



# The Grapevine

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

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## September/October 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,

Summer greetings in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit! I am writing this message on August 9<sup>th</sup>. It has been a true blessing that our weather has turned more seasonable, but without too much oppressive heat and humidity. I hope that you have been able to enjoy some fresh air and sunshine.

Parish life changes in the summer. Worship attendance drops as people travel, go away for the summer, or just take some time off. If you have been away, please know that I keep you in my prayers wherever you go. I eagerly await the chance to say hello and catch up with you in the fall. If you have worshiped at St. Andrew's over the summer, please know that your encouragement during the service, and after worship at coffee hour, has been a great source of strength for a fairly busy pastoral visiting schedule, and for the work of fall planning. For example, Hugh Tones and I have been working on the music

program. Hugh has focused heavily on the lists of your favorite and familiar hymns that you gave us last spring. This has been reflected in the summer music to the appreciation of many parishioners. This will continue in the fall. I have also been thinking and praying a lot about St. Francis Day, Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas so that the Worship Committee and I can hit the ground running. If you have ideas you want to put on the table about the coming season, please contact me. All of the staff, volunteers, and I want to do our best for you.

Janet Ratcliffe mentions some very important information about discernment in her message in this newsletter. Specifically, this is discernment about whether the parish and I are the right fit for the longer term when my three year posting as Priest-In-Charge ends in January. Your participation is necessary so that we have the best chance to decide based on broad input. Even more, your participation is theologically important. The Protestant Reformation centuries ago happened for many reasons, not the least of which was lay people insisting on their right to have their authority recognized in the affairs of their Church. As a Protestant Church, your Episcopal parish of St. Andrew's depends on your exercising your authority. That's why Janet is trying so hard to get everyone possible to participate, especially on September 20<sup>th</sup>, our Welcome Back Sunday, when there will be a crucial meeting with Carol Kingston, our diocesan congregational coach. Carol will facilitate an Appreciative Inquiry process for us at that meeting. This is a way of approaching important decisions, like discernment, starting from the positive position of recognizing our gifts, so we can bring those gifts to bear in the challenge of decision making. I have been involved in Appreciative Inquiry elsewhere. It is enlightening, energizing, and fun. I'm praying for a large and vocal attendance.

Meanwhile, I also pray that you are finding renewed energy as summer turns to fall, and that you are experiencing in your life the truth that God is with you always.

Faithfully yours in Christ,  
Reverend Joe

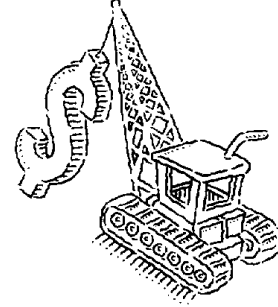
## FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Friends,

It is mid August as I write this from my summer house on Plum Island. Although it's hard to imagine frost on the pumpkin on a spectacular summer day like this, St. Andrew's is beginning to mobilize for fall and the months beyond. At the top of our list is making sure that St. Andrew's continues to be served by a priest. As many of you surely know by now, we are nearing the end of Rev. Joe's original three-year term with us. As such, we have entered into a discernment process in the form of a mutual ministry review. The review will provide us with an assessment of our overall ministry, look at how our Vestry and leadership (lay and ordained) work together to accomplish stated goals and then set goals for the future which will lead to strengthened mission and ministry. The mutual ministry review will be led by Carol Kingston, a Diocesan appointed congregational coach. Rev. Joe, Len and I met with Carol late this spring to discuss our needs and I found her to be warm, thoughtful and engaging. By the end of August, the full Vestry will have met with Carol to explore our ministries in greater detail. Following that, on Welcome Back Sunday, the full congregation will meet with Carol following the 9:30 service for the Appreciative Inquiry part of the discernment process. This step will foster continued growth at St. Andrew's by highlighting what is positive and already working here. From what Carol has described to us, this step of the process actually sounds like fun. We'll also have a cookout that day sponsored by the Vestry and Mary-Ellen Briggs will organize activities to keep the children busy. The outcome of this review will help us determine whether St. Andrew's and Rev. Joe are the right fit for each other for the longer term, so your participation is CRITICAL. Accordingly, I urge you to mark Sunday, September 20th on your calendars and come to church that day. In order to avoid misunderstandings, if you are absolutely unable to participate, you need to contact Len Brown or me in order to register your opinions. We need your help to ensure that Rev. Joe remains our priest here at St. Andrew's.

May the summer breezes continue to bless you.  
Janet

## FROM THE TREASURER



Financial Report through August 2009:

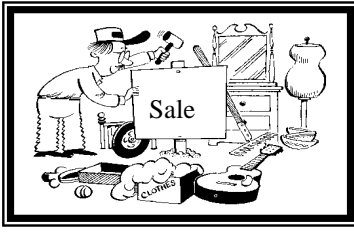
Pledge 2009 – received to date: \$30,738 (96% of budgeted to date). But because of the economy, we budgeted less than was actually pledged, so this represents 89% of the amount pledged. We appreciate your keeping your pledges up in difficult times. If you find it necessary to adjust your pledge, please let the pledge recorder know by putting a note in your envelope. It will help in our planning.

Heating fund donations - \$495 in 2009.

Income:	\$76,867 (102% of budget)
Expenses:	\$79,762 (106% of budget)
Shortfall:	\$ 2,895

These numbers include almost \$10,000 in transfers from reserves. Additionally they include the payment we received from the State Treasurer's office for the unclaimed funds reported in the paper. We have applied all of it to a pension liability from the last three years. We are up to date now on our assessment, our current year taxes and the clergy pension. The Stokes loan was retired last year.

## FLEA MARKET/RUMMAGE SALE



Patty Eldred and Paula Campbell will host a Flea Market/Rummage Sale on Saturday, October 24th. The proceeds for this event will go to the General Budget. Your items can be dropped off starting the beginning of October. Any large items or furniture **CAN NOT** be dropped off until Saturday, October 17th due to events in the church. We need volunteers and help. Looking for people to help sort items, table set up/take down, man tables, grill, clean up, and take unsold items to the Salvation Army. Anything you can contribute to this event will be appreciated. Please contact Patty (978) 686-1472 or Paula (978) 794-1000 to volunteer your service or if you need items picked up

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

As we've mentioned elsewhere in this edition of the Grapevine, this year's Welcome Back Sunday will include a step in our discernment process known as Appreciative Inquiry. This will be an opportunity, presented in interview format, for our church family to reflect positively on our experiences here at St. Andrew's. Here is a sneak peak at the questions for those of you who might like to start mulling over your responses:

- **Best Experience:** Reflect on your best experience at St. Andrew's.
- **Values:** What are the things you value about yourself, being a parishioner, and St. Andrew's?
- **Core Value:** What do you think is the core value of St. Andrew's? What values give life to your congregation. What is it that, if it did not exist, would make your church totally different than it currently is?
- **Three Wishes:** If you had three wishes for St. Andrew's, what would they be?

## WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

On Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> we will have Welcome Back Sunday. After church we are planning to have a luncheon

and then an **important** meeting with Carol Kingston, our Diocesan Discernment Facilitator. We will need help with the luncheon. Is there someone who could "man" the grill for us? Can you bring sandwiches, salad, or dessert? With every ones help it will be a great parish experience. Please speak with Bev Brown for further information

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Permits have been secured and the contractor who will be handling the repair work on the exterior of the church is in the process of scheduling the various workers for the job. We can expect the carpentry work to begin sometime during the month of September. Once the carpenters have completed the lower portion of the building, the scaffolding and painters will move on site, the carpenters will move to the upper reaches and the painters will then follow the carpenters around the building. At different points during the construction process, we'll also have a mason working to shore up some of the stone work around the building. Weather permitting; the job should take 4-6 weeks from start to finish. Please pardon our appearance, as well as any inconveniences which may arise, during the construction process.

## 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.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School resumes with registrations on Welcome Back Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. We'll have classes for preschool up to high school. To the extent we have children who are interested, we will also offer First Communion and Confirmation classes. 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. For further information on Sunday School, First Communion or Confirmation, please speak to Mary-Ellen Briggs.

### COFFEE HOUR



We need more people to share in the coffee hour ministry. Please consider helping out with this time of fellowship after the 9:30 service by taking a turn to provide cookies or pastries. The sign up sheet is on the door connecting the downstairs parlor and kitchen.



We are finishing up with summer and thanks to many of you we again were able to give food to six families in the Arlington Neighborhood each week. We have many faithful donors; it is such a help! As fall arrives new needs will arise and we will strive to continue our weekly donations. As you shop we ask you to remember these families and pick up one (or more) items and bring it with you to church. It all adds up and is a great help!

Each week we give the following to each family: Tuna, cereal, pasta, pasta sauce, green veggies, yellow veggies, soup, peanut butter, jelly or fluff. In addition we purchase milk and bread, so a monetary donation is also helpful.

Thank you for your continued help! Len & Bev Brown

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- 1 *Victoria Milo*
- 9 *Elaine Morissette*
- 15 *Albert Harvey*
- 18 *Kendra Cooley*
- 23 *Janet Ratcliffe*



#### **OCTOBER**

- 2 *Dick Ratcliffe*
- 2 *Molly Ratcliffe*
- 4 *Mary Durant*
- 6 *Melissa Saindon*
- 20 *Natasha Lee*
- 22 *Peter Kwakye Jr.*
- 23 *Heather Hudson*
- 24 *Michelle Stehm*
- 28 *Adam Ste. Marie*

### MEMORIALS



#### **Building Preservation Fund**

Margaret McGhee  
John David Murphy

#### **Memorial Fund**

Carol Cooley

### FROM THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

2 Samuel 7:1-14a      Mark 6:30-34, 50-56  
Ephesians 2:11-22

*And wherever he went, ...they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they*

*might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.*

Mark 6:56 (NRSV)

Many churches are extending their ministry of caring and praying for those members who are ill through the creation of hand knitted prayer shawls. The recipients of those shawls are invited to reflect on the prayers embracing them, much like the shawls that surround their shoulders.

Today Jesus has many cloaks, many followers, and the teaching and healing work of the Holy Spirit is limited only by the many that choose to walk in Jesus' way and be guided by his truth.

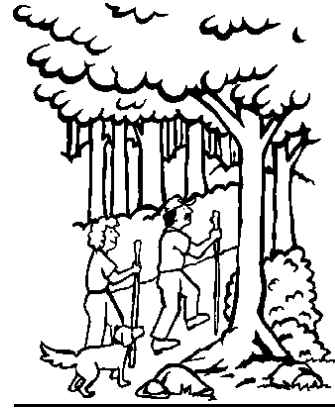
When a prayer shawl is placed upon someone's shoulders, that shawl is the cloak of Jesus. He represents his and your compassion and love for those who need comfort in times of trouble.

*Prayer: Dear God, help me to receive all that You have to offer, so that I may become a living, healing presence in the world. Amen.*

### WITH GRATITUDE

As you have all likely heard by now, the restoration work on the exterior of our church will be funded, in part, by a matching grant we've been awarded by Methuen's Festival of Trees. We are thankful to the Festival of Trees for looking favorably on our grant application and will put their money to good use. You may not have heard, however, that St. Andrew's source for the "match" to the Festival of Trees grant is made possible by our former, longtime parishioners, Genie and Bernie Hancock. In an act of extraordinary generosity, Bernie, who passed away in February 16, 2005, and Genie who passed away more recently in October 16, 2007, bequeathed their entire estate to St. Andrew's. While we are thinking of an appropriate way to honor Bernie and Genie for their contribution to the preservation of our beautiful building, we wanted to acknowledge them here for making this project possible.

# HIKE FOR HOPE



Len and Bev will be walking for "Hike for Hope"  
to benefit St. Andrew's  
October 4th at 1:00 pm.  
Please consider sponsoring a pledge  
for our St. Andrew's friends.

See Bev or Len