been wondering more seriously about the connection between praying and playing. It seems that as St. Michael’s becomes a more prayerful community (with daily Morning Prayer, many Discipleship Groups, and the Discernment for Lay People Group), we also seem to be becoming a more playful community.

Is it possible that there is a connection between the depth experienced in community prayer and the joy that asks to be expressed in play and mutual delight? I’m beginning to think so!

Here are some examples in the last few weeks:

- About month ago, a few parishioners had the idea that St. Michael’s would start a bowling league called “the Lane-gli-cans” (get it?). It was not only a fun and slightly silly idea to think about, but it was a fun and slightly silly thing to do! After church on June 9, about 25 parishioners of all ages from St. Michael’s came together at Brattleboro Bowl for some seriously fun bowling, laughing, dancing, and general merriment.
- At the Connection Constructors Match- Up last month, we had a Bake-off, which provided many amazing baked goods for all of us to sample and some very tough judging for Caleb Fritz and Jonah Johnson. Congratulations to Cliff Wood who won with his Lemon Cheesecake.
- When the Christian Education folks met in May, we decided that instead of a complete break in the summer from kids Sunday programs, we would offer “Summer Fun,” an opportunity for kids at St. Michael’s to build community, have fun and enjoy God’s creation.
- And coming soon...the Animal Rescue Group, comprised of St. Michael’s youth, is planning a Dog Show! What a brilliant and fun idea. Stayed tuned for the date and time.



The best news is that none of these ideas were generated by me, but rather, by our St. Michael’s community. May we continue to pray and play together, rejoicing in God’s abundant grace.

SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS AT ST. MICHAEL'S

While the Godly Play Kids program takes a break in the summer, this year we are offering some summer fun for kids during the first half of the 10:15 am service. Summer Fun is a relaxed time for St. Michael's kids to be together, play, make things, and enjoy the outdoors. We still have slots for adults to help, so please contact Mary Lindquist, mary@stmichaelsmichaels.org if you would like to help for one or two Sundays of the summer. Kids are invited to gather in the Sunday School Room with their leaders for the day and will return to the service during the Peace.



INTRODUCTION TO SACRED GROUND SERIES AT ST. MICHAEL'S
SUNDAY JUNE 30, 9-10 AM

On Sunday, June 30, 9-10 a.m. in the upstairs Meeting Room, St. Michael's will offer an introduction with video previews of the *Sacred Ground* series described below. We invite everyone to come learn how you can participate in our dialogue group. Please contact sissiloftin@hotmail.com for more information.

Sacred Ground is a film and readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. Small groups are invited to walk through the chapters of America's history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity. The 10-part series is built around a powerful online curriculum of documentary films and readings that focus on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific American histories as they intersect with European American histories.

Sacred Ground is part of Becoming Beloved Community, The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. This series is open to all, and especially designed to help white people talk with other white people. Participants are invited to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day—all while grounded in our call to faith, hope, and love.

To learn more about Sacred Ground, go to www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground



DAILY WEEKDAY MORNING PRAYER
AT ST. MICHAEL'S

The Service of Morning Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer is prayed every weekday from 8-8:30 am in the Chapel of Mary Magdalene. The service involves prayer, scripture and chanting and is based on the ancient Benedictine monastic office. This is a wonderful way to start the day -- all are welcome, even if you've never prayed this way before!



SUNDAY JULY 7, 8 AM SERVICE
AT CHRIST CHURCH

Yay, it is summer and time to return to Christ Church for the first Sundays of July, August, and September for the 8 am service. The 10:15 services will remain at St. Michael's. Please remember that Christ Church has several steps which are not accessible for some with mobility limitations. The 8 o'clock service on July 7 is a lovely time to experience worship at our mother church, the first Episcopal church in Vermont.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

SUMMER PRAYER SERIES CONTINUES IN JULY

Discernment for Layperson Team (DLT) invites you to the summer prayer series which began in June. Every other Tuesday evening from 6 to 7:30 this summer, we come together in the Meeting Room for an evening around prayer. At each meeting, the DLT offers an introduction to a different way to pray followed by a chance to practice. You may attend any or all of the meetings. No commitment or registration is requested. Join us in this opportunity to deepen our prayer lives.

- July 9 - Lectio Divina and Centering Prayer
- July 23 - Two-Way Prayer
- August 6 - Imaginative Prayer
- August 20 - The Daily Examen and Compline



ALL PARISH INVITATION

You are invited to join your Vestry on Wednesday, July 10 at 6 pm in the Meeting Room. Child care can be available, if requested ahead of time. Together, we will listen to and offer our thoughts and cares regarding the future of displaying the “Black Lives Matter” sign.

These are the questions on which we hope to hear your thoughts:

1. How do you feel about the “Black Lives Matter” sign on St. Michael’s front yard? What personal experiences and values have shaped your perspective on the sign?
2. Do you have mixed feelings or concerns about that perspective?
3. Do you see any options that might support both your perspective and your concerns?

We also welcome your written comments to the above questions either prior to the gathering or after the gathering until July 15 if you are not able to attend or if you prefer to write. You may return your written comments to a box in the Common Room, mail them to St. Michael’s (16 Bradley Avenue, Brattleboro, VT 05301) or email them to info@stmichaelsvermont.org. All written comments must include the writer’s name. The Vestry welcomes your participation.

In faith, *Carolyn Taylor-Olson*, Senior Warden

JERUSALEM PEACE BUILDERS VISIT
ST. MICHAEL’S SUNDAY, JULY 28

Jerusalem Peacebuilders will be visiting St. Michael’s on Sunday, July 28. Jack Karn, who works for Jerusalem Peacebuilders and whom St. Michael’s has sponsored for ordination to the diaconate, will be preaching at both services. There will also be a special Forum from 9-10 am when teens from Israel, Palestine, and the United States will be speaking about their experiences back home in the Middle East and as part of JPB’s intercultural Interfaith Leadership Institute. There will also be time for our questions. Participants in Jerusalem Peacebuilders, co-founded by parishioners Nicholas and Dorothy Porter, have been a part of St. Michael’s summers for a number of years.

DON’T FORGET YOUR PLEDGE TO
ST. MICHAEL’S IN THE SUMMER!

We know many of us take vacations in the summer, but our expenses at St. Michael’s remain steady. Please don’t take a vacation from your pledge. Thank you so much for your generosity!

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER



Dear St Michael's,

The spring has been full of evaluation and reflection as well as peaks and celebrations. I'm including here the summary of the report that I compiled through conversations, gatherings, and an online survey. Mary and I recently submitted this report to the Diocese and shared it with the Vestry in June. I've also printed out copies and put them in the common room for those who would like to read the full seven-page report. I'm grateful for an abundant year of ministry with you!

Duncan

SUMMARY OF REPORT TO THE DIOCESE

In its second year, the Discipleship and Discernment ministry sustained its impact on discipling while also growing its missional emphasis. The **six discipleship groups** that formed in year 1 all continued to meet. One group meets weekly, others twice a month or monthly. The teenagers plan to create a second teen group in the fall of 2019 to bring the total to 7. Participation has remained essentially steady over the two years – some groups lost members and others added members. Each group has 4-8 core members with a current total of **35 core members across all the groups**. Another **33 people have attended a group 1-3 times** over the last two years. The biggest impact of the ministry continues to be the depth of the relationships that have formed through creating a space where people can share intimately about their lives.

The Priest for Discipleship and Discernment co-led **four missional trainings** through the fall and winter based on individual and collective discernment practices and the team-leadership practices of Prof. Marshall Ganz. Each event was attended by 15-25 people. Out of the trainings, four missional teams formed: an opioid crisis response team focused on recruiting volunteers for Circles of Support and Accountability; an animal rescue team focused on fundraising and volunteer recruitment for local shelters; a Connection Constructor Team focused on building relationships with isolated people in

the community through matching members of the parish and isolated people around shared gifts and interests; and a tag sale team focused on fundraising through putting on a tag sale. Participants learned the practices of praying the neighborhood, public narrative, 1:1 relationship-building, team-building, strategy, and creating an effective action.

Other lay-led initiatives have emerged out of the relationships formed through the discipleship groups. Since Lent, a core group of 4-5 people have been praying **morning prayer** together at the chapel on weekdays and plan to continue indefinitely. In the fall there was a teaching series to help people develop a **Rule of Life**. During Lent, a **Discernment for Lay People Team** created a 5-week teaching series based on Ignatian practices.

As the ministry leadership team looks ahead to **year 3**, the plan is to: continue with the discipleship groups and missional teams and other lay-led initiatives as each group is so called; focus missional energy on exploring developing a L'Arche community in southern Vermont; explore training and partnership opportunities across the Diocese; codify leadership practices and teaching materials so that they can be shared; and develop a transition plan so lay leaders can continue the ministry beyond the tenure of the Priest for Discipleship and Discernment.

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

MY JOURNEY WITH THE DISCERNMENT FOR LAY PEOPLE TEAM

by Joanne Patalano

Last April, I was on a plane flying to Virginia Beach. When we hit turbulence, I didn't panic. Instead, I started to imagine the story of Mary anointing Jesus' feet at the home of Lazarus. And I felt calm. I owe that calm to my participation on the Discernment for Lay People Team.

I remember that the invitation to join the Team over a year ago involved being part of a small group with Duncan Hilton, Christy Fritz, Darcey Mercier and Cary Gaunt. That sounded good to me at the time. I live alone. I am not in a relationship. My family lives in New York. While I have friends, I have grown attached to the St. Michael's community and the people in it. This was a chance to get to know them better.

To be honest, I didn't really know what "discernment" meant in the beginning. Reading books together helped. We began by reading books like *Listening Hearts*, *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, *God's Voice Within* by Mark Thibideau.

When Duncan was away last summer, our group decided to keep meeting. For me, getting to know Duncan, Cary, Christy and Darcey has been a gift. What's even more of a gift is for them to get to know me and still keep inviting me back. It's risky getting close to people.

When our group started to explore Ignatian spirituality, I searched my work's online library catalog for books on St. Ignatius and stumbled on a book called *Inner Compass* by Margaret Silf. It was from that book that I learned about imaginative prayer. There's a section in this book that shows readers how to practice imaginative prayer using the story in John 12:1-8 of Jesus being anointed by Mary while visiting the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

One day I recorded this story on my iPhone. I just hit the video button and pointed my phone's camera at a small icon of St. Michael that I received as a gift from

St. Michael's when I was confirmed. I read the story into my iPhone. [Later I talked with Darcey and asked her why Mary wanted to anoint Jesus' feet with lard. Since I've never heard of nard, I thought the scripture passage had a typo. Darcey graciously pointed out that no, it is *nard* and not *lard*.]

Through the practice of imaginative prayer with this story, I have walked with Jesus on the dirt road to Lazarus' house. I have watched him walking to the house as I sat on the side of the road and like a schoolgirl - looked at Him with a crush.

I have been inside the house with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. I have peeked out the window of the house and have seen Him coming. With excitement we all prepared for His coming. We greet Him at the door of our hut. I have talked with Him as he sat by the fire - the food is before him that Martha served. He always comforts me. He always says I will be okay and that I am loved. That He loves me. He is affectionate.

Some nights I wake up in the middle of the night - my mind starting to race with thoughts of work and things I don't like. One night when this happened, I got my iPhone and listened to the story I recorded earlier. I felt a calm.

Imaginative prayer especially has helped me see Jesus as really having lived on this earth. I always wondered if it was true or not. But a while ago I decided it didn't matter. He is real to me.

Now I am reading *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, by Marcus Borg. I love it. While I admit that sometimes I wake up at night and turn on the TV, more often I grab that book or rely on imaginative prayer. Sometimes I'll take the cross that I received from Janet Brocklehurst and just hold it while I try to fall asleep. It's like a doll or a teddy bear - but it's a cross. I'm not sure how to end this story. I don't want it to end.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

EfM GROUP IN KEENE THIS FALL

We have a few spaces in our St. James Education for Ministry (EfM) group that will be starting in September. The group will meet Wednesdays at 5:15 pm at St. James Episcopal in Keene, NH. We noticed that St. Michael's did not have a group this year, and in the event that there are parishioners who are eager to join an EfM group this coming fall, we would welcome them with open arms!

We have participants for Years 1, 2, and 3. If someone needs Year 4, that would be ideal for the group. My husband (Kerry) and I will be co-mentoring the group. For more information, you can email me, Theresa Ford, at theresaford@mac.com or call me at 210-608-1195.

Best wishes, Theresa

**WANT TO RECEIVE YOUR GUARDIAN ELECTRONICALLY AND SAVE PAPER?**

Please let Jeanie know! Just email her and let her know your preference in how you'd like to receive the Guardian. Her email is jeanie@stmichaelsvermont.org

**SUNDAY AUGUST 25
PARISH PICNIC**

Write the annual Parish Picnic on your calendar for SUNDAY AUGUST 25. We will celebrate and have fun at Kate & Dana McGinn's beautiful home on Lake Spofford from 12 – 4 pm. There'll be lunch, swimming, and porch-sitting. Please plan to carpool if able. More information to come in August. All are welcome!

**RECTOR SUMMER SCHEDULE**

"My family and I will be visiting Oregon and Western New York in the second half of July. We will be reconnecting with Kurt's mother and siblings in Oregon and my parents and siblings in New York.
-- Mary"

**SAVE THE DATE – FALL TAG SALE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5**

The date for the St. Michael's Fall Tag Sale is Saturday, October 5, 2019. We will begin to accept your donations as of Thursday, August 1, 2019. The Tag Sale storage rooms will not be available for drop-off until August 1.

Clothing and sports equipment should be seasonally appropriate for fall and winter. Effective immediately, should you have furniture to donate, please contact Daniel Dobson:

Email – dbdrunner@dobsongroupinc.com

Cell Phone – 425-785-8262

Clothing should be in a condition that is sellable, so we prefer no rips, tears, or heavily soiled clothing. Thank you.

If you would be interested in joining the Tag Sale Core Team, please contact one of the Team members. In addition, if you have any input for the Team based on the Spring Sale, you can also contact one of the Team. Any and all comments, suggestions, or ideas, are very much welcomed.

Wishing you a great summer.

Peace,

The Tag Sale Core Team

- Becky Anderson; broadaxe@comcast.net; 802-257-0064
- Daniel Dobson; dbdrunner@dobsongroupinc.com; C-425-785-8262
- Charlene Kemp; charkemp@outlook.com; 802-254-2083
- Susan Nichols; greenflower05345@yahoo.com; 802-365-4671
- Sherry Stimmel; sherrys@iglide.net; 802-254-8470
- Liz Vick; ebethvick@gmail.com; 802-254-7060

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES

Shepherds Abiding

by Jan Karon

published by Viking Penguin New York 2003

6"x 9" 290 pages

The Genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors or colleges, or churches, or parlors, nor even in its newspaper or inventors, but always most in the common people—Walt Whitman

This the second novel of the North Carolina hill country village of Mitford and its former Episcopal rector (now retired) reviewed in this humble column. Since two-thirds of a library shelf is occupied by the author's Mitford publications, a return visit seems permissible if for no other reason than that of sheer abundance. The first review, "A Common Life," dealt with the impending and improbable marriage of the elderly, balding, droopy, and diabetic bachelor Rector to a rather snazzy younger parishioner. Now, seven years later, they have returned to Mitford (population approximately one thousand) where they have settled in a home of their own on Wisteria Lane in the village. He reads to himself the Daily Offices, performs occasionally as a supply priest, and is attempting to write a book of essays at which he is beginning to suspect he has no God-given talent (his sermons, one suspects, must have been an ordeal to the faithful). His better half (and it soon becomes clear that she definitely is) occupies her days doing good deeds.

Academia embraces and exults in novels about tortured souls and tormented psyches—the more ghastly and depraved the better. There appear to be no wretched souls in Mitford. Most have eccentricities and occasional bouts of crankiness not unlike the common run of humanity, but basically Mitfordonians are remarkably akin to the pleasant, ordinary sort of folk one encounters outside the hallowed halls of the academy wherein dwell those sanctimonious souls who glory in literature's sordid darkness. Mitford, as portrayed by the author, is a town of, as a recent Presidential candidate termed them,

"deplorables" who hopelessly are content to reside in, to quote her again, "fly-over country." To this reviewer, it seems a rather pleasant place (and the former Presidential candidate's world thoroughly nasty).

Unlike Godless Vermont (our church attendance per capita is the lowest in the nation), Mitford has thriving congregations. As this story begins, the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians are jointly preparing for the approach of Advent. Glorious October is turning into sere November and preparations are underway. Father Tim has discovered in the local antique shop an ancient and well-worn nativity set and has decided to restore it as a Christmas present for his beloved. Regrettably, he realizes that he has no more talent for restoration than he has for essay writing. Yet he perseveres.

The book has its faults. The author leaps from episode to episode without clarifying the characters involved leaving the reader temporarily mystified. A competent editor should have resolved this issue for the editor is supposed to act as the reader's friend. Despite this too obvious failing, this is an attractive book with part title illustrations and endpaper water colors of the Christmas scenery. Bungling editor aside, this is a pleasant book in appearance as well as in compassionate warmth—although it might cause an effete, urban (but not urbane) pseudo-sophisticate to gag.

The foregoing being said, upon laying this book aside one is sorely tempted to consider departing the frigid and Godless Green Mountain state for Appalachian Mitford. Like ours, the trout streams run clear and cold, the autumns are glorious, and, blessedly, the winters are considerably shorter.

Robert R. Anderson

NEWS OF THE PARISH

Hello St. Michael's Community!

This is Caleb Fritz from the Connection Constructors missional team and I am pleased to announce that the Match Up we held on April 21 was an enormous success! For those who didn't attend, this event was geared toward bringing people together based on shared interests. It brings me much joy to say that seven groups were formed, with shared interests ranging from birdwatching to Recovery. We even formed a group that fulfilled one of the main purposes of our group, to visit those in our community struggling with loneliness and isolation. Thank you to everyone who helped and supported us throughout this process, especially those who submitted their baked goods for judging at the first-ever St. Michael's Bake-Off! If anyone is still curious about our ministry and would like to become more involved, feel free to contact Duncan Hilton or myself at fritzc6844@stuemail.gcc.mass.edu. We would love to talk with you!

STM

NEWSLETTER APPRECIATION

Every month Jeanie Crosby gathers and edits content for our Guardian Newsletter and Patrick Ackerman-Hovis takes all the content and photos and, through the magic of graphic design, makes it all attractive and readable. This is no small task for Jeanie or for Patrick (a volunteer from our congregation). Be sure to thank them for making this ministry possible – It is so important!

SUMMARY OF THE JUNE 20 VESTRY MEETING

Absent: Janet Brocklehurst, Mark Horton, and Ricky Davidson

Items discussed:

1. Endorsement of Jack Karn for diaconate candidacy. He has been working with Jerusalem Peacebuilders and the Jubilee Prison Ministry near Houston, Texas. Jack will be joining St Michael's for a brief visit in July.
2. Discussed the disbursement of funds for Bishop Thomas Brown's cassock and Bishop Ely's gift. The cassock for Bishop Brown was less expensive than we estimated, so the remaining funds donated for his cassock will be disbursed as a gift to Bishop Brown.
3. Discussion of the current financial report presented by Wayne. Although contributions have been low, as is expected during the summer, expenses have also been low. Wayne discussed that a mailing reflecting individual pledge amounts and contributions should be mailed soon.
4. We discussed an opt-out option for paper Guardian mailings in an effort save on postage and printing for parishioners who prefer electronic versions.
5. The all-parish, in-person discussion about the Black Lives Matter sign is scheduled for Wednesday, July 10, at 6 p.m. in the undercroft. Child care will be available if necessary, and refreshments will be available. The Questions for discussion will be published in advance, and three Vestry members will start the discussion, modeling the type of discussion we wish to have. All are welcome to attend and may contribute their thoughts, but please come even for those just want to listen. A paper copy will be distributed if parishioners wish to submit their thoughts in writing. All responses will be considered prayerfully in the months following the meeting.
6. The all-parish picnic is scheduled for Sunday, August 25, at the McGinn's home.

Closing prayer offered by Imogene.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Jeanette Landin*

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

JULY 2019 LECTIONARY

JULY 7

Isaiah 66:10-14, Psalm 66:1-8,
Galatians 6:(1-6)7-16, Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

JULY 14

Deuteronomy 30:9-14, Psalm 25:1-9,
Colossians 1:1-14, Luke 10:25-37



JULY 21

Genesis 18:1-10a, Psalm 15,
Colossians 1:15-28, Luke 10:38-42

JULY 28

Genesis 18:20-32, Psalm 138,
Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19), Luke 11:1-13

JUNE CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

July 1 Meaghan Landin,
William Stearns,
Patrick Ackerman-Hovis
July 3 Rosie Wojcik
July 4 Matthew Wojcik
July 5 Thea Porter,
Rebecca Porter
July 7 Lori Palmer,
Joanne Patalano
July 8 Judith McGee
July 9 Anita Crosson,
Irene Burtis
July 12 Ann Switzer



July 13 Jessica Mattson,
Beth Ruane
July 14 Marian Wojcik,
David Carr
July 16 Olivia Capponcelli
July 20 Richard Gauthier
July 21 Helena and Zofia Kotas
July 22 Susan Wilmott
July 25 Phillip Wilson
July 27 Kerry Capponcelli
July 30 Shirley Hodgdon
July 31 Nancy Barber

ANNIVERSARIES

July 1 Pam & David Carr
July 13 Susan & Paul Dedell
July 20 Susan & Phillip Wilson
July 23 Mary Lindquist & Kurt Johnson
July 26 Susan Heimer & Tim Ragle
July 27 Ann & Douglas Switzer,
Kristen McKenney & John Byrnes
July 29 Betty & Corwin Elwell



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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