

The Grapevine

A Publication of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Methuen, MA

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November/December 2007

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Please do not hesitate to call Rev. Joe or Richard at any time at the above numbers with pastoral emergencies. Be sure to inform them if you or anyone you know in the parish is ill and/or in the hospital.

GREETINGS FROM REV. JOE

Dear Sisters and Brothers of St. Andrew's,

As I write my message for this issue of The Grapevine, Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Advent, Christmas and the New Year will follow quickly on Thanksgiving's heels. It's a very busy time of preparation for what we each hope will be an exciting and inspirational season. It is also a time for us to be intentional about our charity toward people who find the season a special challenge because of events or circumstances in their lives. This is something we know how to do at St. Andrew's. Whether it is reaching out to comfort and support a

fellow parishioner, or sustaining the strong work many of us do in support of God's poor and hungry in our neighborhood and world, we seem at St. Andrew's to have a particularly good instinct, and capacity, for sharing God's love with people in need of tangible hope that the Promise is real. That is something wonderful to be thankful for.

As we go about the work of charity toward people in need, it is important for us to take time to care for ourselves, as well. One way is to enter this season as a time both for thanksgiving for the blessings we have, and for placing before God our prayers for blessings we await with hope and anticipation. It's being real to acknowledge before God that we still hope for much, even as we express our gratitude for the good things God manages to reveal to us in our sometimes difficult lives. I wonder what you are thankful for, and what you most yet need and desire from God.

I am thankful for the first year we have had together. I have learned a lot from all of you, and have been deeply gratified by the way we seem to have joined in love and trust for our work of worship and service in God's name. I am repeatedly amazed, and overjoyed, by the way so many of you just dig in and get done the many things we are called to do as a community of faith. I can feel the energy and enthusiasm building from this, and it makes me very hopeful that this new life we are finding will be abundant in the strength and promise of God's love in our lives. It truly feels to me like a glimmer of the Resurrection in real life. So, in addition to my prayers for my family, home, and work, I have these new things to pray for in thanksgiving now, and in hope for the future. I also continue to hold you in my prayers that you might have reasons to be both thankful and hopeful.

Faithfully Yours in Christ, Rev. Joe



SUNDAY SCHOOL BIRTHDAYS

James Suleksy	Nov. 3rd
Michael Wizboski	Nov. 13th
Justice McGrail	Nov. 26th
Quentin Bethune	Nov. 27th
Eric Dalrymple	Dec. 31 st



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Don't forget that our next church school-wide activity is scheduled for December 2nd. We'll be making Advent Wreaths, so please plan to join the fun. If there are any adults interested in supervising this activity or any other the other activities that we have scheduled for the first Sunday of each month, we'd love your help. This is a great opportunity to work with the youth of our church. Advent wreaths are a wonderful symbol of the season and the children enjoy making them, but unfortunately, they can also be expensive to make. Please let us know if you would be willing to bring in a bag full of fresh-clipped greens for this project. Not only are wreaths made of fresh greens much nicer, but your efforts will help us to keep the costs down.

Because many of our teachers and children are away over the holidays, we will not have regular Sunday school classes on November 25th or December 30th. For anyone who does come to church on those days, we'll have videos and popcorn during our regular church school time.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This year's Christmas Pageant, scheduled for Dec. 16th, is being organized by Debbie Donegan and Kris Milo with the help of the kids in their Sunday school class. If you are interested in participating, whether on stage or behind the scenes, please see Debbie or Kris. Remember -- many hands make light work!

ANNUAL HANGING OF THE GREENS DECEMBER 2, 2007

AN ALL-PARISH EVENT
WITH ACTIVITIES SURE TO SUIT
EVERYONE

This beloved annual event is scheduled to take place on December 2, immediately after the 9:30 am service on the First Sunday in Advent. The whole Church looks forward to bringing out all our beloved decorations and creating a space of beauty while we await the coming of the Christ-Child. Won't you join us in the nave of the church immediately after the 9:30 service?

OR

You can sign up for one of the events happening during the decorating and for our Pot-Luck Lunch.



CHRISTMAS WEEK SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 23rd (Advent IV)

8:00 am Rite I

9:30 am Rite II with music.

Monday, Dec. 24th (Christmas Eve)

6:30pm Family Service with music

11:00-11:15 pm Caroling

11:15pm Eucharist with music

Tuesday, Dec. 25th (Christmas)

8am Rite II without music

CAN YOU HELP?

During the Hanging of the Greens celebration, we will offer folks the opportunity to make holiday greeting cards for distribution to either active duty soldiers stationed abroad or recovering soldiers who are patients at Walter Reed Army Hospital. If you have any Christmas cards that you would be willing to donate for recycling during this project, please bring them in before December 2nd.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Christmas Memorial Flower offerings are due by Sunday Dec. 9th. Anyone wishing to have loved ones mentioned in the Christmas bulletin should fill out one of the Christmas Memorial Offering Envelopes. Envelopes are located on the tables at the entrances to the church or may be requested from the office. For those people receiving a paper copy of *The Grapevine* in the mail, we are enclosing an envelope for your use. Please see someone on the Altar Guild if you have questions.

FOOD PANTRY

We would like to thank everyone in the parish for all the food that has been donated this year to the Arlington Neighborhood Food Pantry, and also the checks and cash donations that have been received. The Winter is fast approaching and it would be greatly appreciated if you could again bring in any one of the items we give every week: cereal, pasta, pasta sauce, canned veggies, canned soup, canned tuna, jelly or peanut butter. Thank you for making this ministry so successful. Len and Bev

ACOLYTES ARE NEEDED

If anyone is interested in becoming an acolyte, please see Beth Regan, Lisa Storic, or one of our current acolytes. An acolyte must be at least 10 and willing to go through a training period. This is a great opportunity to serve your church.

FROM THE TREASURER

As of October 31st, we were running almost \$2200 behind on our pledges for 2007. We understand that the year end places a financial strain on lots of families, so we'll appreciate your efforts to stay current. Sending in your pledge on time means that we can pay our bills on time!



MEMORIALS

Memorial Fund

Margaret J. Barnes
John G. Buckley
Frances A. France
Alfred R. Willmore

Building Preservation Fund

Eugenia Hancock
Margaret J. Barnes
Muriel Toshach
Alfred R. Willmore

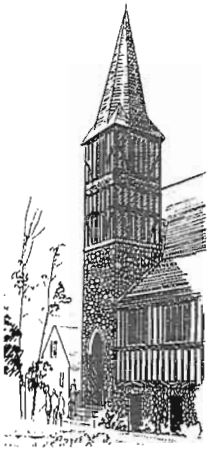
Garden Memorial Fund

Margaret J. Barnes

Organ Memorial Fund

Eugenia Hancock
Margaret J. Barnes
John G. Buckley
Alfred R. Willmore





Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church

November 2007

Dear Friends of St. Andrew's:

In November 2003, Laura Walta reached out to all our parishioners here at St. Andrew's to share her and the Vestry's focus on "How can we be a more inviting church?" Fast forward to May 2006 when Bishop Tom Shaw visited St. Andrew's and met with the parish and Vestry. Bishop Shaw was awed by the love, spirit and devotion that radiate from our dedicated laity and parishioners. As is often the case with visiting Bishops, they are accompanied by chaplains who are in training to be clergy.

As it so happened that beautiful spring day in May, Bishop Tom was accompanied by a chaplain/seminarian from the Episcopal Divinity School, Joseph Wilkes. As it turned out, Bishop Shaw wasn't the only person impressed with our parish and the rest is history!

The arrival of the now ordained Reverend Dr. Joseph W. Wilkes was not strictly about divine intervention and luck. It is a story of a loving, giving and dedicated family of parishioners and laity that took a vision in 2003 and made St. Andrew's the attractive, inviting home it is today.

This year has been dedicated to enriching our worship, our appearance, our missions and our common love we share for our Lord. In my humble opinion, I think we all have done outstanding! We have asked for everyone's helping hand and you have responded! I am grateful for all our blessings.

I often see, hear and feel a renewed enthusiasm at St. Andrew's. We want to build upon this energy but need your help to go to the next level.

For 2008, Reverend Joe and the Vestry hope to help you explore, define and expand your roles at St. Andrew's. We have identified three key elements that form our Stewardship Goals for 2008: Participation, Financial and Mission. As you can see, each element of the triangle touches the other.

Participation: From the Altar Guild to Coffee Hour to Spring Clean-up to leading bible studies, we continue to need your help "one-hour-at-a-time!" Together, we will move forward in 2008 building "one brick at a time!"

Participation

Financial: In 2008, we will continue to address the physical needs of the church building. We pledge to build upon the great work started in 2005 that continues today (the bathrooms, the garden, the entryways, the parlor and the gym).

Mission: St. Andrew's continues its support of the working poor in our neighborhood, refugee immigrants, handicapped dances, Prayer Shawl Ministry, and more! We ask that you continue to help support our very important work!

St.
Andrew's
Methuen

*Following God's
Call*

Financial

Mission

Stewardship 2008: Following God's Call

As you can see, each side of the triangle works together to form our Call to God. Please continue your inspired efforts in 2007 with your pledge to increase your stewardship role in 2008.



I am asking our parishioners for thoughtful contemplation and prayer prior to filling out the enclosed pledge card for 2008. On the back of the pledge card, you will find a notation for *Participation* and *Mission*. Please think of how you currently serve St. Andrew's and how you would be moved to serve in 2008. Make a note or two (or more!) of how you want to help answer God's Call and return the form on December 9th, Pledge Sunday.

Your contributions, "one brick at a time," are what make St. Andrew's the loving, spirited home it is for scores of families in the Merrimack Valley.

Peace,

Richard Falk