



The Guardian

FEBRUARY 2014

FROM THE RECTORY

Last Sunday, we held our Annual Meeting. There is much to prepare for the Annual Meeting—committee reports, budgets, elections. While individual committees look back on the work they've done in the previous year, it is my job as rector to look back at the big picture. What has happened in the previous year? In what ways have we changed as a community? Where is God's Spirit moving us?

I have to admit that I approach this task with a fair amount of ambivalence. I, like many of us, am not so great at looking back and remembering all that has happened. I'm always worried. What if nothing has happened? What if nothing has been accomplished? *Really*. Until I start the discipline of actually looking back, the days just seem to run together and it is hard to see what has changed.

This process reminds me of living with three rapidly growing kids. Since I see them every day, I don't notice their growth until I try to fit them into a pair of shoes or a shirt that had fit one of them only the month before. Could their clothes be shrinking, I wonder? It is the people that see my children on a less regular basis that are better at noticing how they have changed and grown.

The happy part of this discipline of looking back at the previous year is that I can see and appreciate just how much has happened and just how much has changed and been accomplished. I'm always amazed at what I find when I look back over the year, and I've had this experience at every church I have served. At St. Michael's for example, we have completed our \$1.2 million building project, furnished our new spaces, begun new worship services in our new chapel, celebrated our first Pride service, and baptized twelve people—just to name a few of the things that have happened. There is much here to recollect and celebrate, to notice how the Spirit is moving in our church.

Which makes me wonder if the practice of looking back is not only a helpful way to appreciate God's movement in our lives, but an extremely important spiritual discipline for all of us in our own lives. Without the ability to look back, appreciate, notice, mourn and celebrate, how can we expect to discern God's call to us in the future?

*Yours in Christ,
Mary*



NEWS OF THE PARISH

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Many thanks to all who helped with the Annual Meeting! Here are the results of the elections for Vestry and Diocesan Convention:

Vestry: Richard Cogliano, Sarah Benton, and Ronny Johnson were all elected for three-year terms. Wayne Cook was elected to complete a one-year term.

Convention: Joanne Patalano, Annamarie Pluhar, and Janet Cramer were elected as delegates. Paul Moberly and David Mattocks were elected as alternates.

Wardens: Janet Cramer will serve as Senior Warden and Sarah Benton will serve as Junior Warden in 2014.



VESTRY RETREAT FEBRUARY 21-23

St. Michael's Vestry will be on retreat at Holy Cross Monastery from Friday, February 21, through Sunday, February 23. During this time the Vestry will pray together, get to know one another, and begin to lay out some goals for 2014. Please keep the Vestry in your prayers during this time.

VESTRY OF ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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CANDLEMAS CELEBRATED FEBRUARY 2

The beginning of February is marked by the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus, also called the Feast of the Purification of Mary, which is celebrated on February 2. This day bids us remember Mary and Joseph's visit to the Temple to present their child Jesus on the fortieth day following his birth, as Jewish law required, and for Mary to undergo the postpartum rites of cleansing. Luke's Gospel tells us that a resident prophet named Anna and a man named Simeon immediately recognized and welcomed Jesus. Taking the child into his arms, Simeon turned his voice toward God and offered praise for the "light for revelation" that has come into the world.

Taking a cue from Simeon, some churches began, in time, to mark this day with a celebration of light: the Candle Mass, during which priests would bless the candles to be used in the year to come. Coinciding with the turn toward spring and lengthening of light in the Northern Hemisphere, Candlemas offers a liturgical celebration of the renewing of light and life that comes to us in the natural world at this time of year, as well as in the story of Jesus. As we emerge from the deep of winter, the feast reminds us of the perpetual presence of Christ our Light in every season.

We will be blessing candles at both services on February 2. Feel free to bring one or two of your favorite candles to be blessed as we remember God's light that has come into the world!



PARISH FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Operating Income/Expenses for 1/1/13-12/31/13

Total Pledges Received:

\$216,013 vs. Budget of \$211,700 (102% of Budget)

of which: Total Pledges Received for December:

\$24,105 vs. Budget of \$17,642 (136.6% of Budget)

Total Operating Income:

\$328,363 vs. Budget of \$310,440 (105.7% of Budget)

Total Operating Expenses:

\$313,901 vs. Budget of \$309,721 (101.3% of Budget)



NEWS OF THE PARISH

BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND
WITH THE PEOPLE'S CONSENT
THE RIGHT REVEREND THOMAS CLARK ELY,
BISHOP OF VERMONT
WILL ORDAIN
MARK GENSZLER
TO THE SACRED ORDER OF DEACONS
IN CHRIST'S ONE HOLY CATHOLIC
AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, AT 7:00 IN THE EVENING
ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT
YOUR PRAYERS AND PRESENCE ARE REQUESTED
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

As you can see from the above announcement, St. Michael's will be hosting the ordination of Mark Genszler to the sacred order of deacons on Friday, February 28. St. Michael's has sponsored and supported Mark through these last three years of seminary and we are so excited to be a part of his ordination. If you have never been to an ordination service, you are in for an amazing experience. The liturgy not only celebrates Mark's ministry, but celebrates the ministry we've all been called to. We hope you will come and celebrate this important event in the life of St. Michael's!



"SINGING STRONG" BEGINS TUESDAYS

In conjunction with the Brattleboro Music Center, and led by our own Susan Dedell, St. Michael's will host "Singing Strong," a chorus designed specifically for seniors! Singing boosts the immune system, improves heart health, lowers blood pressure, and reduces stress. Best of all, it makes you happier! Susan will lead everyone in songs chosen from a variety of musical styles, mostly from the great song repertoire of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Absolutely no prior singing experience or music-reading skills are necessary.

"Singing Strong" will meet on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. in the Dunham Room. There will be a modest fee of \$35 for a six-week session. Call the BMC at 257-4523 to register, or speak to Susan directly for further information.



IN GRATITUDE

from MJ Woodburn

For the Intercessory Prayer Ministry—
thank you for praying for my brother, Tom, all these years

For the Prayer Shawl Ministry—
thank you for providing the shawl that draped his shoulders as he died

For the Sacramental Healing Ministry—
thank you for the safety and sanctification of processing my loss

For the congregation of St Michael's—
thank you for allowing me to pray with you, for you, about you

For my experience at St. Michael's—
thank you for allowing my faith to take wing here in the form of service

And for God—
thank you doing for me more than I can ask for, pray for, or even imagine



Our former interim rector, *Merritt Greenwood*, will begin serving as interim rector in Arroyo Grande, California, on March 1. Merritt writes, "This is a gracious surprise as I thought we were headed to San Francisco or back to Vermont. It seems that God takes delight in altering the plans I make. We are looking forward to this move as we were completely taken with the central California coast during our summer road trip." Please pray for Merritt as he begins this new ministry!



WINGED PRODUCTIONS

WINGED PRODUCTIONS TAKES FLIGHT AT ST. MICHAEL'S

This fall, our parish celebrated the completion of an amazingly successful project aimed at making our church building more accessible, welcoming, comfortable, and functional. As

we finished that milestone, we realized that we had both an opportunity and perhaps an obligation to discover how we could continue to grow in our ability to address the spiritual needs of the wider community, as well as meet the growing, diverse needs of our own parish. The exciting question lay before us: in what ways can we share the gifts of love and grace that exist in such abundance here at St. Michael's?

This was the motivation that lay behind the formation of Winged Productions. Created and directed by Paul and Susan Dedell, and funded by an initial gift from them as well as a very generous grant from the Narthex Foundation, Winged Productions will



produce events that explore the basic animating questions that lie at the heart of the great sacred traditions. What matters in life? What is the meaning of love? How and why should we serve

one another? What happens after death? How are biology and spirituality connected? Through musical performances, workshops and lectures, theatrical productions, and visual art, Winged Productions will explore these questions in all the variety, richness, and complexity with which they find expression in contemporary lives.

The vestry of St. Michael's voted unanimously and enthusiastically to host Winged Productions. Paul and Susan will work directly with the rector and staff of St. Michael's to ensure that programming is in keeping with the mission of the church and holistically integrated into the schedule of the parish.

THE 2014–2015 SEASON

February 8, 1:00–3:00 p.m. at the Brattleboro Retreat

“The Divine Biology of Love: Best Self Practices”

Presentation by Dr. Lesley Fishelman in collaboration with the Brattleboro Retreat

February 16, 4:00 p.m. at Centre Congregational Church

“Songs of Divine Chemistry”

Music and Libretto by Paul Dedell; Music Direction by Susan Dedell; featuring Matt Hensrud, tenor, Winged Voices, Jubilee Girls Choir, and the Limbic System Percussion Ensemble

April 10, 11, 12, 13, at St. Michael's Episcopal Church

“Three in the Wilderness”

An original Lenten Mystery Play with puppets by Finn Campman, and guest vocalists Tony Barrand and Zara Bode

September 27, 28 at St. Michael's Episcopal Church

“The Protecting Veil” by John Tavener

Paul Wiancko, cello, and string orchestra

Opening lecture, “Icons of the Protecting Veil,” by Zachary Roesemann

November weekends at St. Michael's Episcopal Church

Sacred Chant workshops



WINGED PRODUCTIONS

DIVINE CHEMISTRY OF LOVE: A NEUROBIOLOGY PRESENTATION AND WORKSHOP FEBRUARY 8

On Saturday, February 8, from 1:00–3:00 p.m., a presentation and workshop will be offered at the Brattleboro Retreat by Dr. Lesley Fishelman exploring the nature, biology, and practical application of a variety of practices intended to improve or expand the ability of the brain in a variety of life-altering ways. The presentation includes an experiential workshop, “The Divine Biology of Love: Best Self-Practices.”

Practices such as self-reflection, mindfulness, and focused concentration have ancient origins. As it turns out, doing them on a regular basis makes maximum use of the human brain’s amazing capacity to develop higher levels of awareness, understanding, love, faith, and compassion. Each practice that is explored will be discussed in relation to the neurobiological function that it improves or expands.

There will be time for individual and group reflection, as well as an opportunity to engage in these best self-practices with others who also seek to make the most of the amazing gift of being human.

Lesley Fishelman M.D. will be the facilitator for the workshop. Dr. Fishelman graduated from Yale University School of Medicine and trained for psychiatry at Yale and the Institute of Living. She founded the first Stress Management and Holistic Pain Management program at the Harvard Community Health Plan in Boston and the Alternative Medicine program at its Kenmore Center. She served as a Psychiatry Chief at HCHP, and as Chief of Outpatient Psychiatry at the Anna Marsh Behavioral Care Clinic in Brattleboro.

The event will be held in the Education Conference Room at the Brattleboro Retreat, and is open to the public. It is being offered in conjunction with an upcoming performance on February 16 of Paul Dedell’s “Songs of Divine Chemistry.” For more information, call Winged Productions at 802-348-7735.

SONGS OF DIVINE CHEMISTRY PRESENTED FEBRUARY 16

Where does love come from? Is it wholly a construct of the human mind? A mixture of neurochemicals triggered by environmental and genetic factors? Or does it emanate from the ineffable sphere of spirit? In Paul Dedell’s exciting choral work, *Songs of Divine Chemistry*, the texts of mystic poets alternate with scientific writings on neuroplasticity, finding an intersection of ideas that are both surprising and revelatory.

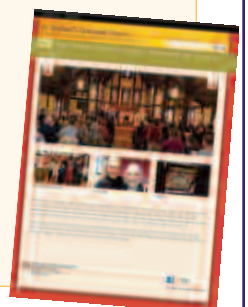
Music Director Susan Dedell leads Winged Voices, the Jubilee Girl’s Choir, the Limbic System Percussion Ensemble, and tenor Matt Hensrud in a performance of this stunning piece on Sunday, February 16, at 4:00 p.m. The performance will take place at Centre Congregational Church in Brattleboro.

Drawing on the poems and writings of Hafiz, Rumi, Meister Eckhart, Rabia, Saint Francis of Assisi, and others, and using excerpts from Dr. Norman Doidge’s best-selling book, *The Brain That Changes Itself*, composer Paul Dedell (our very own!) explores the realms of human and divine love. *Songs of Divine Chemistry* is by turns provocative, passionate, lyrical, funny, and tenderly poignant.

Tenor soloist Matt Hensrud is an emerging young voice in the contemporary music scene in New York City, most recently premiering a work of Steve Reich’s with the Signal Ensemble. He is equally at home with early music; the New York Times called his recent performance in the St. Matthew Passion at the Brooklyn Academy of Music “revelatory.”

DID YOU KNOW?

That you can see this issue of the *Guardian* in beautiful color on our website? That you can find the Rota? That you can check for the latest on events and services? Go to www.stmichaelsvermont.org and see for yourself!





OUR MISSION & WORK . . . AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

**ST. MICHAEL'S CHOIR SCHOOL
TO BEGIN IN MARCH**

We are thrilled to be starting the St. Michael's Choir School for Children, a free after-school program for children ages 7–11. The program will meet on Tuesdays from 3:45–4:45 p.m. beginning March 4.

The choir school is open to all regardless of religious affiliation or level of musical ability. The young singers will learn posture and breathing, tone quality and intonation, and musical notation basics for both pitch and rhythm. They will sing music from a variety of material drawn from the classical repertoire and contemporary and world music. Students will be invited to sing at one service per month, either the principal Sunday morning service or an evening service or program.

St. Michael's has a fast-growing population of children, and we sincerely desire to provide meaningful opportunities for them to enter fully into parish life and ministry. We also are interested in exploring new ways of interacting with the local community in spirited and nourishing ways. By forming a choir school that is open and available to the general public, St. Michael's is providing children an opportunity-

- to develop musical skills,
- to learn a lot of great church music,
- to learn about worship and church,
- to develop teamwork and leadership skills,
- and to have fun!

Susan Dedell

**INTERFAITH YOUTH GROUP
AT GUILFORD CHURCH FEBRUARY 9**

Kids of all faiths from age 11–14 are invited to participate in the Brattleboro Interfaith Youth Group. The group will meet on Sunday, February 9, at 3:00 p.m. at the Guilford Church to prepare and serve a meal at the Overflow Shelter located at the First Baptist Church on Main Street. Parents can pick up their kids at 6:30 p.m. at the Overflow Shelter. If you have any questions, please contact Ricky Davidson at Rickybratt@gmail.com



CHABHA COIN ROLL MARCH 2

Bring those change jars full or less-than-full on Sunday, March 2, for our coin roll during coffee hour. Why? CHABHA, Children Affected by HIV/AIDS in Rwanda and Burundi, helps pay for school fees and health cards and touches the lives of nearly 3,000 children in Rwanda and Burundi. Jars will be available at coffee hours during February.

Bring your kids, too. They will love sorting coins and helping another child.

See you then!

Susan Wilson





MILESTONES & TRANSITIONS

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Steven Meyer
- 5 Andy Burrows
- 7 Douglas Lilly
- 8 Emma Allen, James Landenberger,
Gordon Landenberger
- 9 Richard Burtis, Susan Wilson
- 10 Sissi Loftin
- 11 Alan McBean, Jayne Fritz
- 12 Robert Anderson, Lucia Osiecki
- 14 Stephen Hill, John Judge Jr.
- 16 Greg Allen, Doug Williams
- 19 Ross Kinney
- 20 Judy Wagenbach
- 24 Kirsten Mattson, Steven Perrin
- 25 Anne Cook
- 26 Paul Love, Charlene Kemp
- 28 Joseph Garofalo
- 29 Asa Taggart

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The Guardian is published monthly by St. Michael's Episcopal Church. News items, announcements, articles, etc., should be submitted to Clark Anderson, *editor*, by the 15th of the month for consideration.

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EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

ADULT FORUM SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

February 2, "A New Take on Old Traditions"—Jean Smith discusses the development of the liturgy.

February 9, "Woven in Rwanda, Transforming Lives"—Presentation by Melissa Johnson, teacher of weaving at the Putney School, who, with her Rwandan student Celine Mudahakana, took looms and tencel yarns last July to a CHABHA gathering of Rwandan young people and taught them how to weave scarves. You will hear the stories of how these young people's lives have been transformed and see the lustrous, stunning scarves they have woven.

February 16, "New Resources for the Digital Age"—Led by Mary Lindquist

February 23, "Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle"—Led by John Daly

Forums are held on Sunday mornings from 9:00–10:00 a.m. You do not have to be a member of St. Michael's to attend; all are welcome.

FEBRUARY LECTIONARY

Sunday, February 2:

Malachi 3:1–4, Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7–10,
Hebrews 2:14–18, Luke 2:22–40

Sunday, February 9:

Isaiah 58:1–9a, Psalm 112:1–9, 1
Corinthians 2:1–12, Matthew 5:13–20

Sunday, February 16:

Ecclesiasticus 15:15–20 or Deuteronomy 30:15–20,
Psalm 119:1–8; Matthew 5:21–37

Sunday, February 23:

Leviticus 19:1–2, 9–18; Psalm 119:33–40;
1 Corinthians 3:10–11, 16–23;
Matthew 5:38–48



Saint Michael's Episcopal Church

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The Guardian

Progressive, Prayerful, and Seeking to Follow Jesus in All Aspects of Our Lives



Our Worship Together

SUNDAYS—8:00 a.m., Quiet service of prayer and Holy Communion

10:15 a.m., Prayer, music, and Holy Communion, with Sunday School and childcare

WEEKDAY MORNINGS—6:00 a.m., silent hour in chapel

WEDNESDAYS—Noon, Brief service of prayer and Holy Communion

THURSDAYS—9:00 a.m., Rite I service; 5:30 p.m., Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer

SATURDAYS—8:00 a.m., Centering prayer

This Month At St. Michael's Episcopal

FEBRUARY 2—Candlemas

FEBRUARY 16—*Songs of Divine Chemistry*

FEBRUARY 21–23—Vestry retreat

FEBRUARY 28—Ordination of Mark Genszler