

The Guardian

NOVEMBER 2021

FROM THE RECTORY

BEGINNING TO ACT

In Stewardship time, we usually give thanks for our manifold blessings and reflect on where God is calling us in the next year. I remember clearly last year (in the midst of staying home and keeping safe and offering everything church-related on Zoom) that, while I could give thanks for the blessings of staying together as a church, I had no idea what the future held and no clear sense of where or what God was calling us to beyond sustaining our life together as a church.

This year, even though the pandemic is far from over, I feel that St. Michael's is in a different place. We have much to be thankful for and we have a fairly clear sense of what is "ours to do" as a church over the next few years. And let me tell you, it is a lot! There are three separate initiatives that have sprung up over the last few months that will call on a great deal of focus, involvement and support by YOU, our congregation.

- **Roof Replacement & Solar Investment:** Remember the Building for the Future project from 10 years ago? We did a tremendous amount of work on our physical plant, making it fully accessible, adding the Chapel, updating spaces to make them more flexible and usable while becoming more energy efficient. One big part of the dream for the Building for the Future Project that we were not able to accomplish 10 years ago was the replacement of the sanctuary roof and the investment in solar power. While we are not yet sure of the entire scope of this project, we hope to move ahead with this in 2022.
- **The Refugee Co-sponsorship Ministry:** "An opportunity walked in the door" is how parishioner Jeff Lewis described the beginning of this new ministry at St. Michael's and with the wider Brattleboro community. Jeff was approached by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) about a community initiative that would help bring refugees to Southern Vermont. This initiative needed faith communities to work as co-sponsorship groups, so several members of St. Michael's have been organizing within our church and with other faith communities in our area to participate. Please note the announcement later in this newsletter about an important information-sharing event on November 7.
- **Becoming Beloved Community:** This initiative was sparked by the picture that is hanging in our Common Room of Bishop John Henry Hopkins, the first bishop of

Continued

FROM THE RECTORY

Vermont and the eighth Presiding Bishop of the United States. Although Bishop Hopkins did a lot of important things for our church, he repeatedly wrote what he understood to be Christian justifications of slavery. This discovery got us wondering what to do with this picture. Take it down and pretend as if this is not part of our history as a church? Leave it up with an acknowledgement of this part of our history? The vestry decided we could not just take it down and that, in fact, this was an opportunity for us to take a look at our own history as it relates to racism as well as to explore who we are called to be *now*. We are also gifted with the presence of Adwoa Lewis-Wilson, our Seminarian, who is willing to work with us on this exploration. This initiative, which will begin in earnest on Christ the King Sunday, November 21, will be liturgical, educational and formational.

I know this sounds like a lot of new initiatives and it is! I have struggled to discern in prayer if any one of these initiatives could wait until a later time, but each one seems to be irreducible and un-put-off-able. And even though each initiative has its own focus, all are very much related to the mission statement the Vestry created three years ago. Here is part of the statement:

We seek, through the joyful experience and power of Christ, to serve all people as we pursue stewardship of the Earth, commit to deep generosity, and promote social, racial and economic justice.

I guess we should be careful what we write in our mission statement – it just might lead to a lot of initiatives! And all this, in the midst of our ongoing struggle with Covid. It is more than a little surprising to me. But then again, God loves surprises.

This work we are called to means that each one of us needs to pitch in. This is an “all hands on deck” situation! While we know that everyone cannot be involved in all three initiatives, we hope that everyone will be involved in at least one over the course of the next year. Initiative means “beginning to act” and after a year of lock-down and fear and uncertainty, we are beginning to act again, even while living with Covid. May God continue to bless us with courage, faith and hope as we seek to serve Christ in all we are and in all we do. Here we go!

Yours in Christ,

Mary
Mary

NEWS OF THE PARISH

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

This year, our St. Michael's stewardship theme is *Embracing the Present Moment*. With this theme, we acknowledge the ever-changing nature of the time in which we are living. We have been greatly humbled by the generosity of St. Michael's parishioners in this last year. We ask you to prayerfully consider your pledge for St. Michael's mission and ministry in 2022! Here are some of our plans:

- **Stewardship Speakers:** As in past years, we will hear from individual parishioners during our stewardship time at services on October 24 (Carol Hesselbach), November 7 (David Treadwell), and November 14 (Steven Guerriero).
- **November 14 will be our Ingathering of Pledges.** We ask you to return your pledge cards to St. Michael's by this date, either by mail or in person at services on November 14. This year we would like to raise \$280,000 and from 130 pledges for our ministry in 2022. Both of these goals are slightly more than last year.
- **Stewardship Small Groups:** St. Michael's Stewardship Team invites you, the community of St. Michael's, to attend one of our Small Groups — by Zoom or in-person. Please see announcement below.



AN INVITATION TO ST. MICHAEL'S COMMUNITY SIGN UP FOR A SMALL GROUP

These Small Stewardship Groups offer an opportunity for us to reconnect, reflect on the last year, hear about how St. Michael's is doing financially, and discuss our mission and future.

Below are the dates and times of the Small Groups; the October 31 group is in-person and the others are on Zoom. If none of these times works for you, please let us know and we will try to accommodate you.

Dates & Times — Please sign up for one! All are on Zoom except the first one on October 31.

- Sunday, October 31, 11:45–12:45 (in-person, in the Meeting Room)
- Monday, November 1, 1–2 pm
- Tuesday, November 2, 6–7 pm
- Wednesday, November 3, 1–2 pm
- Thursday, November 4, 6–7 pm
- Tuesday, November 9, 6–7

Please let us know of your attendance by:

- Signing up at this link:
<https://signup.com/go/btDxDyT>
- Emailing Jeanie at jeanie@stmichaelsvermont.org
- Phoning the church office at (802) 254-6048, ext 104

We will contact you with a reminder and a Zoom Link. Thank you so much for participating!



SPIRITUAL TOOLS FOR DIFFICULT TIMES: AN ADULT FORUM SERIES

Beginning on Sunday, October 31, the Adult Forum will focus for three Sundays on the theme, *Spiritual Tools for Difficult Times*. We have all experienced difficult times in the last two years. What has helped get you through? What has assisted you in staying grounded and/or given meaning to your life even in the midst of difficulty? Below are the topics we will focus on for each forum:

- **October 31:** “Our Ancestors and the Great Cloud of Witnesses” (in honor of All Saints Day), led by Mary Lindquist
- **November 7:** “Gratitude,” led by Nancy Ames and Carolyn Taylor-Olson
- **November 14:** “Endurance vs. Letting Go,” led by Janet Cramer

Join us in the Meeting Room from 9–10 am!

NEWS OF THE PARISH

I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME

By Jean Smith

My husband Peter and I were 26 and living in Cincinnati, Ohio with two children in diapers and an eleven-month old poodle when we agreed Peter would accept a new job in Japan. We were thrilled at this opportunity for our young family. I remember well the day in Tokyo when the moving van arrived because it was moon landing day. We were captivated by Neil Armstrong and the lunar landing and equally excited to finally be receiving our household goods which had arrived by ship. But, that morning I awakened thinking, "We might as well be on the moon. I don't know one person in Tokyo and they all speak Japanese!"

In June when several of us at St Michael's began to talk about the possibility of an interfaith refugee re-settlement ministry in Brattleboro, I had strong memories of those first months in Japan. Peter had a job, we quickly met others within the company as well as international families, and we found an Anglican church. Our move presented opportunity and challenges, but we were surrounded by support. Daily life could be confusing but it was our choice, our dream.

How different are the lives of refugees who have endured persecution and in terror fled their homes and countries leaving spouses, children, careers and everything familiar- not because they want to, but for their very survival.

A small group of us motivated by our personal stories, Scripture, and St. Michael's Mission Statement and led by Daniel Dobson and Jeff Lewis has taken initial steps to join civic groups already engaged in a local project of refugee re-settlement.

The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC), long aware of our aging population and diminishing work force, has invited faith communities to collaborate locally with the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) which has resettled more than 60,000 persons of many nationalities within the last ten years. The Community Asylum Seekers Project (CASP) also is a part of the collaboration along with the regional planning commission, SIT, the local bus service, and now the interfaith community.

How do we at St. Michael's prepare to offer the kind of informed and compassionate welcome our newest neighbors will need? Fortunately, training will be available soon and ECDC has explicit guidelines of what we will need to provide these families and suggestions for our volunteer coordination. "Carry Me Home" has begun a clothing drive with print lists available in the Common Room. Additional information will be available frequently and, in the meantime, we pray for all refugees wondering where they will land, if they will be safe, and how they will be welcomed.

St. Michael's Refugee Resettlement Core Committee: Daniel Dobson, Jeff Lewis, Alix Fedoruk, Christopher Wesolowski, Craig Hammond, Joyce Vining Morgan, Brian Morgan, Jean Smith

NEWS OF THE PARISH

St. Francis Day Blessing of the Animals

NEWS OF THE PARISH

**PARISH INFORMATIONAL MEETING
ST. MICHAEL'S INTERFAITH
REFUGEE PROJECT,
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1:00–2:00 PM**

The St. Michael's Refugee Ministry is presenting a comprehensive discussion on its refugee project and the greater refugee project in our community. This meeting will be live in the Sanctuary and available via Livestream, the same as the Sunday 10:15 services. You may ask questions from home via the Vimeo Chat function.

Experienced-based speakers who will enrich our understanding and vision around this project are:

- Alex Beck, Welcoming Communities Director, BDCC;
- Kate Paarlberg-Kvan, Executive Director, CASP;
- Joe Wiah, Director, ECDC.

Mary Lindquist will lead off the meeting and members of the Ministry's Core Team will also present. Following the presentations will be a question-and-answer period. Please join us along with Jesus on this vital mission.

Should you have any questions about this meeting please don't hesitate to contact Daniel Dobson at dbdrunner@dobsongroupinc.com or 425-785-8262. LiveStream Link: <https://www.stmichaels-vt.org/vimeo-archive/>

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DIAPER SUNDAY — NOVEMBER 21

In this time of financial stress, many parents have difficulty affording diapers, a basic health and comfort need for their children. The Outreach Committee invites you to bring packages of disposable diapers (any size) to help them. You may bring them to the Sanctuary on November 21. Between November 7 and 21, you can also at any time drop them off at one of these four collection points — the porches of:

- Judy Davidson, 42 North St, Brattleboro;
- Shirley Hodgdon, 34 Hampshire Circle, West Brattleboro;
- Alix Fedoruk, 169 Park Laughton Rd, Dummerston; or
- Susan Wilson, 105 Westminster Road, Putney.

On November 22, we will deliver them to Parks Place Diaper Bank and to Groundworks. Thank you for thinking of your neighbors as you do your own family's shopping!

If you prefer to make a monetary donation in lieu of diapers, please write a check to St. Michael's with "Diaper Sunday" written in the memo line and place it in the collection plate or mail to: St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 16 Bradley Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301

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NEWS FROM JACK KARN

Jack, a member of Jerusalem Peacebuilders, was a St. Michael's seminarian.



I was ordained as a Permanent Deacon in June and Emma and I just got married in August (after 8 years!). It's been a joyous, busy summer of big transitions and life events. I praise God for good health, faith, and cheer through them all.

Above is a picture of The Rev. Nicholas Porter, Emma and Jack at their wedding in West Brattleboro this summer.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

HOLIDAY GIFT BAGS FOR INMATES AT THE SOUTHERN STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (SSCF) SPRINGFIELD, VT

By Cliff L. Wood

St. Michael's is one of 4 churches in Southern Vermont that provide a ministry to inmates at SSCF. Pre-Covid, St. Michael's was responsible for a non-denominational religious service once a month. During the pandemic, we have been asked to provide special items for the inmates' comfort and support as well as packs of clothes for prisoners who have been released during this period. Parishioners at St. Michael's have been very generous in providing toiletries, individually-wrapped cookies and candies, socks, underwear, paperback books and magazines, puzzles and games.

We have now been asked to provide special support for the Holiday Gift Bag Project of the Volunteer Coordinator, Kristine Sultzman. The project will provide a gift bag to the 50 inmates who are indigent, which means they receive no outside support including mail or visits from family or friends and do not have any money on account in the prison bookstore. Because of your previous generous support, Kris has an ample supply of some items to include in the bags. She now specifically needs the items listed below, which can be ordered from Amazon. Below is information about the items needed and three ways you can help us obtain them.

The three items that are needed and are available from Amazon.com:

- Assortment of candy bars: box of 18 includes Kit Kat, Hershey's Milk Chocolate, and Reese's Peanut butter \$10.49
- Speedstick deodorant/antiperspirant: package of 6 in clear bottles \$15.91
- Taster's Choice House Blend Coffee Packets: Package of 80 \$13.34

The three ways you can help:

- Order the items directly from Amazon and have them delivered to you. You would then need to place the items in the blue bin on the bench outside the church by December 1.
- Order the items and have them sent to me for distribution by December 1. The address is Cliff L. Wood, 154 Harrington Road, Putney, VT 05346. My phone is 802-518-2080.
- Send a check payable to St. Michael's with a notation PRISON MINISTRY. The church will then provide me with a check for the donations received and I can order the needed items.

Special note: Kris, the Volunteer Coordinator appreciates the way in which we are providing this support. She says it is much easier to distribute the bags to inmates when all items are exactly the same. Again, thanks for your generous support.

You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope.

—Thomas Merton

NEWS OF THE PARISH

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH LOAVES & FISHES

This ministry of St. Michael's and Centre Church has an ongoing need for volunteers. Loaves & Fishes prepares and distributes meals and collects donations of food items from local food banks, grocery stores, restaurants, and farms. With winter coming on, more volunteers are needed. We can find a place for most anyone who wishes to volunteer, regardless of physical abilities, vehicle availability or level of COVID comfort (we are very COVID cautious to protect our volunteers and clients). Pick-up and delivery, cooking, receiving, preparing lunches and grocery bags are just a sampling of how you can help. Some examples of how and when you can help:

- Receiving donations from the food bank, Co-Op, groceries and restaurants (Mon & Wed),
- Picking up produce from Wild Carrot Farm (Tue & Fri),
- Delivering food to shelters in Brattleboro and West Brattleboro and delivering meals to Ground Works (Tue & Fri),

- Baking cookies and desserts at home (bring to Centre Church on Tue or Fri),
- Cooking and food preparation in the Centre Church kitchen (Tue and Fri),
- Packaging meals for distribution (Tue & Fri),
- Cleaning, dishwashing, and cardboard recycling (Tue & Fri),
- Receiving, preparing and sorting of clothing (Thu),
- Providing monetary or gas card donations to help those who volunteer their cars.

Most jobs are mornings only and do not require contact with the public. If you can only help for one morning or even an hour or two a week, that's great! Can't help in person? Donations are greatly appreciated.

Contact Ruth Tilghman (rtilgh09@aol.com or 802-258-1765), David Treadwell (davidtreadwell@me.com or 734-657-0023), or the church office (jeanie@stmichaelsvermont.org or 802-254-6048) for more details.

**THANKSGIVING DAY
MORNING PRAYER
AT CHRIST CHURCH, 10 AM**

Join us on Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 10 am at our Mother Church, Christ Church in Guilford, for a Morning Prayer service with hymns. Coming together to give thanks to God is a beautiful way to begin our Thanksgiving. Please dress warmly, as Christ Church does not currently have heat.

All are welcome!



Project Feed

the thousands



PROJECT FEED THE THOUSANDS NOVEMBER 1–DECEMBER 31

“How can we live with ourselves if our neighbors are living with hunger?”

Hunger has become an epidemic. Our friends and neighbors are having an increasingly difficult time putting healthy, nutritious meals on the table. Often hidden, hunger affects countless individuals and families in our community. In fact, there are over 5,500 people in our area who regularly use a food shelf or community kitchen. These individuals include senior citizens, veterans, and working families with children who do not earn enough to make ends meet (less than 2% are homeless). Project Feed the Thousands’ mission is to address this epidemic.

Everyone can help. Project Feed the Thousands is unique in that **EVERYONE** can participate in some way. Whether you choose to make a cash contribution, pick up an extra non-perishable food item every time you go grocery shopping, or drop your extra change in a collection box, **YOU** are helping **YOUR** friends and neighbors fill a critical gap — the need for the most basic of human needs — **FOOD!!**

How St Michael’s people can help. Everything people at St Michael’s donate to in the name of Project Feed goes directly to Loaves & Fishes. Last year we brought in 3361 pounds of food and \$4220. Project Feed also gave \$4500 to Loaves & Fishes. This was used for family grocery bags and boxes of food delivered to people at Dalem Chalet and the housing projects. Some of the food was put

directly into meals which we served to the homeless in the motels and Foodworks food shelf. The donations of money gave us funds to purchase more food from the Food Bank and for all the paper products that to-go meals need.

What we need: Pam Carr, who faithfully packages our family grocery bags, has a list of needed items that we can’t always get from the Vermont Foodbank.

- Canned goods especially with pop top lids: baked beans, beans, canned chicken, tuna fish, deviled ham, hash, fruits, and vegetables, spaghetti sauce
- Dry goods: crackers, individual packets of rice and mashed potatoes, mac and cheese, pasta meals
- And of course, cash donations.

How to donate to Loaves & Fishes? There will be a bin at St. Michael’s or people can deliver to Loaves and Fishes at Centre Church on Main Street. Also, you can order from Amazon and have food delivered to Centre Church at 193 Main St, Brattleboro 05301.

Donations of checks can be made out to Loaves & Fishes with Project Feed in the memo

With YOUR help we can make a difference in our communities — with dignity, courtesy, and respect for those less fortunate than ourselves.

THANK YOU!

Ruth Tilghman 802-258-1765 rtilgh09@aol.com

NEWS OF THE PARISH

SUMMARY OF OCTOBER MEETING OF THE VESTRY

St. Michael's Vestry met on Thursday, October 21, continuing with our mix of in-person and online participants. We began our meeting with devotional time led by Judy. She shared a short piece on gratitude from Jack Kornfield followed by brief reflections from all present on something they were grateful for. It is always amazing to see how this simple practice reinforces both thankfulness and hope. Our themes were consistent — our community, family, our natural world and St. Michael's.

Bruce Lawrence presented the Treasurer's report, indicating both solid financial numbers for September, as well as the year through the first three quarters. In addition, he stated that he was able to lock in a favorable fuel cost as we approached the heating season. The Vestry is very appreciative of Bruce's skill of being thorough with the reports and clear with explanations.

After approving the previous meeting's minutes the Vestry was joined by Cary Gaunt who, along with Laura Andrews, has been researching the Solar Project. Cary presented a draft of a Request for Proposal (RFP) that will be sent to potential contractors. The Vestry and our church community are "grateful" to have the talents of these two women. The RFP is a first-class document that not only spells out our needs and questions but requires potential bidders to clearly address any of these concerns relating to technical and financial considerations. The possible financing of the project was the focus of our conversation.

In the Rector's Report, Mary looked at the three major church initiatives going forward: the Refugee Resettlement Project; the Roof Project, including discussions on a Capital Campaign; and "Becoming a Beloved Community" with discussion among the group. Mary would like each of these initiatives to have three Vestry members participating.

The Diocesan Convention is coming up on Thursday, November 4 and Saturday November 6th. Mary, Ricky and Rosie Wojcik will be attending via Zoom.

In his Warden's Report, Ricky led a brainstorming conversation about new Vestry members. He also checked-in to be sure Vestry members are clear about their group and committee assignments.

Other committee reports included Buildings & Grounds with Alan reporting on rug replacement and the bollards in the parking lot. Steve and Mary shared the report of the Stewardship Committee and the launch of this year's pledge drive. Pledge packets are out, small group dates and times are set, and there are speakers for three Sundays in Stewardship Season.

Christy closed with a beautiful seasonal reflection.

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LETTER FROM DUNCAN HILTON

Dear St. Michael's,



Thanks for all your prayers and letters of support! The doctors gave us the green light to return to Vermont in mid-October. Charlie has reached all his

recovery milestones to date: his bladder is back in his body and his hips are healing in place. He still has a velcro cast which he must wear for the majority of the day but we hope that he will be through with that after a November check-up in Boston. Bethany has begun working as a humanities teacher at Burr and Burton in Manchester, VT so I'm stepping more fully into the role of stay-at-home-dad (while also continuing as part-time priest at St. John's in Walpole). The apple tree which St Michael's gave me as a parting gift is already bearing fruit, as is all that I learned in ministry at St. Michael's.

Gratefully, Duncan

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

LECTIONARY FOR NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 7: 1 Kings 17:8–16, Psalm 146,
Hebrews 9:24–28, Mark 12:38–44

Sunday, November 14: Daniel 12:1–3; Psalm 16;
Hebrews 10:11–14, 19–25; Mark 13:1–8

Sunday, November 21: Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14; Psalm
93; Revelation 1:4b–8; John 18:33–37

Sunday, November 28: Jeremiah 33:14–16, Psalm
25:1–9, 1 Thessalonians 3:9–13, Luke 21:25–36

NOVEMBER 2021 CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

November 1	Willow Hesselbach
November 2	Patrick Meyer
November 3	Rich Melanson
November 4	Tian Ragle
November 5	Kierstan Landin, Oliver Ridgway
November 8	Miles Ackerman-Hovis and Jesse Ackerman-Hovis
November 9	Ruth Tilghman
November 11	Mikael Mattson
November 15	Wendell Howard, Nathan Olmstead
November 16	Judy Walker
November 17	Kate McGinn, Ken Jacobs
November 19	Christopher Wesolowski, Aiden Anderson
November 20	Christine Gauthier, Eve Pomazi
November 21	Annelise Fedoruk, Amanda White, Rosalind Ridgway
November 22	Anne Brown
November 24	Pam Crispe, Juniper Ridgway
November 28	Laurie Chipfield, John Laamanen



ANNIVERSARIES

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

LEADERSHIP

VESTRY

Ricky Davidson, Senior Warden
rickybratt@gmail.com
579-6701

Nancy Ames, Junior Warden
alderyacht@gmail.com
617-733-6179

Judy Davidson
judydavidson3d@gmail.com
254-5440

Christy Fritz
fritzfive@gmail.com
706-599-8756

Steve Guerriero
guerrierosp@gmail.com
603-363-8006

Annie Landenberger
verbatimvt@gmail.com
802-348-7156

Mary Lindquist
marydail7@gmail.com
254-6048

Alan McBean
amcbean57@gmail.com
802-254-6975

Rebecca Olmstead
rebeccaolmstead@me.com
802-258-2656

Jared Rediske
dentalguy2006@gmail.com
802-579-8998

Bruce Lawrence, Treasurer
brattvt@yahoo.com
802-257-1494

Carol Beninati, Clerk
writers@sover.net
802-258-4636

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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