

# The Guardian

SEPTEMBER 2021

## FROM THE RECTORY

### BABY GRAND

I've always been dissatisfied by the names churches give to the beginning of their fall program year. "Fall Kick-Off" seems too sporty. "Homecoming" does not take into account all the people who have been attending church all summer. "Grand Opening" does not make much sense, except if you might be returning to church after a long pandemic. So, this year we decided to have a soft opening in July after being out of the church for 16 months, followed by a grand opening in the fall.

In any case, the September newsletter was supposed to be the place where we could announce our Grand Opening, the return of all our education programs, choir practice, full liturgy with acolytes and crucifers and both elements of Holy Communion. This definitely felt doable in early July, but not so doable now. We had expected that the wide distribution of the COVID vaccine we would be fully in the season of post-pandemic. But COVID with its Delta variant, has, yet again, foiled our plans.

I had a bit of a tantrum at a Christian Education meeting in early August. When talking about how to accommodate our programs for children and youth this fall to new COVID restrictions, one wise participant said, "We just have to be flexible." I replied, "I'm tired of being flexible! I want to be rigid! I want to be able to actually plan something!"

I'm sure all of you share my frustration. We thought we were done with all this uncertainty, but we are not.

The good news is that we are not back at square one. We are far from locking the doors of the church and retreating again to our homes to do Zoom church. We are still able to come together in the church, albeit with masks. We now know a whole lot more about how COVID surges go up and go down. Most of us are vaccinated, which offers a great deal of protection. But despite my tantrum, we will have to continue to be flexible.

So as of today, we are still having a grand opening on Sunday, September 12. I wondered if we should call it a "grand-ish" opening? A "moderately grand" opening? But I settled on my favorite, a "Baby Grand Opening," with a nod to all the piano enthusiasts out there. While we won't be able to offer all the children and youth offerings of the past, we will offer some. While we won't have our full liturgical party with a Communion of bread and wine, we will still be able to offer our simplified liturgy with bread. While we cannot yet do a true Coffee Hour, we will continue to offer food and fellowship outside, under the tent after the 10:15 am service. And, we will still be dancing the Jerusalema in front of the church following the 10:15 service on September 12.

I hope you can join us in person or via our Vimeo service for our Baby Grand Opening on Sunday, September 12!

Yours in Christ,

*Mary*  
Mary

## NEWS OF THE PARISH

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

We have modified and simplified our offerings for children and youth this fall. Below is our plan, but we are open to being flexible depending on how things unfold with vaccinations for young children and the Delta variant. We will be taking cues from the public schools in our region regarding safety precautions.

**Safety Precautions:** All children, youth and adults will be masked at all times regardless of vaccination status. Godly Play will be offered outside, and for those who wish, Holy Communion will be distributed under the tent (see below for more details). There will also be two pews reserved in the back of the church for children and families, for those who prefer to sit in a designated area in the church

**Godly Play (Preschool–4th Grade):** We will be offering Godly Play outside this fall. Children are invited to gather under the tent between 10–10:15 am. Beginning at 10:15, there will be a time of song and preparation, followed by a Godly Play story. Following the story, the kids will be taken to the playground for their response/play time. Kids will return with teachers to the tent by the time of the Peace (in the liturgy). Parents are invited to fetch their children and bring them into the church for Holy Communion, or remain outside under the tent and Holy Communion will be brought to you there. For more information, please contact Susan Heimer at [heimer.susan@gmail.com](mailto:heimer.susan@gmail.com)

**Holy Mayhem (5th–9th Grade):** Holy Mayhem kids will meet in person every other week, from 10:15 until Holy Communion time (approximately 10:15–11am). Kids are invited to gather under the tent and proceed to their classroom at 10:15. On the “off weeks” when Holy Mayhem is not offered, kids are invited to act as helpers with the Godly Play class. For more information, please contact Lydia Taggart at [lydiafin1@gmail.com](mailto:lydiafin1@gmail.com)

### Youth Discipleship Group (10th Grade and up):

The Discipleship Group will continue to meet on Zoom with some in-person sessions. For more information, please contact Jonah Johnson at [jonahkonane@gmail.com](mailto:jonahkonane@gmail.com)

**Nursery Care (0–4 years old)** has resumed. Kaitlin, who has been a nursery caretaker at St. Michael's for many years, is now joined by September, a staff member of the Horizon Preschool.

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### SUNDAY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 9:30–10 AM

Please join us for the Sunday School Open House outside, under the tent, from 9:30–10 am. Stop by and learn more about Godly Play, Holy Mayhem and Youth Discipleship Group, as well as register your child for Sunday School. Please invite neighbors and friends who may be interested to attend!



## NEWS OF THE PARISH

**SERMON SERIES ON THE PSALMS**

It is my view that in the words of the Psalms the whole human life, its basic spiritual conduct and as well its occasional movements and thoughts, is comprehended and contained. Nothing to be found in human life is omitted. —*Athanasius, 4th Century Church Father*

I will be offering a sermon series on the Psalms this September through October 10. Because I rarely preach on the Psalms, I thought a sermon series would be a great opportunity for us to explore the Psalms more in depth. Here is a tentative schedule:

September 5 — Introduction and Psalms of Thanksgiving

September 12 — Psalms of Pilgrimage

September 19 — Imprecatory Psalms

September 26 — Psalms of Refuge

October 10 — Psalms of Lament

In the eNews, I will let you know a few examples of each type of Psalm. It is my hope that you will take some time during the week prior to read some examples of the Psalms that we will encounter on the coming Sunday. —*Mary*


**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH —  
AN INTRODUCTION**

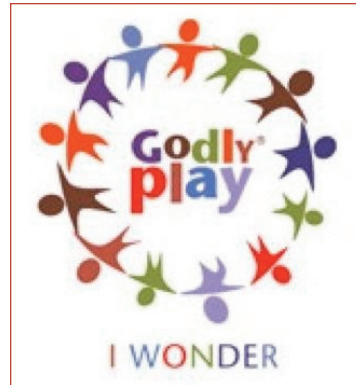
Are you new to St. Michael's? To the Episcopal Church? Been away from church for a while? This class is for you! During this class we will be exploring the basics of the Bible, Church history, liturgy and what makes the Episcopal Church the Episcopal Church. We will also get a chance to get to know one another.

The class will be on Zoom on Tuesdays either in the morning or the early evening (depending on the best time for those who are interested) beginning on Tuesday, September 28 and concluding on Tuesday, October 26. Please let Mary Lindquist know if you are

interested in attending at marydail7@gmail.com or by calling the church office, 802-254-6048, ext 104. The deadline for signing up is Sunday, September 19.

**AN INVITATION TO GODLY PLAY**

*Susan Heimer*



What about the children? During pandemic times adults were able to meet over Zoom, but after our valiant effort to reach young children over Zoom, we realized that this was not a developmentally workable medium for

them. Therefore it is our hope that we may again be able to try to gather children — masked, spaced reasonably, and mostly outdoors — to renew our commitment to Christian community again this fall.

Over the last 14 years or so, our children's ministry at St. Michael's has centered around a special program called Godly Play adapted from Maria Montessori's philosophy. Jerome Berryman, an Episcopal priest, developed stories from Hebrew and Christian scripture presented in a three-dimensional way, with liturgical language and symbolism, that has been used around the world in thousands of churches and institutions since 1991. The child is understood to be a spiritual being and the presentations honor elements of our faith tradition such as readiness, quietness, awe, and wonder. I had the honor and privilege of training with Sonya Stewart, the co-author of Berryman's first book, in the early 1990s. I am just one of the many who have loved and worked on this ministry over the years at St. Michael's.

Godly Play has two strong components. One is the thoughtful and intentional construction of the



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classroom. Many, many people helped put together our Godly Play room with its lovely handmade bookcases. New stories have been added every year. (Peek in and look at the room sometime!) Our dedicated team of craftspeople, “storytellers,” and “doorkeepers” have made the stories come alive for the children in the classroom. But because of Covid, we have decided that we are going to forego using our beautiful children’s worship space this fall.

The second strong component of Godly Play is biblical storytelling by the spoken word. This we can do! Storytelling is going to be even more important this year. Berryman has said that teaching biblical facts does not automatically make people believe in God, but God’s presence itself is in the midst of scripture. The stories are waiting to be told! It has been my experience that being exposed to Godly Play versions deepens my own understanding of them. It is my hope and prayer that these lessons touch the lives of all who experience them.

### How can you help?

**Be patient.** You may not find us to be very quiet. During the beginning of the service, we may either be outside the windows under the tent gathering for the story and “wondering” questions or joining for friendship and fellowship under the windows on the other side of the church.

**Support us.** Be interested in the program. Find out more about it. Talk to families. Include us in your prayers.

**Consider joining us.** It is a wonderful gift to get to relate to the children and parents in our parish, and children relating to us may be part of their ministry. We will need extra adults to meet “safe church” guidelines as well as to participate in the program. You can contact me, Susan Heimer, at [heimer.susan@gmail.com](mailto:heimer.susan@gmail.com)

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### ST. MICHAEL’S HEALING TEAM RETURNS

Members of St. Michael’s Healing Team are looking forward to a “soft opening” in September of their ministry of praying individually with people who want prayers for healing, thanksgiving, or any other need.

Rather than meeting during the Eucharist, as in the past, members will be stationed next door in the chapel and will pray with parishioners after both the 8 am and 10:15 am services. For protection, Healing Team members will be masked and will offer hand sanitizer to parishioners, as well as adjusting how close or distant they are depending on the comfort of those wanting prayers.

Leadership rotates among the current 8 members, with planning meetings after the 10:15 service on the fourth Sunday of each month. Healing team membership is open to people who are willing to participate in training and a day-long retreat, which has often been held with members of the healing ministry of St. Mary’s in the Mountains.

*Submitted for the Healing Team by Janet Cramer*

Dear Church Family,

Cards! Cards! Everywhere Cards!

Thank you all so much for remembering me on my 90th birthday.

I am enjoying looking at all the cards — no two alike!

*Blessings and Love, Mary C.*

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## SINGING THOUGHTS + NEWS

*Susan Dedell*

As summer comes to a close, my thoughts turn towards the upcoming program year, as well as some musings about the past few weeks back in church.

I know I speak for the entire choir when I say that the fellowship of singing harmony together this summer has been balm to weary souls. And for me to be able to open up the full organ to play those glorious hymns AND hear voices lifted all around me has been a precious gift. I love playing many hymns on the piano, but there are some that just demand a full organ and choir!

I also know that many of you in the larger congregation are also finding that singing surrounded by the voices of others and the notes of the organ filling the air is a part of worship that moves the heart like none other. I have loved so much hearing your voices on the hymns and service music. Even masked, St. Michael's is a fine singing congregation!

So, it is with a hopeful heart that I anticipate the "official" return of the St. Michael's choir on Sunday, September 12. At this point, all eyes and ears are watching the data coming from the CDC, the state of VT, and the diocese, but for now I am eagerly preparing the fall music program with some fresh choral music as well as our beloved favorite repertoire. All fully vaccinated choir members are eligible to sing.

If you are not currently a choir member, but are interested in learning more about our programs, I encourage you to contact me directly at [dedellsusan@gmail.com](mailto:dedellsusan@gmail.com); by phone (802) 348-7735; or by leaving a message in the church office.



### ALTAR GUILD MEETING SEPTEMBER 18, 9 AM

In this ever changing world that we live in, as of today, there is an Altar Guild meeting on Saturday, September 18 at 9 am. Please join us if you are an

Altar Guild member or would like to learn more about this important and behind-the-scenes ministry.

I am looking forward seeing everyone in person, checking in, and discussing scheduling and duties of the Altar Guild. Please call or email me if you have questions about our ministry. *Jane Sbardella*



### ADULT FORUM BEGINS AGAIN ON SEPTEMBER 19

The Adult Forum will be starting up again on Sunday, September 19, from 9–10 am in the Meeting Room. The Forum worked really well on Zoom during the pandemic and it was a great way to connect with one another. The Adult Forum Committee will offer the Forum both in-person and on Zoom to try to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend. This hybrid style of meeting may be challenging at first, but we are committed to try to figure out a way to involve everyone who wishes to attend! An Adult Forum Zoom Link will be set up for all those who wish to attend virtually.

**September 19, RECONNECTING:** For this first Forum, we want to hear from you! Because of vaccinations and the lifting of restrictions, we'd like to hear about what you've been up to this last summer and what it meant to you to be able to reunite with family and friends. Here are some questions to consider prior to the forum: What was the highlight of your summer? How has it been to move from quiet, closed-in pandemic life to a life of more freedom and social engagement? What has surprised you? What has made you take stock or change the way you live? What are you grateful for? Sharing is totally voluntary, so don't hesitate to attend the forum, even if you just want to listen!

**September 26, THE HUMAN SONG: PSALMS:** Music director Susan Dedell leads an overview of the fascinating, controversial musical history of psalms, including current uses and forms.

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## SUMMARY OF AUGUST MEETING OF THE VESTRY

St. Michael's Vestry met on Thursday, August 19, largely in person with two members participating virtually. Vestryman Steve Guerriero opened with two poems well suited to lead us into the evening's work: "For a New Beginning" by John O'Donohue and "The Road Ahead" by Thomas Merton. Consider these last lines of the latter:

*I will not fear, for you are ever with me,  
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*

First on our agenda was Eli Phoenix of Phoenix Roofing. His presentation proposing replacement of the church roof and the reshingling of the Bradley wing roof was thorough and helpful generating several questions and food for thought. This is a project under consideration for next summer.

Parishioners Laura Andrews and Cary Gaunt followed with a discussion proposing that we install solar panels at St. Michael's. Laying out logistics and advantages, they made a good case that doing so would further establish St. Michael's as a strong leader, responsible for both the community and the environment.

We then heard our Treasurer's Report from Bruce Lawrence which contained no big surprises nor any cause for concern.

Finally we heard from Adwoa Lewis-Wilson, who'd been encouraged by Mary to create a proposal calling for us as a parish to do something larger, more integral, and even liturgical in our quest to reckon with Bishop Hopkins in our past. Named "Becoming Beloved Community: a vision for parish transformation and wholeness," the proposal is thoughtful, well-founded, comprehensive — and it promises to be a most effective guide for the "what next" in our life as a parish as we recognize and grapple with Hopkins' justification of slavery in the mid-nineteenth century.

Mary closed with a truncated Rector's Report elucidating primarily the most recent pandemic safety measures St. Michael's is taking.

It was a full meeting!

*Annie Landenberger*





## EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

## LECTIONARY FOR SEPTEMBER

**Sunday, September 5:** Isaiah 35:4–7a; Psalm 146;  
James 2:1–10, 14–17; Mark 7:24–37

**Sunday, September 12:** Isaiah 50:4–9a,  
Psalm 116:1–8, James 3:1–12, Mark 8:27–38

**Sunday, September 19:** Wisdom of Solomon 1:16–  
2:1, 12–22 or Jeremiah 11:18–20; Psalm 54; James  
3:13–4:3, 7–8a; Mark 9:30–37

**Sunday, September 26:** Numbers 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–  
29; Psalm 19:7–14; James 5:13–20; Mark 9:38–50

## SEPTEMBER 2021 CELEBRATIONS

## BIRTHDAYS

September 1	Nan Tierra
September 3	Thad Bennett
September 4	Jacki Capponcelli
September 6	Ricky Davidson
September 9	Sarah Benton
September 11	Grace Xinqi Willingham
September 12	Margit Lilly
September 13	Laurie Kaiser
September 14	Jay Pomponio, Kyle Capponcelli
September 16	Eleanor Horton
September 18	KJ White
September 19	Skyla Ragle, Elise Burrows
September 20	Krista Burtis, Ainsley Meyer, Christian Olmstead
September 22	Anne Montgomery, Alix Fedoruk
September 25	Scott McElhinney
September 26	Steve Guerriero
September 28	Corwin Elwell
September 30	Mary McCarthy

## ANNIVERSARIES

September 3	Christine Triebert & Carol Ross
September 4	Becky & Robert Anderson
September 5	Alix & Michael Fedoruk
September 10	Kate & Andrew LeBlanc
September 11	Julie & Richard Cogliano
September 14	Judy & Jack Davidson
September 16	Margit & Jack Lilly
September 20	Marie & Bruce Lawrence
September 28	Judy & Bob Walker

## LEADERSHIP

## VESTRY

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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](mailto: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 IN PERSON & ONLINE

SUNDAYS	8:00 am	Quiet service of prayer and Eucharist
	10:15 am	Prayer, music and Eucharist.
WEDNESDAYS	12:00 pm	30-minute service of scripture, prayer and Holy Communion
WEEKDAY MORNINGS	8:00 am	Morning Prayer
THURSDAYS	5:30–6:00 pm	Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer