



# The Grapevine

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

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## July/August 2009

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*Please do not hesitate to call Rev. Joe or Janet 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.*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am writing this message on June 21<sup>st</sup>. The calendar says it's the first day of summer, but you can't tell that by our ongoing rainy and cool weather. I am grateful that the abundant rain makes drought later in the summer less likely. Still, I have been praying for more seasonable weather. My guess is that you have been praying for the same change.

One thing that will not change during the summer is our commitment to two Sunday services at St. Andrew's: Rite I with Eucharist at 8:00 AM, and Rite II with Eucharist and music at 9:30 AM. I especially commend the 8:00 AM service to you if you have Sunday recreational plans. The eight o'clock is early and brief, making it easy to start a happy day with prayer, and with the nourishment of communion.

One thing that will change over the summer is that Mary Ellen Briggs is preparing to coordinate Sunday School in the fall. We thank Janet Ratcliffe for serving in this role for the past two years. Janet is now digging into the work of Senior Warden. Many of our Sunday School teachers have committed to continuing in the fall. We need more teachers, however, so that the joy and work of helping our children learn about God can be shared. "Many hands make for light work." Please contact the church office (978-689-0463) or me if you would like to talk about helping. It really is easy, and the children are so appreciative!

Please mark your calendars for Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup>, our Welcome Back Sunday. This is always a great time to renew friendships and share our summer stories. Vestry will host a cook out. Even more important this time is a crucial parish meeting after church that Sunday to kick-off everyone's involvement in the process of discerning if I will continue as your priest. Carol Kingston, a facilitator provided by the diocese, is very experienced at guiding these processes. Carol will be with us on Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup> to facilitate a process called Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry is a lively, engaging, and positive approach for groups to discover what they appreciate most in their life together, what their dreams for the future might be, whether they have the right combination of gifts to reach that future, and what that implies for any changes they might have to make. I have participated in just such a process and I can attest that it is a fun and effective way to get everyone's ideas into the mix. We need everyone to participate. It gives the Holy Spirit more opportunities to guide us. Participation is also, itself, an indicator of how we feel about our relationship.

My summer prayer for you is that you will have some time for rest and recreation. May God keep you safe and bring you joy. God Bless you!

Faithfully Yours in Christ,  
Reverend Joe

## **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CONFIRMATION OR FIRST COMMUNION?**

As we begin planning for next year's Sunday school program, we are trying to get a handle on whether we have children who might be interested in either First Communion or Confirmation. Our First Communion program is usually for children who are in 2nd grade and above. The children follow a special curriculum through the year and the First Communion service is held in the spring. For Confirmation, the Diocese is now recommending that children be 16 years of age at the time of their Confirmation. Generally, if you are entering 9th grade this coming fall or will turn 16 by the Spring of 2011, you would likely be eligible to begin our two-year program in the fall. In order to make the process as convenient as possible for our older teens and their families, we are going to change the format we have previously followed and anticipate that Confirmation classes would meet once per month on Sunday evenings. Please let us know if you have a child who is interested in either of these programs by leaving a message in the church office, or by speaking with Rev. Joe.

### **FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN**

One of the many hats I wear is that of soccer mom. Robert has played soccer since kindergarten and, for the last few years, has been on a Methuen team that travels throughout Essex County. One recent Saturday morning, which dawned far too dreary and cold for early June, we traveled to bucolic Byfield for our last game of the regular season. I was a little miffed with myself because I had misread the directions and went out of my way to get to our destination. I was also a little put off by the damp cold morning. I had also strained my back the day before and was not looking forward to spending an hour plus in my folding chair. I simply was not in the best of moods. However, our Methuen boys were in a three-way tie for first place in their division and only two of those three teams would advance to the playoffs. It was a big game and the boys were excited. Speaking as someone who, after all these years of sitting on the soccer sidelines, still doesn't know if the ball is blown up or stuffed, I can say without hesitation that this was an awesome game played by a terrific group of 5th and 6th grade boys. They were shining examples of energy, enthusiasm, determination, cooperation, hard work and supporting your teammates. I sat there in my folding chair thinking that if you couldn't see the best of God's handiwork in the faces of these boys then it just wasn't possible. I wish there were a way to bottle the spirit I saw on the soccer field that day and share it here at St. Andrew's.

You may think that's the end of the story, but really my day only got better. By the time the game ended, the sun

was shining warmly, the skies were brilliant blue and my aching back wasn't quite so sore. Since we were so close to the beach, we decided to stop for lunch at Brown's Lobster Pound. We pulled into the parking lot at the same time as, and parked next to, an older fellow. Robert and I both gave him a quick wave as we got out of the car. Just as we had finished ordering our lunch at the window, a voice from behind said "I'll pay for that." It was the older fellow we had seen in the parking lot and he wanted to buy our lunch. Believe me when I say that this is not something that happens to be very often. Actually, I can't think of a time that it has ever happened to me and accepting gifts, especially from a stranger, is not my strong suit. I tried to turn down the kindness of this stranger, but Robert, with the wisdom of an 11 year old, saved me from myself (and his further embarrassment, I guess) by saying "Mum, he's just trying to be nice." And so it was, I accepted this man's kindness, enjoyed every last one of those onion rings that nobody does better than Brown's and vowed to find a way to pay this gift forward.

Although I might not be articulate enough to adequately explain all of this, I'm quite sure that I saw the power of the Holy Spirit at work on what began as a cold, dreary, early June morning and ended in the warmth of a complete stranger. I hope you all get to experience the joy of one of these moments in your own lives.

PS Robert's team did win that Saturday game in Byfield, but they were eliminated from the playoffs by virtue of one point in the goals differential tie breaker. It almost didn't matter. I'm not sure that the playoffs could have been better than that one beautiful Saturday.

### **ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE**

Mark your calendars -- our annual Rummage Sale will be held on Saturday, September 26th. Please keep us in mind as you are doing your spring cleaning and set aside any gently used items that you wish to donate. We can accept your donations over the summer months; however, due to ongoing activities in our space, we will not be able to accept larger furniture items until after September 18th. If you have any questions, please contact one of our chairpersons for this event, Paula Campbell or Patti Eldred.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

Please notify the church office if you or someone in your family is ill or hospitalized. In addition to keeping you in our prayers, our Pastoral Care team would like to send one of its members to visit you and bring communion.

## FESTIVAL OF TREES

As many of you may have already heard, St. Andrew's recently applied to the Festival of Trees organization for one of the matching grants it offers to historic properties around town for rehabilitation work. We were notified on June 4th that we had been awarded \$9,820.00. As a result, beginning this summer, we will begin work on some of the deferred maintenance projects on the exterior of the church. Please pardon our appearance and excuse the inconvenience as we undertake this important work to preserve the fabric of our building

## MEMORIALS



### Building Preservation Fund

Daniel Ford  
Gerry Niemoller  
Patrick Sheehan  
Mary Bennett  
William Bourque

### Organ Memorial Fund

Ethel Arsenault

### Garden Memorial Fund

David R, Bergeron

## Happy birthday

### **JULY**

2 *Zoe Ratcliffe*  
11 *Harry Noorigian*  
11 *Norma Lee*  
16 *Betty MacKay*  
23 *Irene Hoyle*  
26 *Magdaleine Kwakye*  
28 *Michael Williams*



### **AUGUST**

19 *Betty Feugill*  
27 *Madeleine McKeon*  
31 *Jim Beagan*

## BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

FROM: Laura Walta

DATE: June 8, 2009

I met with the City and their consultant Arthur Jemison from GLC on May 7<sup>th</sup> to hear the preliminary report and ask more questions, including a question regarding the provision of housing, at least in part, to residents who are DMH or DMR clients. Following is an update from Arthur.

GLC/Utile advanced their work on the St. Andrews site in May presenting material to Laura Walta and the City as well as an amended presentation for the Methuen Arlington Neighborhood group.

The key takeaways were that a 3-story development behind the church in the style of the multifamily Meadows development in North Andover and the two-family units from Roslindale in Boston on Messer Street are feasible on a preliminary basis. The analysis also suggested that a development of this scale could provide the \$60,000 in lease income sought by the Church. GLC is now meeting with cost estimators to refine the scope and costs, including looking at the cost of bringing the church's kitchen and other needs back into the original building.

At the M.A.N meeting, the community responses were favorable to the larger units along Messer Street, but ranged from neutral to concerned about the multifamily building. The design seemed feasible; their concerns were more about the volume of traffic and the unit configuration. Specifically, was this too dense a building or would it be possible to have more of the 2-family-style units in the rear as well? They also speculated that the All Saints Way was not large enough for the kind of traffic that could be generated.

GLC/Utile and the City would like to meet with your board when the time seems appropriate to update you on the analysis.

I hope this update is helpful. Please call with any questions you may have. Thanks.

Regards,  
Laura Walta  
978-857-0624

**S.O.S.**

**SAVE OUR SHAWL MINISTRY.**

There will be another tea planned for September 15<sup>th</sup> at St. Augustine Parish in Andover. For the last two years we have given Communities Together twelve (12) shawls to nursing homes. The remaining shawls have been given to friends and members of our Parish. The supply badly needs replacing both for the coming tea and our own use. People have been most generous with their time, talent and treasure, but the treasure has dwindled, in fact it is showing red. Because I, Betty Feugill, have taken the liberty to use your gifts (and 50% off coupons) to build a supply of materials and direction; if help is needed.

I thank you, who have helped, and are still helping, but there is still a need. This is a joint church effort and I want St. Andrew's to be involved. Faithfully Betty

**UNDERWEAR DRIVE**

This Lenten season marked the 12<sup>th</sup> year *Communities Together* sponsored its diaper and underwear drive for children in the greater Lawrence area. We collected over 13,300 items! This number will grow as we purchase items with the cash donations we received. The collection will be shared with social service agencies able to reach those most in need. We congratulate our delegates, who took the lead in gathering these items from their congregations, on a job well done. We are also grateful to Bobbi Weller, our Underwear Drive chairperson and Board member for her work on this project, to Mauri Johnson for helping us find volunteers to count and sort each item, and to **First-Calvary Baptist Church in North Andover** for serving as our storage and collection site. Many thanks also go to the following additional volunteers: Carl Weller (**Christian Fellowship Church of the Merrimack Valley**), Sue and Bryson Hepler (**West Parish in Andover**), Anne Edwards (**St. Paul's Episcopal in North Andover**), and Masato Aoki. Delegates Beverly & Leonard Brown & Patti Eldred; and all the Parishioners who participated in the Underwear Drive.- (**St. Andrew's Church, Methuen**), Thank you from Dana Bennett & David Edwards

**SIXTH ANNUAL PRAYER SHAWL TEA**

*at St. Augustine's in Andover* – *Communities Together* will sponsor the Sixth Annual Prayer Shawl Tea on Tuesday, September 15, 2009. We are pleased to announce that **St. Augustine Parish in Andover** has graciously agreed to host this event for the first time. Please save the date and plan to join us as we celebrate the Prayer Shawl Ministry in this area. Knitters, crocheters, clergy, shawl recipients, supporters, and those interested in learning more are welcome. This event is free and open to the public. Details will follow.

**LISTEN UP! ~ WE ARE ON THE AIR!**

Tune to  
WCCM,  
1110 AM

every Wednesday morning at 11:00 to hear host Rev. Mike Shirley and his guests on our radio program, ***Living Faith.***

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Welcome Back Sunday  
is slated for September 20th.

We'll hold Sunday school registrations  
prior to our 9:30 service  
a cookout, hosted by the Vestry, will follow.

Also following the service, there will be a  
special parish-wide meeting to be held as part  
of our discernment process with Rev. Joe

The meeting will be facilitated  
by Carol Kingston, a coach appointed to us  
by the Diocese  
the agenda promises not only to be fun but  
will give you a chance to be heard.

Special activities and supervision will be  
available for children during the meeting.

## GARAGE DEMO

Early Monday morning the big equipment rumbled down Messer avenue and began the task of removing the storage room and garage behind the Rectory. An audience of Rev. Joe, Janet Ratcliffe, Len Brown, Gloria Schwarz, Carol and her staff from the Day Care and of course many little people watched, jumped, and clapped at the expertise action of the driver with the big yellow shovel. In short time all was down and in the dumpster. It was an exciting show for all.

*Pictures by Janet Ratcliffe*

