



The Grapevine

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

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church
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(978) 689-0463

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March/April 2009

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00am–1:00pm
Monday–Wednesday. 9:00-12:00 noon Thursday

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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.

GREETINGS FROM REV. JOE

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
I recall hearing as a child that giving up something I really liked during Lent was intended to be an act of my love for God, an expression of sorrow for my sins, and a sign of my repentance. The idea was that the more painful the sacrifice, the more deeply and sincerely I was expressing my love and sorrow, and the more effective my repentance. There seems to be a theology of suffering that suggests suffering as a desirable and effective path to deeper relationship with God. I must admit that I always have had a problem with that theology. God became incarnate in Jesus Christ to free us from suffering's power over us. I don't imagine God as wanting us to suffer as an expression of love. What I do imagine is God wanting us to try our best to clear away obstacles and distractions that

get in the way of our relationship with God. We know only too well that we lead real lives with real pressures. Lent is a time to reflect on these pressures, and the obstacles and distractions that get in the way of our relationship with God. It is a time to try shedding some of them for at least a few weeks so that we can turn our attention more to God. If giving up something specific reminds us to do this, then that's a good thing. This is sacrifice and repentance in a positive light. In clearing the way to attend to God in our lives, we may come to feel God attending to us. This holds real potential for the way we experience life, and the way people experience us. It opens the way to hear God's call and encouragement to stretch a bit, trying something new in God's service. So, beyond giving up some things, Lent can mean loving God by opening up to take on something new, and feel God respond, "I love you." During Lent, the lay pastoral visitors and I will be making extra efforts to visit people who are unable to come to church. If you, or anyone you know, are unable to join us in worship, please call the church at 978-689-0463 so we can arrange a visit. But please do try to make a Lenten commitment to join us on Sundays if you possibly can. We're stronger in Lent if we go through it together. I also invite you to make note of the following worship times:

April 5th Palm Sunday
Rite I at 8 AM and Rite II at 9:30 AM
April 9th Maundy Thursday
7:30 PM, Eucharist, foot washing,
stripping the altar
April 10th Good Friday
7 PM, The Way of the Cross
April 12th Easter Sunday
Rite I at 8 AM and Rite II at 9:30 AM

I hope to see you in church. Meanwhile, please know that I keep you in my prayers, and I ask you to keep me in yours.

Faithfully Yours in Christ,

Rev. Joe

**FROM SOME OF OUR NEW VESTRY
MEMBERS/OFFICERS**

Janet Ratcliffe's extended family has a long history here at St. Andrew's beginning with her great aunt, Janet Hill, and continuing today with the 4th generation of Ratcliffes, Janet's son, Robert, and his cousins, Sarah, Zoe and Chelsey. The Ratcliffes have had weddings, funerals and baptisms. They've sung in the choir, served as acolytes, been on altar guild and vestry, participated in youth group, and taught Sunday school. St. Andrew's is very much the Ratcliffe family's church home and, if it's not already that for you, Janet hopes that we can make it so.

Jim Beagan has been paying the bills for two years, and finally took on the title of Treasurer. Although he has an MBA, it was so long ago that it is of no help here. He also serves on the pastoral care committee and has written a piece for this month's Grapevine. He is a member of the Methuen Disability Commission and chairs the government relations committee at the state Multiple Sclerosis Society.

**REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED AT 2009
ANNUAL MEETING**

- SENIOR WARDEN:** Janet Ratcliffe
JUNIOR WARDEN: Len Brown
TREASURER: Jim Beagan
CLERK: Beth Regan
VESTRY: Betty Mackay, Matt McKeon, Patti Eldred
DELEGATES TO DIOCESAN CONVENTION: Matt McKeon and Laura
DELEGATES TO DEANERY: Jim Beagan, Beverly Brown and Leonard Brown
COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: Leonard and Beverly Brown and Patti Eldred
HISTORIAN: Matt McKeon

**COMMUNITIES TOGETHER
LENT 2009 SCHEDULE**
(REMAINING SERVICES)

- 3/11** First-Calvary Baptist Church, North Andover
3/18 Rolling Ridge Conference Center, North Andover
3/25 Forest Street Union Church, Methuen
4/3 Kurth Auditorium at Lawrence General Hospital

All services begin at 12 Noon followed by a light lunch

FROM THE TREASURER



Financial Report through Feb 2009:

Pledge 2008 – budget \$52,500; final received \$52,837
Thank you!

Pledge 2009 – received to date: \$6,769 (85% of budgeted to date) 2009 pledge budgeted was only 90% of amount pledged, so we are even further behind on pledges than budget would imply.

Heating fund donations - \$315 – thank you

Income:	\$11,226 (78% of budget)
Expenses:	\$15,738 (84% of budget)
Shortfall	\$ 4,473

No transfers from reserves have yet been made to the account this year. All of the shortfall has come from the checking account balance from the end of last year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



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 the kitchen.

BULLETINS: The Bulletins for our at home members will be sent out every two weeks to help in order to save on the mailing.

PRAYER SHAWLS: St. Andrew's Church is still working with the Shawl Ministry if anyone would like to invest some time in learning how to make a shawl or add fringe (materials are provided). If you know of anyone who would like to receive a blessed shawl or help in any way, please see Betty Feugill.

UPDATING OF PARISH RECORDS: We are updating our parish directory. If you have not already done so, we would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to complete the contact sheet contained in this

issue with your current contact information and return it to the church office.

HEATING OIL FUND: If you can help with the increased cost of our heating expenses, please use the Heating Oil Fund Envelopes located in the pews. Please put in collection plate or give to Reverend Joe at the coffee hour. You may also send your donation to the church office. Thank you!!

SUNDAY MORNING CANCELLATIONS: If Church services and Sunday school are being cancelled due to inclement weather, there will be an announcement on Radio Station WCCM, AM -1110 on your dial

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEEDS YOUR HELP: The Sunday School children need your help. We are currently looking for a coordinator, as well as volunteers to help with next year's program. We can use your time and talent in almost any capacity, whether you wish to volunteer or a weekly basis or as an occasional substitute, so we encourage you to talk to Rev. Joe or Janet if you are interested

ANNUAL EASTER BREAKFAST: Please join us for our annual Easter Breakfast between the 8am and 9:30am services on Sunday, April 12th. Everyone is welcome. Please call the office if you need additional information.

EASTER FLOWER MEMORIAL: Those wishing to give to the flower memorial fund in memory of a loved one, please have info to Gail Ratcliffe by April 5th.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE **BY LAURA WALTA**

First, I want to stress that the St. Andrew's Affordable Housing Project is a RESEARCH project. No decisions have been made. No plans are in place. We're not there yet.

The rationale for starting this research is that, as you all know, St. Andrew's is cash poor. We have little in the way of cash assets. But we do have land. And the question was raised, how could we use our land in a way that might support our ministry AND generate income? We have agreed from the start of our inquiry that BOTH of these ingredients would be necessary. And the income

generated would need to be greater than the income already generated through the rental of the rectory and the kindergarten.

In late 2006, Rev. Jane Bearden encouraged me to attend an affordable housing workshop in Lynn, where I met the director of Episcopal City Mission (ECM). They talked about affordable housing as a wonderful potential ministry of providing affordable housing for the economically disadvantaged in our communities and indicated that ECM had resources and expertise to help churches through the process.

As a member of the Methuen Zoning Board of Appeals, I was aware that this effort is supported by Massachusetts legislation known as "40B" that requires cities and towns to provide 10% of its housing stock as affordable to someone making 80% or less of the median household income. In order to get around restrictive city zoning laws, a 40B development must price at least 25% of the units as affordable on a long-term basis. Currently, Methuen is below its 10% requirement, and is therefore supportive of developments that would meet the affordability needs of its residents.

I returned to St. Andrew's with a very real question- about whether we as a parish might be called to the ministry of providing affordable housing, and if so, could we respond to this call. Would that be a productive use of our land? Initially I talked to Janet Ratcliff, who works with developers and financiers of these kinds of projects, as well as Fr. Joe, and Len Brown. Our discussion focused around a number of questions:

- Is there a demand for affordable housing in our community? If so, who among the community might benefit from it?
- Do we have room to build it?
- What will it take in terms of time, space, money, patience, energy, zoning/regulatory steps, etc.?
- What are the benefits, including financial and space, for the parish?
- IF the parish discerns that we are called to this ministry, what do we need to know to get started?

The vestry authorized a study committee to develop the basic information that the parish could use to do this discernment. We went to ECM with our questions, and they suggested we apply for a couple of small grants. The first is to pay for an architect to come out and look at the property, meet with the City to find out the regulations, and make some suggestions as to what is even possible. The second is to pay for a marketing and financial feasibility study.. The market portion of that study has recently been completed. According to the study, there is a good sized population of people eligible for affordable

housing in this area. A copy of the study is available in the office for anyone who would like to read the details.

Just as we were preparing to begin the financial study, we were informed that the City of Methuen had received a \$75000 grant to study the development of affordable housing on three private parcels of land in the downtown. I believe one parcel is on the other side of the river, near the VFW and the old train station. Another is the old Mt. Carmel school property on Lowell St. And the third was our very own St. Andrew's. This is a wonderful opportunity for St. Andrew's to derive the benefit of a set of fresh professional eyes to suggest what might be, what is marketable, and what the financial picture would look like. We are very excited for their work to begin!

One point of clarification: At this point we are NOT considering the purchase of the two abutting properties-one on Broadway and one on Messer Ave. Our research is focused only on the property we already own.

We are using Brett Donham, of Donham & Sweeney Architects in Boston, who has a lot of experience in the area of church property development and has a special interest in the churches designed by Henry Vaughn. Initially, we thought an over-55 development would be preferable. Brett drew some preliminary sketches that included different combinations of one and two bedroom apartments. He imagined townhomes coming down Messer Ave, and a 3 story building with under-building parking behind the church. He included the development of a landscaped parking lot in front of the church. Additional parking would be available on Broadway.

Development of our land would require the demolition of the rectory, the garage, and the parish hall. This, in turn, would require the renovation of the space being used as a kindergarten back into a functioning parish space, as well as some upgrades to the church building itself. We'd like to believe that St. Andrew's will be here for at least another 100 years!

The size of the property suggests a rental development. We still face the question of for whom we want to build this housing. Will it be small families? Larger families? Over 55? The most recent market study suggests that we could rent 1 and 2 bedroom units to families and seniors. We hope that the research completed by the City will help us see better what our options are.

When all of the necessary information has been developed to answer our initial questions, the study committee will report it to vestry. If the project is NOT economically feasible, we will not pursue it. However, if the project IS feasible, we still need to ascertain whether this is a ministry we, as a church, are called to do. Vestry will then

arrange for another presentation to the parish for input, opinions, questions, concerns, and ideas. Vestry will also want to get neighborhood input.

Throughout this process, we will have times for prayer and reflection that the Holy Spirit help the parish discern if God's mission in Methuen includes affordable housing, and if St. Andrews is called to that particular ministry. If we are, we will want to make sure that the project retains the church (and even make structural repairs) and permit the normal activities of the church and its congregation. We will also want to make sure that the housing project is professionally managed, both during construction and then as the units are occupied.

Of course, there will be a number of questions that will need to be answered and a number of things that will need to happen. At this point we don't even know what all of those things will be, but we will work closely with ECM and rely on their guidance. We can expect things like:

- The team will need to meet with the City to define detailed requirements and parameters
- The architect will need to draw up plans of what the development would look like
- The parish will need to meet to review the plans, ask questions, and provide opinions
- The team will continue to work with ECM to work out initial financing options for moving forward. This will likely involve St. Andrew's coming up with some funds of its own, or some other form of "good faith" investment in the project.
- The Vestry will need to meet to authorize the initial phase of the development, to include the process for identifying and contracting with a project developer/ manager.

Beyond that, the list is probably endless. At this point I can't even imagine all of the things that will need to be done. To be honest, at this point I don't even know if the project will be feasible! And it's up to the church to determine if this is a ministry to which we are called. But I will commit to following the feasibility study and discernment process through its course, wherever it may lead; and to keeping the Vestry (and anyone who asks) informed of whatever information I have. For now, I look forward to knowing once and for all if the project is even worth considering!

THOUGHTS ON PASTORAL CARE BY JIM BEAGAN

In January, we all received a very sincere and heartfelt letter about how much we need to increase our Sunday attendance and how this affects the worship for the family

of Saint Andrew's. But this is a call to action not just for the missing, but also for those in the pews. Pastoral care is a responsibility, not just of the priest and the Eucharistic Ministers, but of all members of the parish.

There are many reasons why someone can't make it to services including, health issues, family needs or job pressures, or guilt at being away so long. As a person with multiple sclerosis, I miss a fair number of Sundays because I just do not feel up to it, and I know personally how easy it is for that to become a habit. A call from Father Joe, not at all accusatory about my absence, just inquiring if I was doing ok, reminded me that I am a member of the family at Saint Andrew's and needed to make a little extra effort to participate in its worship life.

What those of us in the pews can do is to first remember those who are missing. We have added to the end of the prayer list the statement, 'and for all those who can't be with us today' to make us focus on it. If someone you know is absent, please make a call to see how they are doing, or at least ask the pastor or one of the lay Eucharistic Ministers to do it. Perhaps that person would like a visit from a lay Eucharistic Minister - that pastoral ministry need not be confined only to the bedridden and very sick. If there are enough people who can not make Sunday mornings, maybe we can schedule an afternoon or evening prayer service and communion with a lay minister or our priest. That's how important we feel corporate worship is.

Ideally we would prefer everyone to be here on Sunday mornings, but if that is not possible, we are willing to work with our family to make its spiritual life full.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Mark your calendars & get the word out! The Barbara C Harris Camp annual Volunteer Work Day is on for May 2 – this is a great way for camper families to give back to the camp, or for those curious about the camp to get a good look at the facility while helping out. After the storms of this past winter, there will be plenty to do. There are jobs for every skill level; raking the beach, laying the dock, spreading mulch, splitting logs, painting, rolling boulders, clearing downed trees. **We especially need some strong, capable men with good chainsaw skills!** Visit <http://www.bchcenter.org/volunteer/workday.htm> for more info about the day – all meals provided. **Come on out for the camper in your life!!**

Youth Leadership Training

A series of training events for Youth Ministry Leaders

All Saints' Episcopal Church
10 Billerica Road (Route 129)
Chelmsford, MA 01824
Phone 978-256-5673
Email : aschurch@gis.net
Web site: www.allsaintschelmsford.org

Youth Ministry 101: God has a dream with our name on it

Sunday, March 29, 2009 from 3:00 – 6:00 PM followed by a light supper

Led by the Rev. Lori Mills-Curran, Director of Religious Education at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Framingham, MA

This workshop will cover the what, where, who, and why of youth ministry. We will move from looking at the current context of doing Youth Ministry to practical planning, resource development and leadership.

Spiritual Practices and Worship with Youth

Sunday April 26, 2009, 3:00 – 6:00 PM followed by a light supper

Led by Kit Lonergan, Director of Youth Ministry, Diocese of Massachusetts

Youth are often heard complain that Church is boring. This does not mean that they do not have deep spiritual longings. This workshop will combine theory and practice of worship with youth.

These training sessions are the first in a series offered to youth leaders in the Episcopal Church and beyond. They are free to all but we do ask that you RSVP to aschurch@gis.net. The costs are being paid out of a Congregational Development Grant to All Saints' Church Youth Ministry Task Force. We are offering them with the support of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Office of Formation and Education.

For more information please contact the Rev. Tom Barrington at asctom@gis.net



MEMORIALS

Building Preservation Memorial Fund

Dorothy Campbell
Ruth E. Dahms
Larry Joecks
James L. Johnson
Judy E. Langley
Carolyn Lily
JoAnn B. Moran
Kenneth R. Morley
Leo Robillard
Fred Smith
Richard Thomas
Isabella Tones

Organ Memorial Fund

Margaret (Peg) Barnes
Donald Briggs
Carol Charest
James L. Johnson
Judy E. Langley
McKenzie Maddox
Kenneth R. Morley
Leo Robillard
Ruth Ruffen
Sidney Scarth
Fred Smith
Isabella Tones

Memorial Fund

Roy H. Bourque
Judy E. Langley
James L. Johnson
Fred Smith

Garden Memorial Fund

Leo Robillard
Fred Smith
Helen Travers

Music Memorial Fund

Roy H. Bourque
James L. Johnson
Fred Smith

St. Patrick's Day Dinner



March 14, 2009 5:00 P.M.
\$12.00/Adults \$6.00/Child 5-12 years

Please contact the church office for further information.



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



Contact Card

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Birthday: _____

Contact Card (page 2)



Names/Birthdays of Other Household Members You Would Like to Add to our List: _____

Would you like to be contacted by our priest or member of our pastoral care team?
