

The Guardian

OCTOBER 2021

FROM THE RECTORY

EMBRACING THE PRESENT MOMENT

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

I have always loved this quote from Thomas Merton, but it seems to fit our present circumstances more than ever right now. The Stewardship Committee chose the Stewardship theme for this year, *Embracing the Present Moment*, partly because we related to Merton's words and partly because we had no idea what the present moment would look like in late October and November. By choosing this theme, we knew we would be covered no matter what happens!

I remember the deep uncertainty I felt when we began our stewardship time last fall. We had lived through 6 months of pandemic lock-down, the church was (sadly) vacant, and we were contemplating the hard truth that we would continue worshiping and meeting on Zoom through the winter. Would the congregation still want to support our ministry at St. Michael's even when our ministry looks so radically different? Even when we have not been together for so long? I really wondered with trepidation what would happen.

But you all not only supported St. Michael's mission and ministry, you pledged a greater amount than you did the year before! I was shocked and humbled by your deep faithfulness and generosity, even in the midst of a great uncertainty about our future at that time.

So here we are again looking at the stewardship season ahead, still living with the pandemic. I am grateful that we are able to gather now, although in a limited way; I am grateful that there is life happening inside and outside the church building; I am grateful for the deep level of engagement I observe in our current ministries; and I'm even grateful to the new possibilities that Zoom and Livestreaming have opened up for our life together.

Covid or no Covid, we now know that we *can* be the church. Covid or no Covid, God is faithful. Covid or no Covid, *you* have been faithful. And after what we have lived through in the last year and a half, we know that, with God's help, we can navigate the present moment and whatever moments may come with courage, faith and hope.

Yours in Christ,

Mary
Mary

NEWS OF THE PARISH

I WANT ST. MICHAEL'S TO WALK WITH ME*Laura Andrews*

Last week, Cary and I decided to take a little break from attending church and enjoy the last gasp of summer weather. And, because St. Michael's has felt like a lifeline amid the pandemic, I wanted to keep up with the services. So on Monday I donned my headphones, slipped my iPhone in my pocket, and set out for my early morning stroll. I pulled up the St. Michael's website and clicked on the August 29, 2021 Vimeo recording. Wow! I was blown away. I listen to a lot of podcasts, and the new equipment we've purchased for the church rivals any of them in terms of sound quality. I could feel Susan's prelude and the organ pedals deep in my chest. Amazing! As I walked along, I participated in the prayers and responses, sang loudly while gleefully unmasked on the Keene rail trail as the sun peeked through the clouds, and listened to Mary's wonderful sermon on The Song of Songs. How perfect that one of the hymns was, "I want Jesus to walk with me." He certainly was with me that morning and I came back to the house moved, happy and refreshed. I listened to another service this morning and it was a similarly satisfying, spiritually fulfilling experience. I'm excited to continue this experiment of taking St. Michael's with me on my morning walk and highly recommend you give it a try.


**ST. FRANCIS' DAY MISSA GAIA
OCTOBER 3, 10:15 AM**

On St. Francis' Day, October 3, St. Michael's Choir joined by 3 stellar instrumentalists — Bruce Diehl, saxophone; Don Baldini, bass; Steve Rice, drums — will once again integrate the Missa Gaia (Earth Mass) in the 10:15 service.

The Missa Gaia was premiered in 1981 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NYC. It is a unique work in many ways, not least in that it incorporates the recorded sounds of wolf, whale and loon. In the words of saxophonist Paul Winter, who

was one of the original co-creators, "I envisioned a celebration that was both ecumenical and ecological, one that would embrace all the voices of the Earth. I asked the Dean of the cathedral whether a mass could celebrate the whole Earth as a sacred place. He assured me it could. Could the voices of our animal musician colleagues be interwoven in the music, and could the actual musical melodies of the mass be based on the musical calls of the whale and the wolf? 'YOU COULD WRITE A MASS ON ANYTHING,' the Dean said."

Join with us as we celebrate God's presence in every portion of creation!


**ST. FRANCIS' DAY BLESSING
OF THE ANIMALS OUTSIDE
AT ST. MICHAEL'S
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 4 PM**

All St. Michael's people, creatures and critters are invited to a special celebration in thanksgiving of our pets and animals!

When: Sunday, October 3, 4 pm

Where: Outside at St. Michael's

What: A brief time of music, readings and prayer followed by an individual blessing for each pet.

Who: You, your pet or a picture of your pet, or a stuffed animal.


STEWARDSHIP IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

Time has passed slowly over this past year for many of us; for others, reacting to the pandemic, it has passed in a rush. For Mary and our church leaders, time has run quickly, scarcely enough between events to cope—always pedal to the metal. Yet, we have moved smoothly through the liturgical seasons—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and that

NEWS OF THE PARISH

best of all — Ordinary time. We now prepare to enter another cycle of the seasons as we recall Jesus' life.

For St. Michael's there is a season before the season. As we build up to Advent, we spend a few weeks in Stewardship season, paying attention to our commitments, personal and collective. The collective are the church program and budget — what we are going to do as St Michael's in the coming year. For each of us, it is also the personal, evaluating our commitments to the church and its work. We pause, in this Ordinary time, to reflect on what the church has meant to us in this past year and on what we hope for in the next.

The Stewardship program will begin October 24 with Sunday morning speakers and with a series of small group meetings. We will have an opportunity to talk with others of the faithful about how we 'got through' this past year and what role St. Michael's played. We will talk about the budget, how we've done in this pandemic time, and what opportunities we have to anticipate.

We will send out more times and dates of the small group meetings in mid-October. We hope you will sign up, listen to the testimony, reflect on Stewardship sermons, and think, in this season, about how significant St. Michael's has been in your life this year.

Jeff Lewis
for the Stewardship Committee



**BLESSING AND SEND-OFF
FOR MARY & JOHN CARNAHAN
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 10:15**

Although Mary and John Carnahan formally joined St. Michael's in 1965, they began attending the parish in 1957 when they rented an apartment on North Street. They moved to Washington DC for two years, then returned with two young children and purchased the old rectory house on Tyler Street, right down the



street from St. Michael's. They have been very active parishioners for over 50 years! Mary has been a faithful member of the Altar Guild, a Sunday School and Godly Play teacher, and one of the founders of the Memorial Garden while John has been the unofficial "church historian," assisting son Paul in researching the architecture of St. Michael's for his book, *The History of St. Michael's*. Mary has also been a long-time attendee of the Wednesday Eucharist. Now that they are both in their 90s, they are moving to a continuing care residence in Randolph Center, which will put them much closer to their son Paul.

We would like to thank Mary and John for their tremendous ministry at St. Michael's, as well as their friendship, support and faithfulness. Their last Sunday with St. Michael's will be October 17. We plan to say a special prayer of blessing at the 10:15 service, followed by a reception under the tent, weather permitting. We invite you to write a card or letter to Mary & John, letting them know what they have meant to you and to our church. Please send cards and letters to Mary and John Carnahan, 29 Tyler St., Brattleboro VT 05301.

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS CELEBRATED SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

—Paul's letter to the Ephesians

On October 31, St. Michael's will celebrate the Feast of All Saints at both the 8 am and the 10:15 am service. During this service, we will remember those saints who have gone before us and loved ones who have died, as well as recognize ourselves as those 'saints' who have been called to follow Jesus with our whole selves. On this day, we will remember in our prayers those who have died during the last year.

In preparation for this feast day, please send names and photos of loved ones who have died in the last year and we will remember them in our worship. Please email names and photos to the Church office at jeanie@stmichaelsvermont.org or mail them to St. Michael's at 16 Bradley Ave., Brattleboro.

STM



SHELTER MEALS MINISTRY

Now that the new Groundworks Shelter is open on Canal St. in Brattleboro, the parishioners of St. Michael's are once again invited to participate in providing meals to the homeless men and women of Brattleboro who stay there. We are really excited to be re-starting our active Shelter Meals Ministry which was interrupted by Covid-19 in April, 2020. Currently, because of Covid, no one in our group will be going inside the Shelter. Team leaders Liz Vick and Benson Bobrick will pick up the prepared hot or cold (as it will be served) food from parishioners in the St. Michael's parking lot and deliver all the food to a staff member outdoors at the Shelter.

We are on the meal schedule for one evening a month — the 2nd Monday. Volunteers will prepare at home the main dish, salad and dressing, or dessert for 35 people. Others can volunteer to purchase bread and butter, milk or dessert. In general, parishioners prepare the whole menu item (for example, the whole main dish) themselves, but 2 people can agree to share if you wish. We will need to use disposable pans or containers for cooking and delivering the food. Our dates for the coming 7 months will be: Mondays Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec.13, Jan. 10, Feb. 14, Mar. 14, and Apr. 11. **The “main dish” category we are asked to prepare for our Mondays is a pasta dish or lasagna.**

If you have any questions, please call or email Liz or Benson. Anyone who would like to volunteer to help with one or more meals can either

- sign-up on the monthly schedule sheets on Sundays under the tent or on the table in the Common Room at church,
- OR email or call either Benson or Liz at shiloh98@sover.net (802) 254-6175 or orebethvick@gmail.com (802) 254-7060

Form a team with friends if you like! Please think about helping out with this important ministry. Thank you so much for your generosity!!

NEWS OF THE PARISH

WELCOMING REFUGEES TO BRATTLEBORO: HOW WE CAN SERVE

We are all painfully aware of the compelling need to welcome refugees after watching the recent crisis in Afghanistan. Many, many people will need new homes in American and other partner countries. This crisis calls to mind that there are many, many people in the world who are not safe in their home countries. The United States has welcomed refugees and other immigrants for many years; most of us are descendants of ‘people from away.’

The process of getting here has become far more difficult as the world has become far more dangerous. People are often coming here less for opportunity and more for refuge, safety. The number of people in the world who are displaced or at risk is continuing to grow: Afghanistan is but the highest profile event. There are hundreds of thousands in camps around the world waiting for a permanent place to live, a home.

We, in Brattleboro, can become part of the solution for some families by working with other community resources like CASP (Community Asylum Seekers Project), BDCC (Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation), and their partner ECDC (Ethiopian

Community Development Council) to welcome and help settle refugees in our region.

A small group of St. Michael’s people have been learning all we can about the local project and educating ourselves about the world of refugees — including the complex process of being recognized as a refugee by the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and then the slow move to a point where UNHCR assigns them to a country for settlement. There are more refugees than settlement spots, meaning people hang in limbo for years. Sometimes events like the Afghan crisis cut through that Gordian knot and create a crisis in a specific country — in this case the US.

We’ll have more to learn, believe me! But for the moment you will begin to hear more about what we have learned and what the local effort looks like on the last Sunday in September at worship and then at a Forum on October 17. Stay tuned, this is an exciting opportunity for our congregation to be of service in a world-wide crisis doing what we do best — being welcoming.

Sunday School Open House

NEWS OF THE PARISH

SUMMARY OF SEPTEMBER MEETING OF THE VESTRY

The Vestry met on Thursday, September 16th to review many topics of interest to the Parish. After devotional time, Bruce Lawrence, our Treasurer, reported that we are meeting our target goals to remain on budget for the year.

We passed a motion to order a plaque for names of parishioners whose ashes have been spread in our Memorial Garden.

Mary reviewed with the Vestry the ongoing steps that the church is taking to maintain in-person services, with Vimeo options, so that as many people as possible can attend services. We celebrated the Baby Grand opening of Christian Education, with thanks to all who made that possible, especially Christy Fritz and Susan Heimer. Mary also updated us on the progress that the administrative team is making on the 'Becoming a Beloved Community' initiative. They have many resources and look forward to beginning this program on Sunday, November 21, which is Christ the King Sunday.

Also in late October, we will be kicking off the Stewardship campaign for 2021. Our theme this year is: Embracing the Moment!

The Vestry heard a thirty-minute presentation from Jeff Lewis and Daniel Dobson regarding the work of a Refugee Resettlement Committee that is working to bring refugees to the Brattleboro area, supported, in part, by our parish. The Vestry believes this is an exciting and timely way for the Parish to live into its Mission Statement.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee has recommended that we replace the rug in the Common Room, and the Vestry approved that suggestion. We also approved a motion for Mary to formally put the replacement of our roof on the schedule for the Phoenix Roofing Company.

Finally, we discussed a Spring project to put a pollinator garden on the steep west side of the parking lot using plants from parishioners so that "your" gardens become "our" garden.

*With gratitude for our Christian community,
Respectfully Submitted
Nancy Ames*

Sunday School Open House

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

LECTIONARY FOR OCTOBER

Sunday, October 3: Jeremiah 22: 13–16, Psalm 148: 7–13, Galatians 6: 14–18, Matthew 11: 25–30

Sunday, October 10: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31

Sunday, October 17: Isaiah 53:4–12; Psalm 91:9–16; Hebrews 5:1–10; Mark 10:35–45

Sunday, October 24: Jeremiah 31:7–9, Psalm 126, Hebrews 7:23–28, Mark 10:46–52

Sunday, October 31: Deuteronomy 6:1–9, Psalm 119:1–8, Hebrews 9:11–14, Mark 12:28–34

SEPTEMBER 2021 CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

October 4	Nancy Ames
October 5	Valerie Abrahamsen, Joao d'Alcaravela
October 6	Ori Johnson
October 9	Judith Reichsman, Keira Caponcelli
October 10	Janet Cramer
October 11	Brendan McElhinney
October 12	Christy Fritz
October 15	Joanna Brown
October 16	Judith Junkins
October 17	Dana McGinn, Jack Lilly
October 18	David Birri
October 21	Mary Lindquist, Ed Sbardella, William Boggess
October 24	Lifei Osborne
October 25	Karren Meyer
October 29	Steve Harrison
October 30	Melanie Boese

ANNIVERSARIES

October 1	Christine & Richard Gauthier
October 4	Rebecca & Nathan Olmstead
October 8	Thad Bennett & George Connell, Larry Earle & Jay Pomponio
October 9	Heddy & Zsolt Pomazi
October 11	Louise LaChance & Aldrich Wright
October 16	Anne & Wayne Cook
October 22	Anita & Jim Crosson

LEADERSHIP

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ST. MICHAEL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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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