



The Guardian

JANUARY 2014

FROM THE RECTORY

When many people learn that my family and I moved to Vermont from Hawaii, they wonder how we could possibly leave such a tropical paradise. Although Hawaii is a great place to live with many endearing qualities, one thing I really missed while living in Hawaii was the feeling of being *cozy*. To me, cozy means curling up with a good book by a warm fire while it is dark and cold outside. Since Hawaii was always warm (and practically always sunny), there was no need to curl up with a blanket by a warm fire. I missed being cozy.

Needless to say, I am enjoying the winter snow, the short days, the warm fires, and the hot chocolate. It is very cozy. I really appreciate the sense of quiet and inwardness about this season, and I find it a really good time to read and reflect. What about you?

Since you might enjoy this time to read *and* reflect and be in community, and because Lent doesn't begin this year until March, we are offering a couple of additional opportunities for formation in January and February.

One opportunity is a book study group on *My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer*. Christian Wiman is a poet and a Christian who recently returned to his faith. Wiman is a profound and provocative thinker and I hope some of you will be interested in coming together to share in the richness of his insights. This is a great book to read while sitting by a fire!

Another opportunity that will be offered in January is an "Introduction to Contemplative Prayer." St. Michael's has a strong and growing contemplative ministry. For many of us, this kind of silent, meditative prayer is a profound way to deepen our prayer life. If this is something you have been interested in trying, I invite you to give this class a try.

Many blessings to you all in this cozy and sacred season of Christmas!

*Yours in Christ,
Mary*



NEWS OF THE PARISH

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 19

All members of St. Michael's are invited to attend our Parish Annual Meeting following the 10:15 a.m. service on January 19. Like last year, the meeting will take place in the church sanctuary after everyone has a chance to get something to eat in the Undercroft.

We will elect four new members of the Vestry (three for a three-year term and one for a one-year term), adopt a budget for 2014, and receive reports of St. Michael's various ministries. In addition, we will see a slide show reviewing some of the events from 2013.



BUDGET REVIEW MEETING JANUARY 12

Those of you who would like the opportunity to review St. Michael's budget for 2014 and ask questions prior to the Annual Meeting are invited to a choice of two budget meetings on Sunday, January 12. The first meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. in the Undercroft (especially for those who attend the early service). A second budget meeting will be offered following the 10:15 a.m. service.



CHRISTIAN FORMATION RETURNS JANUARY 5

Workshop Rotation is a Christian formation program for kids ages 3–10 years old and meets from 9:00–10:00 a.m. in the Sunday School Room. The program is set up in four-week units. In each unit we concentrate on a different Bible story. Last fall, we concentrated on Jonah and the Whale, Joseph and his brothers, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Our next unit will begin on January 5 with Mary Lindquist as the Rotation leader; the story we will explore is Love: 1 Corinthians 13. We welcome all kids to participate whenever they can and invite their friends.

Godly Play is a Montessori-based Christian formation program for children ages 3–9 years of age, which meets from 10:10–10:50 a.m. in the Godly Play room. The children come into church after the Peace

so that they may receive Communion with their families. Last fall, children in Godly Play heard many Old Testament stories, as well as several Advent stories. In the new year, we will begin to hear more stories about Jesus, especially Jesus' parables.

Youth Forum is a gathering of kids ages 10–15 years of age and meets every Sunday from 9:00–10:00 a.m. in the Small Meeting Room (downstairs, off of the Undercroft). This is a time of discussion and fun focusing on how our faith intersects with our daily lives. On the first Sunday of the month, youth are invited to participate in the Interfaith Youth Group, which gathers on Sunday evenings to make and serve a meal for the Overflow Shelter (see next article).



INTERFAITH YOUTH GROUP AT ST. MICHAEL'S JANUARY 5

Kids of all faiths, from age 11–14, are invited to participate in the Brattleboro Interfaith Youth Group. The group will meet on Sunday, January 5, at 3:00 p.m. 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



STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Many thanks to everyone who has pledged to St. Michael's for 2014! We have received 127 pledges for a total of \$216,153. This is an increase in total amount over where we were at the end of December in 2012 (128 pledges for a total of \$208,875). An amazing 37 of the 127 pledges were increases from last year and we received 12 new pledges. We are so *grateful* for your generosity. It is only through your gifts that we are able to support St. Michael's important ministries.



NEWS OF THE PARISH

2014 PLEDGERS TO DATE

Anonymous (x7)	Alan Dann and Deirdre Donaldson	Kate and Dana McGinn
Valerie Abrahamsen	Dan Drish and Ron Lenker	Herbert Meyer
Greg and Kelli Allen	Jeffrey and Nancy Durborow	Steven and Karren Meyer
Clark Anderson and Zachary Roesemann	Susan and Paul Dyer	Paul Moberly
Bill and Nancy Ames	Corwin and Betty Elwell	Anne Montgomery
Robert and Becky Anderson	Alix Fedoruk	Martha Moravec
Susan Avery	Chris Gauthier	Brian and Joyce Morgan
Nancy Barber	Susanna and Joe Grannis	Linda and Ken Neilson
Betsy Bates and Neil Quinn	Karen Guthrie	Frances Nevins
Thad Bennett	Craig Hammond and Liz Vick	Whitney Nichols
Sarah Benton	Christine Hart	Cory and Sarah Nohl
Don Berg	Susan Heimer	Joan Pinilla
Lynn Billington	Bruce and Carol Hesselbach	Dorothy and Nicholas Porter
Diana Bingham	Judith Hildreth	Gayle Potter
Karin Bleecker	Joel Hill	Jared Rediske
Melanie Boese	Shirley Hodgdon	Mark Reinhardt
Joanne Brickley	Dan Houder	Dodo Rice
Janet Brocklehurst and Sissi Loftin	Wendell and Madelyn Howard	Linda Rice
Fred Bump	Judy and Phil Hueber	Paula Ryan
Anne Wilmott Brown	Kenneth Jacobs II	Edward and Jane Sbardella
John Brynes and Kiersten Mckenney	Veronica Johnson	Peter and Jean Smith
Andy and Elise Burrows	Deb Jones and Lucia Osiecki	Devin Starlanyl
Richard and Irene Burtis	Jenny Karstad and Jodi Clark	Marcia Steckler
Pat Cameron	Charlene Kemp	Cherolyn Stimmel
John and Mary Carnahan	Patrick and Serina Keppel	Elizabeth Swift
Chris Chapman	Susan Kochinskas	Doug and Ann Switzer
Laurie Chiperfield	Dawn Kotapish	Lydia and Eben Taggart
Wayne and Anne Cook	Annie Landenberger	Carolyn Taylor-Olson
Dianne Clouet	Pat Laubach	Ruth Tilghman
Richard and Julie Cogliano	Gregory Lesch	Christine Triebert
Jennifer Course	George and Laura Lewis	Judy and Wayne Wagenbach
Al and Janet Cramer	Jack and Margit Lilly	Judy Walker
Lawrin and Pam Crispe	Mary Lindquist and Kurt Johnson	Christopher Wesolowski
Trudy Crites	Sumiko and Tom Mansfield	Robin White-Diamondstone
James and Anita Crosson	Leigh Marthe	J. Douglas Williams and George Hizny
John Daly	David and Monica Mattocks	Norma and Grace Willingham
Richard Davidson	Christopher and Ellen McCulloch-Lovell	J. Michael and Susan Wilmott
Dorrie Degutis	Alan and Judy McBean	Phillip and Susan Wilson
Cliff Dempster	Lauren and Drew McDowell	MJ Woodburn and Vince Johnson
	Judith McGee	Robert and Anne Works



NEWS OF THE PARISH



BRAVO FOR THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!

Thank you to all who helped put on a fabulous Christmas Pageant on December 24. I am especially grateful to Annie Landenberger and Miranda Smith, who directed the pageant, the many faithful parents who were present to organize and “herd,” and the kids who worked so hard to practice and learn their lines.

Mary Lindquist



NEWS OF THE PARISH

THANKS FOR THE OUTREACH MINISTRIES FAIR

In the Undercroft on November 24 after the 10:15 a.m. service, and again the following Sunday at 9:00 a.m., parishioners told the stories of their outreach and inreach ministries. The room was filled with 26 posters and objects describing how many witness their Christian commitment. The room buzzed with talk of the range of services that people provide in the church, in the community, and far beyond. We look forward to this being an annual event.

The Outreach Team



REPORT ON HEALING TEAM RETREAT

On November 22–23, the Sacramental Healing Team travelled to the Immanuel Retreat Center in Bellows Falls for an overnight retreat of fellowship and renewal. Perched on a hill next to the Immanuel Episcopal Church, the center provided a warm and inviting space for us to gather. It was here that we were able to put aside our everyday lives and schedules to focus on ways to deepen our relationship to God and equip us for the healing ministry to which we have felt called. Through many shared experiences we were able to examine our faith walks and learn how to more perfectly embrace a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and one another. Inasmuch as we received a bounty of spiritual food through our study, prayer, and other helpful exercises, we were also able to partake in the joy of delicious meals that were lovingly prepared for us. Our time together was fruitful, and on Saturday morning our retreat culminated with Communion and the anointing of one another with blessing.

The following was written during the late night silence and an occasional Zzz...

*We came as eight women on a day that was grey,
Our spirits soon lifted as we started to pray.
The study and sharing was well led by Jean,
Much laughter and chat made for fellowship keen.
Our stories went on about rats, bats, and bears,
We counted in fours and broke off into pairs.
This group, oh so awesome, as from a new planet,
Sarah, Trudy, and Robin, Betsy, Jean and Janet.
And, oh yes of course there was MJ and Margit,
We all came together as darts on a target.
Such love, so appealing, our spirits revealing,
God bless St. Michael's ministry of healing.*

Margit Lilly



NEWS OF THE PARISH



DECEMBER VESTRY REPORT

- Treasurer Wayne Cook reported that, as of November 30, we had received 98.9% of this year's budget, with indications that people with outstanding pledge amounts are planning to cover their balance before year's end. He cautioned that expenditures tend to rise at the end of the year, but it appears we are going to be very good overall.
- Stewardship reported there are 127 pledges including 12 new "pledging units," ranging from single persons to households of 5 or 6.
- The budget for 2014 is being developed by the Rector, Junior Warden, and Treasurer. Vestry discussed some elements that will be included in the final draft.
- Vestry decided that half of the Tag Sale receipts will be reserved for local charitable outreach, jointly allocated by the Mission and Outreach Committee and representatives of the Tag Sale.
- The new Board President of the Nursery School wrote asking for financial help in making a physical change to their classroom on the lower level. We voted to pay for materials not exceeding \$150 to assist a school parent to move the doorway accessing their bathroom directly from the classroom rather than the hallway.
- A slate of nominees for 2014 Vestry members, to be elected at the Annual Meeting, is partially complete. There will be openings for three Vestry members for three-year terms and one for a one-year term.
- We also confirmed a policy, voted on by email prior to this meeting: "The church will support the development of programs that pursue its mission and connect with the wider community in new ways." Vestry accepted Winged Productions, Art/Science /Spirit Outreach as the initial new program. (More about this in a separate article by Susan and Paul Dedell, who administer this program in consultation with the SMC staff.)

PARISH FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Operating Income/Expenses for 1/1/13-11/30/13

Total Pledges Received: \$191,908 vs. Budget of \$194,058 (98.9% of Budget)

of which: Total Pledges Received for November 2013: \$20,499 vs. Budget of \$17,642 (116.2%)

Total Operating Income: \$285,547 vs. Budget of \$284,695 (100.3% of Budget)

Total Operating Expenses: \$273,587 vs. Budget of \$279,359 (97.9%)



VESTRY OF ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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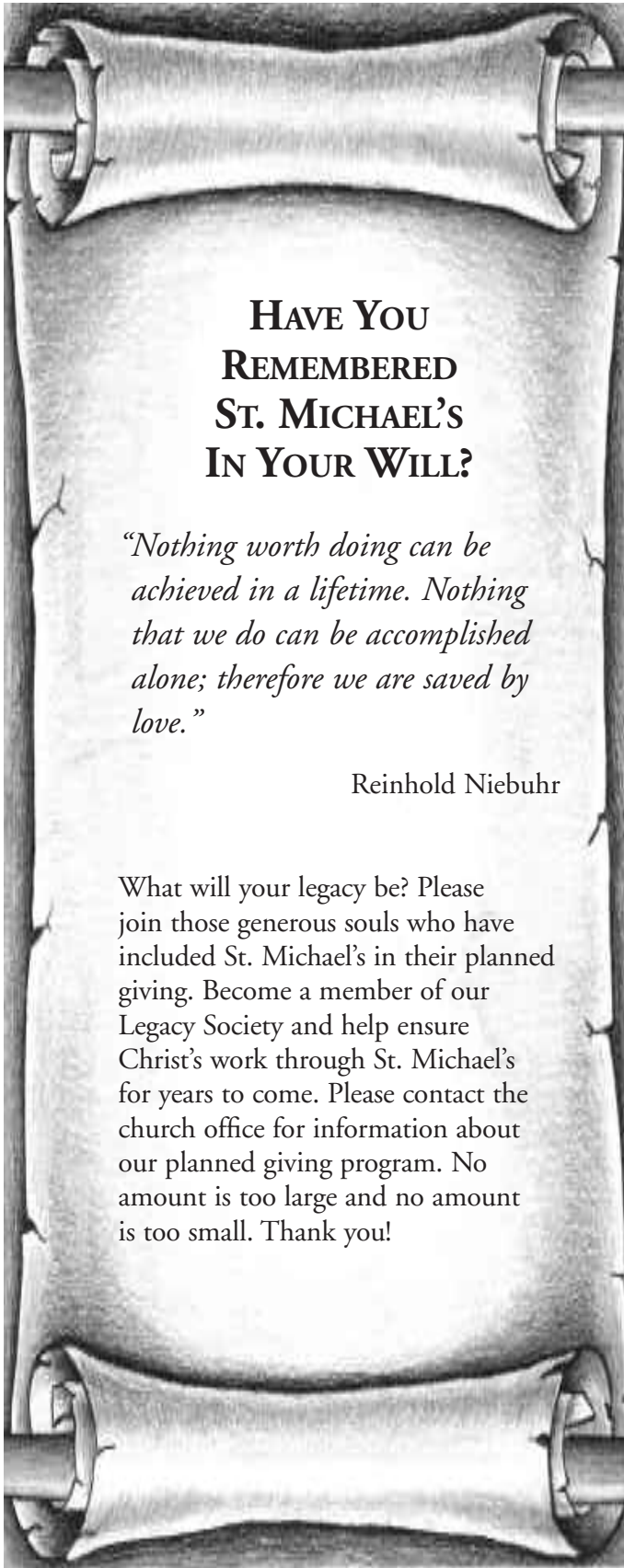
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**HAVE YOU
REMEMBERED
ST. MICHAEL'S
IN YOUR WILL?**

“Nothing worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime. Nothing that we do can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love.”

Reinhold Niebuhr

What will your legacy be? Please join those generous souls who have included St. Michael's in their planned giving. Become a member of our Legacy Society and help ensure Christ's work through St. Michael's for years to come. Please contact the church office for information about our planned giving program. No amount is too large and no amount is too small. Thank you!



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!





EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

BOOK STUDY BEGINS JANUARY 14:

***MY BRIGHT ABYSS: MEDITATION OF A MODERN BELIEVER* BY CHRISTIAN WIMAN**

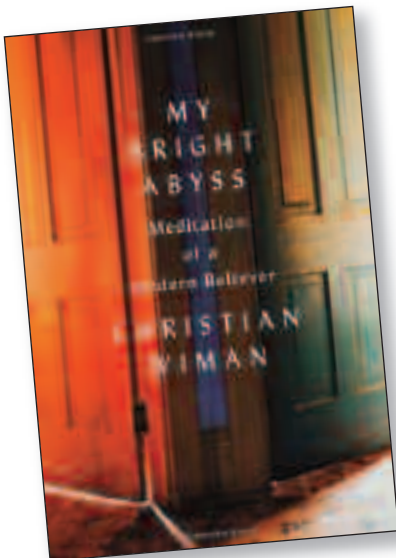
“This is a daring and urgent book...a book about experience, and about seeking a language that is adequate for both the fiery moments of inspiration and the ‘fireless life’ in which we spend most of our days. It is a testament to the human ability to respond to grace, even at times of great suffering, and to resolve to live and love more fully even as death draws near.”

—Kathleen Norris, *The New York Times Book Review*

Seven years ago, Christian Wiman, a well-known poet and the editor of Poetry magazine, wrote a now-famous essay about having faith in the face of death. My Bright Abyss, composed in the difficult years since and completed in the wake of a bone marrow transplant, is a moving meditation on what a viable contemporary faith—responsive not only to modern thought and science but also to religious tradition—might look like.

Mary Lindquist will offer a winter book study on My Bright Abyss on Tuesday evenings, 6:00–7:15 p.m., for five weeks beginning January 14.

Participants are encouraged to purchase the book prior to the first meeting and to read the first chapter. Questions? Please speak with Mary Lindquist, mary@stmichaelsvermont or 254-6048, x102.



INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER BEGINS JANUARY 25

Be still and know that I am God —Psalm 46:10

Enter into the quiet inner experience of God through contemplative prayer. Grounded in 16 centuries of Christian tradition, this prayer helps us bring our whole being to God beyond words, beyond thoughts, and beyond images. It emphasizes prayer as a personal relationship with God.

Session 1: Saturday, January 25, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Sessions 2–6: Five additional sessions will be held during February and March, with dates and times to be agreed upon by participants at the first session.

Please sign up in the Common Room, by calling the Church Office at 254-6048, or by email to Jeanie@stmichaelsvermont.org. Let us know if you need childcare!

EFMG

(EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY GRADUATES)

After graduating from EfM last June, many of us asked the question, “Now what?” Spending four years together in community, in study, in theological reflection, and in the sharing of our faith journeys week in and week out was not only a long-term commitment but one of significant growth individually and as a Christian community.

After conversations with the graduates and with the support of Joel, Anita Crosson and I said, “Let’s do it!” and so we now have EFMG. We meet every other week for study, prayer, and to be in community with each other. Using the model of EfM, each of us takes turns leading the discussions and officiating closing prayer.

Currently we are studying from the Old Testament using the Bible and other outside resources. Because we are not on a fixed time table in terms of study, we can go deeper into scripture, which is not only enlightening but much fun.

It is our hope that others who graduate from EfM in the future will join us to continue not only in Christian formation but, more importantly, to be in community with one another.

Sarah Benton



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

ABOUT KIDS SINGING

I've been singing with an increasingly large number of children after the 10:15 a.m. service for the last few weeks, and I'm thrilled to realize that St. Michael's has the promise of a really fine children's chorus. Not only do the kids enjoy singing, they enjoy one another's company—and they are starting to experience a growing sense of identity and community.

As we approached the holidays, I realized that many of the traditional Christmas carols that my generation took for granted as being commonly known are not familiarly known to these kids, in large part because most schools and music programs have dropped sacred carols and songs from their repertoire. Carols such as "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Angels We Have Heard on High," even "Silent Night" are not necessarily known by the majority of kids, or are only faintly familiar from that once-a-year hearing on Christmas Eve. To try to remedy that, I've been singing some of these carols with the kids, and I hope that when we sing them on Christmas Eve, they will have the excited spark of recognition that happens when we hear a familiar, well-loved song.

I'd like to encourage all of you parents to include carols and hymns as part of your home listening repertoire. I realize that I grew up listening to a wide variety of music in my home, from all the great swing bands and Mitch Miller leading folk songs to Artur

Rubenstein playing Chopin, and to this day I remember this music that I was exposed to in my young years. In fact, I think I know it far better than I do music that I've learned in the last decade! Kids have a broader sense of music appreciation than many adults realize, so I urge you not to limit them to "made specially for kids" material. Think about feeding your children's musical lives with a balanced diet, and let God have a place in it as well.

Amazon lists thousands of Christmas titles, and looking through it can be pretty exhausting! To get you started, I thought I'd make a short list of some holiday titles. Pop some corn, play a game, and put these on to enjoy with your whole family!

- The classical **traditional sound** sung by some of the best: *Classic Christmas Carols* (Choir of Kings College, Cambridge); *Songs of Angels Christmas Hymns and Carols* (Robert Shaw Chamber Singers)
- Very fresh and fun **indie rocker/singer**: *Songs for Christmas* (Sufjan Stevens)
- A couple of **jazz classics**: *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Vince Guaraldi Trio); *An Oscar Petersen Christmas*
- Still unbelievably wonderful: *The Christmas Album* (Nat King Cole)
- And our own local legend: *Noel Sing We Clear* (Tony Barrand et al.)

Susan Dedell

JANUARY LECTIONARY

Sunday, January 5: Jeremiah 31:7–14; Psalm 84:1–8; Ephesians 1:3–6, 15–19a; Matthew 2:1–12

Sunday, January 12: Isaiah 42:1–9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34–43; Matthew 3:13–17

Sunday, January 19: Isaiah 49:1–7; Psalm 40:1–12; 1 Corinthians 1:1–9; John 1:29–42

Sunday, January 26: Isaiah 9:1–4; Psalm 27:1, 5–13; 1 Corinthians 1:10–18; Matthew 4:12–23



ROTA FOR JANUARY

LITURGICAL ROTA FOR JANUARY 2014 • 8:00 AM AND 10:15 AM SUNDAY SERVICES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

Position	January 5	January 12	January 19	January 26
8:00 A.M. SERVICE				
Lay Assistant	Kate McGinn	Wayne Cook	Kate McGinn	Anita Crosson
Intercessor	Doug Switzer	Laura Lewis	Joanne Patalano	Anne Brown
Sacramental Healing	Sarah Benton	Jean Smith	Jean Smith	MJ Woodburn
Usher	Judy McGee	Anne Cook	Judy McGee	Anne Cook
10:15 A.M. SERVICE				
Crucifer	Miranda Smith	Peter Johnson	Annie Landenberger	Ricky Davidson
Torch Bearers	Thea Porter Rebecca Porter	Robin White-Diamondstone Joanne Patalano	Mikael Mattson Kierstan Landin	Jonah Johnson Andachew Mousin
Element Bearers	Craig Hammond & Liz Vick	Sherry Stimmel Linda Rice	Judy Walker Sue Dyer	Greg & Kelli Allen
Lay Assistant	Annamarie Pluhar	Sarah Benton	Greg Lesch	Brian Morgan
Lector	Jenny Karstad	Carolyn Taylor-Olson	Diana Bingham	Susanna Grannis
Intercessor	Mary Carnahan	Sarah Rich	Paul Moberly	Chris Chapman
Ushers	Andy & Elise Burrows	Vince Johnson Ricky Davidson	Michael & Susan Wilmott	Chris Hart Dick Burtis
Sacramental Healing	Trudy Crites Janet Cramer	MJ Woodburn Trudy Crites	Sarah Benton Janet Cramer	Betsy Bates Robin White-Diamondstone
Altar Guild	Mary Carnahan Betty Elwell Rebecca Olmstead Zadie Olmstead	Madelyn Howard Carol Hesselbach Lynn Billington	Madelyn Howard Carol Hesselbach Lynn Billington	Sue Dyer Elise Burrows Pat Laubach Judy Walker Laurie Chiperfield
Coffee Hour				Megan Buchanan
Counters	Judy McGee Anne Cook	Vince Johnson Wayne Cook	Ricky Davidson Jared Rediske	Sherry Stimmel Judith Hildreth

If you cannot make it, please find your own replacement; then call Jeanie in the Office at 802-254-6048, ext. 104. Thank you.





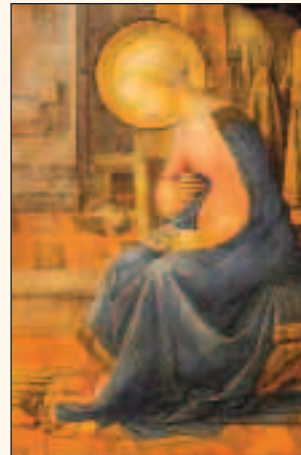
MILESTONES & TRANSITIONS

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- January 1 Dorothy Rice
 January 2 Wayne Wagenbach
 January 3 Frances Nevins, Tom Mousin
 January 5 Andy Burrows, Brenda Gilfillan
 January 10 Pat Cameron
 January 15 Bruce Griffin
 January 17 Cordelia Garofalo
 January 18 David Mattocks
 January 20 Miranda Smith
 January 21 Linda Neilson, Ralph Meima
 January 22 John Carnahan, Bill Morlock
 January 23 Dawn Kotapish
 January 24 Melia Allen
 January 26 Rebecca Olmstead, Andachew Mousin
 January 28 Gwen Mousin
 January 29 Paul Dedell, Peter van Wageningen,
 Rachel Cristofolini
 January 30 Megan Buchanan, Mark Genszler

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- January 25 Neil & Anne Montgomery
 January 27 Joe & Susanna Grannis



MARY: ADVENT

by Jim Crosson

Angel of God, what message hast thou brought?
 It seemed at first so clear:
 I would conceive . . .
 God's son.
 And truly, that did I,
 For new life forms
 Within whom never lay
 With man.
 But now that miracle is passed,
 I ponder what
 Obedience . . .
 Hath bought.
 Am I new Eve, whose holy fruit redeems
 From Death which first Eve brought,
 Or Mother Earth, whose womb brings forth
 The Life mankind hath sought?
 Handmaid of God yea, His Glory I do sing!
 And yet...
 Within me grows . . .
 Such fear!
 I wish the hardship won.
 Creant of Adam's rib, I hold heart's hope
 As only mother can,
 Yet knowing (by psalmist's word of old):
 Though He holds all ends of ages in his hand,
 The wondrous Son will be undone by Man!
 Am I to grieve then, and wait unseen
 While cruel death becomes His lot?
 Or dance in joy as he ascends the throne
 That God has wrought?



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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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

Please see front for Advent and Christmas services schedule

JANUARY 5—Christian Formation resumes

JANUARY 12—Budget review meetings

JANUARY 14—*My Bright Abyss* book study begins

JANUARY 19—Annual Parish Meeting

JANUARY 25—Contemplative Prayer class begins