

The Guardian

Febuary 2024

FROM THE RECTORY

SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS — A LOOK BACK AT 2023 THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Life is not measured by time. It is measured by moments. —Armin Houman How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. —Annie Dillard

Every year I wonder how best to reflect on the year that has passed. This year has been such a mix of joy and sadness, gratefulness and grief, love and tragedy. Therefore, I've decided that instead of trying to summarize the year that has passed, I would share some significant moments in our life together as St. Michael's.

- Saturday evening, January 14 This was the evening we all gathered to give thanks for Susan Dedell's ministry and to say goodbye to Susan & Paul. The Undercroft had been transformed from its utilitarian character to a beautiful and festive party space. The music and the tributes were beautiful, but what I remember most is the Choir School kids who came together again after three years of pandemic to sing together, cry together and offer Susan their love. It was a profound testament to the power of music and leadership to form and support our youth.
- Sunday, early morning, April 9 A few hearty souls gathered together before sunrise to participate in the Easter Vigil. The moon was almost full and there was a real sense of quiet and holiness as we lit the Paschal candle and made our way into the dark church. We had experienced an amazing Holy Week together full of a greater depth of participation thanks to Team Holy Week. We were also in shock because of the brutal murder of Leah Rosin-Pritchard on the Monday of Holy Week at Groundworks.
- Weekend of May 5–7 On Friday, the church was abuzz with people preparing for our annual Tag Sale. The choir was gathering to meet Music Director candidates. Many St. Michael's folks were at Gallery Walk in town to invite people to participate in the "Weaving Love for Groundworks" project. On Saturday, we opened our doors for our Tag Sale, which was an amazing gift of love to our community with proceeds going 100% to Groundworks and the Windham County Heat Fund. There were so many people working and volunteering with such a sense of delight and joy. Then on Sunday May 7 with Bishop Shannon, we celebrated 13 people who were confirmed or received or who re-affirmed their baptismal vows. What a joyful, energic, Christ-filled weekend!
- Sundays, August 6 & August 13 We celebrated many additions to our staff! We welcomed Keane Southard to be St. Michael's new Music Director. We thanked Patty Meyer for her wonderful and faithful service to St. Michael's during our long search. We also welcomed Lars Hunter to be St. Michael's official deacon.
- Wednesday evening, August 23 It was a hard spring and summer for our town. We experienced an uptick in crime and violence in our neighborhoods. In addition, because the pandemic housing funding was coming to an end, many people in our community lost their homes. We were faced with a sense of urgency about how to respond to our neighbors in need of housing and services. We had been approached by Groundworks to host a

Continued

FROM THE RECTORY

port-o-potty on the church grounds. After some hard conversations, the Vestry decided against this idea. However, we knew that we were called to respond to the need in our midst, so we came together on Wednesday evening, August 23, to share our feelings of heartbreak, fear and sadness about the state of our community and to begin to discern what was "ours to do." It was a balm to come together and share prayer, concern and ideas about possible ways our church could be of greater service to our community. And the conversation and discernment are continuing into 2024.

- Tuesday evening, October 17 We came together for a Service of Prayer and Lament for Israel and Palestine. Hamas had attacked Israel ten days prior. I came together with John Lent and Nicholas Porter to plan this time when we could lament the violence and the deaths of our siblings in the Holy Lands. John Lent, former Executive Director of the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, had preached at St. Michael's on June 18. In his sermon, he described the amazing ministry of the al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza. Tuesday afternoon, prior to the service, the hospital was bombed. It was one of the saddest days I can remember. The only solace was being able to be together in our grief.
- Sunday mid-day, October 29 On this day, we celebrated the (almost) completion of the first phase of the Building Hope Project and the completion of the Common Room Project. Both of these events marked accomplishments of the initiatives began in 2021 the Building Hope for the Earth Initiative and the Becoming Beloved Community Initiative. It was wonderful to look back at our history and witness ourselves making history through the energy transformation of our buildings. It was joyous to come together, eat good food, reflect and give thanks for all that God has done through us!
- Sunday, December 24— Advent in the morning and Christmas Eve in the evening! It was a long and good day. I was so thankful to be present for Christmas Eve after two years of Christmas Covid. We were blessed with many enthusiastic kids participating in the pageant and a full church just like pre-pandemic times.

Mary Lindquist Rector

Christmas Pageant









CELEBRATING ST BRIGID FEBRUARY 1 AT THE THURSDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE

February 1 is St. Brigid's Saint Day! Come hear stories of St Brigid, beloved Celtic saint, as part of the Thursday Contemplative Service of chant, prayer, and silence. We'll mark the threshold of winter and spring and the coming of the light. Led by Kim Peavey.



GIVING THANKS FOR JEAN SMITH'S MINISTRY AT ST. MICHAEL'S

A SPECIAL BETWEEN-THE-SERVICES COFFEE HOUR IN HONOR OF JEAN SMITH FEB 11

It is time to say a huge THANK YOU and goodbye see you later to our beloved priest associate, the Reverend Jean Smith. Jean and her husband, Peter, are moving to Connecticut to be closer to their son. Jean has served St. Michael's for sixteen years and her ministry with us has been so profound. We want a chance to tell her just how much her ministry has meant to us all.

We will share food, memories and words of gratefulness for Jean. Please bring a personal card to add to the basket we will be collecting for Jean. Since Jean will not be too far away, we hope to see Jean again at St. Michael's for visits in the summer. So this is not a final goodbye, but a recognition that Jean will not be part of the community in the way she has been.



LENTEN SERIES ON THE HOLY LANDS FOR ADULT FORUMS IN FEBRUARY

"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?"

These words of the Prophet Isaiah will guide our exploration of the peoples, politics, and challenges of Jerusalem, Israel, and Palestine on Sunday, February 4, 18, and 25 from 9–10 am. These forums will be led

by fellow parishioner and Middle East specialist, the Rev. Canon Nicholas Porter, KStJ. Nicholas led the November forum on the Israeli-Hamas War. He is the founding director of Jerusalem Peacebuilders.



PANCAKE SUPPER, SHROVE TUESDAY, FEB 13, 5:00–6:30 PM

The Outreach Committee invites you to come celebrate Shrove Tuesday, or Mardi Gras as it is called in New Orleans. It is a merry prelude to the solemnity of Lent, with homemade pancakes (including glutenfree pancakes for those with gluten allergy), real Vermont maple syrup, sausages, applesauce and fruit. Costumes encouraged!

Supper is from 5:00 to 6:30 in the Undercroft, with a voluntary contribution of \$7 for each person or \$20 for a family of three or more. All proceeds from the supper will support Saint Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry.

Helpers are needed for set up, cooking, and clean up: contact Brian Morgan at 802-451-8551 or morgan.bg@gmail.com.



ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 8 AM, 12 NOON AND 5:30 PM

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which lands this year on February 14. Ash Wednesday, a reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God, marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season and is commonly observed with ashes and fasting. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness. The liturgy, which includes the imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist, will be offered at The Works (118 Main Street) at 8 am and at St. Michael's at 12 noon and 5:30 pm (with music). All are welcome.



ST. MICHAEL'S LITURGY TRAINING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Calling all readers, ushers, lay assistants and intercessors! We are having a liturgy training to brush up on our ministry of worship. This is also an opportunity both for experienced liturgy helpers and for those who would like to be more involved in serving on Sundays. Here is the timing for the training:

9-9:30 am — Lay Assistants

9:30–10:15 am — Readers, Intercessors and Ushers If you cannot attend this training, we hope to do some recordings of the training to pass on to folks who are not able to be there.



ST. MICHAEL'S COFFEE HOUR TRAINING & KITCHEN ORIENTATION FEBRUARY 17, 2024, 10:30 AM

Ever felt like signing up to help with Coffee Hour, but decided 1. You are too new, 2. You don't know the kitchen and what is expected, 3. It is too overwhelming, 4. You want to partner with someone to do it?

On Saturday, February 17 at 10:30 am (conveniently following the liturgy training), St. Michael's Hospitality Team with hold a kitchen orientation and a Coffee Hour Training. Come learn the ins and outs of St. Michael's kitchen, join with others who feel called to offer hospitality to our parish, and see what it's all about.



TEAM HOLY WEEK SUNDAY, FEB. 18, 12 PM, THE CHOIR ROOM SUNDAY, MAR. 3, 12 PM, THE CHOIR ROOM

The holiest, most important time in the Christian year is Holy Week, from Palm Sunday (March 24) to Easter Day (March 31). At St. Michael's, we especially focus on the Triduum (Maundy Thursday–Easter, March 28–31). Last Lent we started a new tradition at St. Michael's — Team Holy Week. The idea is that <u>liturgy is about participation</u>, so instead of doling out parts for folks to do, we call together a team of people who are willing to

participate fully — <u>a whole team effort</u>. Because of the commitment, dedication and creativity of Team Holy Week last year, Holy Week was a deeply transformative experience for many. All are welcome to participate, even if this is your first time observing this holy time.

- We will need readers, prayer leaders, cooks, kitchen help, prayer practitioners, artists, musicians, singers & more.
- Come to two planning meetings at 12 pm (after church and some refreshments) on Sundays February 18 & March 3 to understand the story arc of the triduum and decide how you would like to participate.
- Are you in? Please contact me at mary@stmichaelsvermont.org If you are interested in participating, but can't attend the meetings, just let me know.



ST. MICHAEL'S 2024 LENTEN STUDY WISDOM IN THE WILDERNESS: DISCOVERING PATHWAYS TOWARD HOPE TUESDAYS, 5:30–6:45 PM IN LENT

Jesus's Lenten journey from the wilderness to Easter's resurrection offers wisdom for all of us who feel lost, in transition, discouraged, or despaired. It also provides a fitting metaphor for those who hear the calls to live and serve in new ways, supporting what many name the "Great Turning" and what we call "Building Hope" at St. Michael's.

St. Michael's Lenten Series this year examines the wisdom of the wilderness and pathways toward hope demonstrated by Jesus and wisdom teachers from our Christian and other traditions. Through short readings, reflection, prayer practices, and community, we will explore together the Lenten Gospels, Jesus's time in the desert as a metaphor for the rites of passage in our own lives, the power of forgiveness and reconciliation, and how hope emerges from faith and learning to see with new eyes. The five sessions will be a combination of prayer, conversation and sharing facilitated by Cary Gaunt, Mary Lindquist, and Lars Hunter.



When: Tuesdays in the Season of Lent, from 5:30–6:45 pm (February 20, 27; March 5, 12, 19).

Where: This will be a *hybrid offering*, which means that you may gather in-person in the Meeting Room at St. Michael's or you may attend on Zoom.



BAPTISM AND COLLABORATION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Lent is a season that evokes many perceptions and organizes itself around many themes. Yet one of the themes that is often overlooked is baptism. From its earliest days, the church has seen fit to use Lent as the season of preparation to receive new members at the Easter Vigil. In this way, Lent is a season not only for baptism but for community.

Baptism and Collaboration (one way of expressing our connection to the larger community of Christians to whom we are bound) are themes of particular importance to the bishops of both Vermont and Eastern Massachusetts. This Lent, through the first week of Easter, a devotional on the theme of Baptism and Collaboration in the Body of Christ will bring these themes together.

Patterned on the devotional we had at St. Michael's for a few years, this booklet will feature the voices of lay, ordained, and monastic persons from both dioceses reflecting the wide range of contexts in which we worship, connect, and serve in the name of Christ.

Each week will be organized around one of the questions of the baptismal covenant:

- Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers?
- Will you persevere in resisting evil, and whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Jesus Christ?

- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
- Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- Will you cherish the wondrous works of God, and protect and restore the beauty and integrity of all creation?

How do these questions impact your own life and spiritual growth?

The devotional will be available for download. In addition, conversations about the weekly theme and the daily reflections will be held on Thursday evenings from 5:45-7:45 on the Green Mountain Online Abbey of the Diocese of Vermont. All are welcome and RSVPs to adwoa are appreciated: awilson@diovermont.org.

Both the devotional and the Thursday gatherings will provide a great opportunity for people from St. Michael's to deepen their connection to the greater community of faith in this New England region.



ST. MICHAEL'S WOMEN'S RETREAT COMING INTO OUR WHOLE AND HOLY NAMES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 9 AM-4 PM HALLELUJAH FARM RETREAT CENTER

On Saturday February 24, St. Michael's invites women from the parish to gather for a spacious day of reflection and connection at beautiful Hallelujah Farm in Chesterfield, New Hampshire. The retreat will be a day of conversation, art, gentle movement, music, and prayer.

Together we'll explore the power of naming through the stories of our own naming and through the stories of people, places, and animals that we may have named. We'll consider John 20:11–16, when Mary Magdalene does not recognize the risen Jesus until he speaks Mary's name. Also central to the retreat is Isiah 62: 2–5, when



the people take heart in this hope: "You shall be called by a new name [...] you shall no longer be called forsaken [...] but you shall be called My Delight."

This retreat will be led by Kim Peavey. Please register by signing up in the Common Room or by emailing Mary at mary@stmichaelsvermont.org. A donation of \$25 is requested to help cover lunch and facility rental.



GROUNDWORKS SHELTER MEALS MINISTRY

So many people at St. Michael's stepped forward at once this year to help feed the homeless at the Shelter on South Main Street that our Sign-up Sheet was almost immediately filled. It was truly a wonder!

Only one slot remains — for a volunteer to prepare a hot pasta or lasagna dish for 35 for Thursday, April 4, 2024. If you would like to do this, please contact me directly at shiloh98@sover.net.

With bountiful thanks, and many blessings, Benson Bobrick



TAG SALE NEWS

The members of the St. Michael's Tag Sale Ministry have begun planning for our annual Terrific Tag Sale, slated for Sat., May 4. We are looking forward to another great sale with lots of excellent items to offer "for sale" (mostly by monetary donation). We are very pleased that the proceeds will all go to Loaves and Fishes this year.

On Sunday February 11, we will begin accepting selective items to "sell" at the Tag Sale. Housewares, clothing, shoes, linens, jewelry, puzzles and books (please, <u>no</u> textbooks!) may be brought to the Church anytime that the building is open. We ask that all donations be in **good condition**: gently used, clean, nothing stained, broken or with pieces missing. The only electronics we can accept are (working) small household or kitchen appliances. (see guidelines below).

We will begin accepting furniture and sporting goods later this spring. Stay tuned!

All donated items may be left inside one of the 2 designated Tag Sale closets ("Clothing and Linens" or "Housewares and Books") off the hallway outside Horizon Preschool (entrance through the church's back door near the parking lot.)

Please review our donation guidelines below when setting aside donations for the sale:

Clothing — any season, adult and child. Must be clean, no stains or rips, good condition.

Shoes — any season, only lightly worn, excellent condition shoes, hiking boots, boots, sandals.

Jewelry — in good condition.

Linens — good condition, no stains, clean.

Housewares — must have all parts, clean, unbroken, in good condition.

<u>Appliances</u> — Only small kitchen electronics, working, clean, all parts with it. Sorry, NO AUDIO, COMPUTER OR OTHER ELECTRONICS OR APPLIANCES!!

Toys — only puzzles or games with all the pieces! Sorry, no other toys.

Books — books in good condition are welcome as long as they have not been stored in a damp basement. **NO TEXTBOOKS!!**

Furniture — Save for closer to Tag Sale due to lack of storage. New policy: ALL furniture will need to be reviewed by Tag Sale Team member before being accepted. Note: please, no furniture made from particle board (fiber board).

Sorry, we absolutely cannot accept any MATTRESSES, EXERCISE EQUIPMENT, or anything that is soiled, worn, musty or broken.

Thank you so much — we look forward to working with all of you to hold another awesome sale this spring! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

—Liz Vick ebethvick@gmail.com 802-579-5536



SUMMARY OF JANUARY MEETING OF THE VESTRY

The January Meeting of the Vestry led off with contemplation of the overall work of the Vestry last year and deep appreciation for the three departing vestry members. One of the departing members said his initial impression of the job would be of joining a church board focused on brass tacks, budget, and the physical demands of running the church, but he had discovered that St. Michael's equal emphasis was on leading with prayer, worship, and reflection. These qualities were mentioned often in appreciation for Annie Landenberger's two-year term as Senior Warden where she led with energy, enthusiasm and great ability to communicate; for Steve Guerriero's deep faith and grounding meditations as well as business skills; and for Alan McBean's devoted work of coordinating, laboring on and overseeing projects, and especially for helping bring the Hope for the Earth Campaign to fruition.

Treasurer's report: Mary noted how much work and how many hours Gwen Mousin and Tom Cain have put into understanding and clarifying the budget, particularly in regard to accurately tracking operating and non-operating items and expenses. In the 2023 summary, income exceeded expenses by \$6,608. Endowment income came in at \$1600 less than budgeted for the year, based on allocation over a 3-year lookback. For the 2024 Draft Budget there's a projected \$19,000 deficit due to higher expenses and a Diocesan assessment that will go up. We discussed that energy bills may lower because of the solar panels, and increased pledges may pull us over a deficit, but there are some unused Covid relief funds that will cover if necessary. Information sessions will be available to the congregation on Jan. 21.

Christ Church, Guilford Report: Ed Meade, a structural engineer who lives ¼ time in Guilford, joined us to talk about fundraising efforts and what it will take to fix Christ Church, our mother church, now owned by the Episcopal Diocese. \$27,000 — \$30,000 has already been spent to address some of the significant truss and roof repairs. There is a matching grant for which they need to raise more money to meet the match. Ed also showed us pictures of some of the damage from the 2023 lightning strike. Construction has been delayed as negotiations take place with the insurance company and as more grant proposals go out. The board is also applying for grants to replace the heating system. There used to be income from events, but now, as the building is under repair, there's no event income. In response to a question about adding plumbing, accessibility, and other usability features, Ed said it's a vision, but these items will have to take a back seat to more urgent repairs. More board members are needed!

Rector's Report: A Coffee Hour of appreciation for Jean Smith will be held between the two services on February 11. Linda Rice and others will coordinate. Liturgy Training is Saturday, February 17. There will be a Coffee Hour training on the same day. Cary and Lars will present a Lenten Series on Tuesday evenings starting February 20. The topic is "Wisdom and the Wilderness: Discovering Pathways Towards Hope." Mary thanked Paul, Steve, and Annie for the evening event focusing on the Refugee Ministry. We continue to have "Responding to our Neighbors" meetings. Parishioners are looking into a Hospitality House. The committee is focused on the needs of unsheltered families and children.

Senior Warden's Report: Annie will be doing an article on Loaves and Fishes. She's performing there and will invite others to do so in future weeks. A good conversation centered around Coffee hour. Annie noted how rewarding it is to host coffee hour. If two entities cooperated every week, we'd have most of the year covered. Also suggested: a matchmaking system for individuals who don't want to do it on their own, opportunities to support financially, regular support for those who sign up, and pairing



newbies with experienced hosts. Rebecca Olmstead is willing to do a coffee rota. Annie also suggested we have some kind of online forum for posting needs for rides, coffee hour hosting, etc. Rosie will invite participation in the Welcome Committee at the Annual Meeting.

Committee Report: Thanks go out to the Refugee Ministry for a beautiful evening with the volunteers. They have executed a new mode of operation with ECDC regarding their work.

The meeting ended with Steve offering the Oscar Romero prayer:

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is beyond our vision. . . .

This is what we are about: We plant seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and to do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.







On January 7, we celebrated the baptisms of Atticus and Azariah Coburn! Given the snow storm that had happened the night before, Atticus and Azariah arrived at the church by sled.



On January 14, we celebrated the baptism of Ocean Leiterman-Long (who played baby Jesus in the Pageant!).



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

To see all the readings for each Sunday, go to http://www.lectionarypage.net/#febuary.
You will find there the collects, lessons and psalms for each Sunday and feast day.

FEBRUARY 2024 CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

	DIKITIDATIS	
February 1	Steven Meyer	
February 7	Chris Landin	
February 8	Emma Allen	
February 9	Susan Wilson	
February 11	Alan McBean, Jayne Fritz	
February 12	Craig Irvine	
February 13	Cliff Wood	
February 16	Greg Allen	
February 19	Ross Kinney	
February 20	Laura Andrews	
February 23	Judy Davidson	
February 24	Kirsten Mattson	
February 25	Ron Doty-Tolaro	
February 26	Paul Love, Charlene Kemp	
February 28	Leigh Marthe	
February 29	Asa Taggert	



LEADERSHIP

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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 Eucharist	
	10:15 am	Prayer, music and Eucharist. (in-person and online)	
WEEKDAYS	8:00 am	Morning Prayer (online) and Tues.—Thurs. in Chapel	
WEDNESDAYS	11:30 am	Centering Prayer (in-person)	
	12:00	Eucharist (in-person)	
THURSDAYS	5:30 pm	Contemplative service (in-person and online)	
SATURDAYS	8:00 am	Centering Prayer (in-person)	