



The Guardian

MARCH 2014

FROM THE RECTORY

Last year our Lenten series was called “Living Faithfully in a Culture of Violence.” We explored violence in our culture—domestic violence, bullying, violence in the media, violence in the Bible. This topic arose in response to the tragic shootings at the Sandy Hook School in Newtown, Connecticut. Lent seemed the right time to address honestly subjects that are difficult to face. Although these topics were not easy to discuss, there was a sense of comfort and support in struggling with them together, as a community of faith.

Last fall, Nicholas and Dorothy Porter and their two daughters, Thea and Rebecca, moved to Brattleboro. Nicholas, an Episcopal priest, had left his position as rector of Trinity Church in Southport, Connecticut, to devote himself full-time to a ministry called Jerusalem Peacebuilders, <http://jerusalempeacebuilders.org>. Jerusalem Peacebuilders is “an interfaith non-profit organization with the mission of creating a better future for humanity across religions, cultures, and nationalities. Our programs focus on uniting Palestinian, Israeli, and American youth and provide them with the opportunities and skills they will need to become future leaders for peace in their global communities.”

For our Lenten series this year, Nicholas is graciously putting together a series of evening lectures for St. Michael’s and for the wider community about the Middle East. We see this topic as a continuation of our series from last year—just as we explored issues of violence in our nation, we will explore the complexities of international conflict in the Middle East. We hope this series will help us to be better informed about the world, and offer a safe, supportive environment in which to address issues of violence and conflict on a global scale.

*Yours in Christ,
Mary*

ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVED MARCH 5

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. The liturgy, which involves the imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist, will be offered at three different times at St. Michael’s: 7:00 a.m., noon, and 5:30 p.m.



LENT AT ST. MICHAEL'S

ST. MICHAEL'S SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER MARCH 4

St. Michael's will once again be hosting the Shrove Tuesday (or Fat Tuesday as they call it in New Orleans) Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 4, from 5:30–7:00 p.m. in the Undercroft. The menu will include homemade pancakes with real Vermont maple syrup, sausage, fruit, and applesauce. The donation for the supper is \$5 per person or \$15 per family if you able. Please come and celebrate with your St. Michael's family. Remember we are not able to use our stove for frying because there is no exhaust system in the kitchen, so we need to borrow electric frying pans or electric griddles. If you have one that you could loan us for the evening of March 4, please bring it to church this Sunday, March 2, and leave it on the kitchen counter. Please mark it with your name to ensure a safe return. Thank you.



MIDDLE EAST FORUMS: LENTEN SERIES BEGINS MARCH 9

St. Michael's is teaming up with local organization Jerusalem Peacebuilders to offer a Lenten series that focuses on the peoples and challenges of the Middle East, beginning with the Adult Forum on Sunday, March 9. Below is a schedule of events.

You are welcome to attend any or all of the events. For the evening sessions, childcare will be provided from 6:15-8:00 p.m. in the Sunday School Room. All of the forums are open to the public, so please extend invitations to those in our wider community.

Our evening schedule will be:

- **Simple Supper:** 5:30–6:30 p.m. Come when you can for soup, sandwiches, and conversation in the Undercroft.
- **Evening Prayer:** 6:15–6:40 p.m. Come and worship in the beauty of holiness during this Lenten season. Worship held in the church.
- **Forum:** 6:45–8:00 p.m. A lecture and a time for questions in the Meeting Room.

Sunday morning, March 9 (Adult Forum)—Middle East Primer with Nicholas Porter, an Episcopal priest and founder and director of Jerusalem Peacebuilders. He has a master's degree in Middle East Studies from the American University in Cairo, a master's degree in War Studies from King's College at the University of London and an M.Div. from the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1995 and has served as curate at St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem and as sub-dean and canon pastor at the American Cathedral in Paris. He served as Rector of Trinity Church in Southport, Connecticut, from 2006–2013.

Tuesday evening, March 11—Shattered Mosaic: Refugees in the Middle East Crises led by Christopher George of Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS). IRIS is a program of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut and is the local affiliate of Episcopal Migration Ministries and the Immigration and Refugee Program of Church World Service. IRIS resettles approximately 200 refugees each year and provides some services to asylees and other immigrants. Currently, IRIS' refugee clients come from Afghanistan, Congo, Cuba, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and other countries.

Tuesday evening, March 18—The Future's Hinge: Afghanistan and the 2014 Future led by Marin Strmecki, Senior Vice President and Director of Programs of the Smith Richardson Foundation in Westport, Connecticut. He has recently worked in a variety of advisory capacities in the U.S. government, serving as the Afghanistan Policy Coordinator and as a Special Advisor on Afghanistan in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 2003 to 2005; an advisor to Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad in Afghanistan and Iraq from 2004 to 2007; and as a Policy Counselor at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations.

Tuesday evening, March 25—A Land Divided: Israel-Palestine led by Phillip Wilcox, President of the Foundation for Middle East Peace. In the U.S. Foreign Service, he served in Laos, Indonesia, Bangladesh and, most recently, in Jerusalem as U.S. Consul General. In the Department of State, Wilcox has served in the Bureau for Middle Eastern and



LENT AT ST. MICHAEL'S

South Asian Affairs as Director for Regional Affairs, Director for Israeli and Arab-Israeli Affairs and as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs. He also served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research and as Ambassador at Large and Coordinator for Counter Terrorism.

Sunday morning, March 30 (Adult Forum) Devil's Play: Syria and Identity Politics led by Nicholas Porter.



PLEASE SIGN UP TO HELP WITH THE LENTEN DINNERS

For our simple suppers during the Tuesday evening series, St. Michael's will provide fixings for sandwiches, but we are hoping two or three people will bring a pot of soup to each dinner. We also need help with set-up, shopping, and clean-up. Please sign up in the Common Room. Thank you for your help!

BIBLE STUDY ON PHILIPPIANS BEGINS MARCH 15

Come learn how to have a deeper understanding of Scripture by spending five weeks looking at Paul's letter to the Philippians, starting March 15 in the Meeting Room on Saturday mornings from 9:30–10:30 a.m. If you have never done a Bible study or read the Bible every day, this study will teach you to look at Scripture in a refreshing new way, drawing you into a more meaningful relationship with God. The study will be led by Darcey Mercier. Please contact her at dorram@sover.net if you have any questions. Sign-up available in the Common Room or by calling St. Michael's office at 254-6048, x104.



NEWS OF THE PARISH

REPORT FROM THE VESTRY RETREAT

What a beautiful weekend to spend in prayerful meditation and fellowship! On February 21, the St. Michael's Vestry traveled to Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, New York, and spent time together looking at the upcoming year (and a bit beyond). Included in our discussions were reflection on last fall's "Dream-catching 2.0" as well as a recap of the last five years in general. "Where have we been?" and "Where are we going?" were just a couple of questions that we explored. Between our meetings we also shared the Daily Office with the monks of Holy Cross, who really are some of the sweetest people. Oh, and did I mention the food? Welcome was made to our two newest members, Sarah Benton and Richard Cogliano, and we had numerous opportunities to share thoughts, hopes, and insights with each other. We look forward to a good year serving St. Michael's!

Jenny Karstad for the Vestry

REPORT ON THE INTERFAITH POVERTY WORKSHOP

The February 8 workshop on poverty held at Centre Congregational Church and hosted by the Brattleboro Interfaith Council was a profound experience for seven of us from St. Michael's and some 25 others from other congregations. The subtitle of the workshop, the cornerstone of the day, was "solving the problems versus treating the symptoms." Angela Berkfield led us through several small and larger group discussions, showed a moving video, and challenged us to leave with an action plan for our churches. We seven (Valerie Abrahamsen, Joe Grannis, Susanna Grannis, Joel Hill, Lori Palmer, Joyce Vining Morgan, and Susan Nichols) are eager to talk with you about this. To that end, will be announcing a series of activities to engage us in dialogue and action. In the meantime, are you ready for a Lenten challenge? It's coming. Sometime during Lent. Read the Sunday bulletins.

Joel Hill



NEWS OF THE PARISH

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST MARCH 22

Please join the women of St. Michael's for our monthly breakfast on March 22 from 8:30–10:00 a.m. Please bring a breakfast dish to share. And bring a friend!

We are fortunate to have Susan Venman as our presenter on *Letting Go: Organizing Strategies for Living*. Lent invites a journey of reflection, self-examination, and letting go. Yet so often our journeys are hindered by the weight of everything we carry. Fear, grief, disappointment, resentment, and anger can cause us to stumble and even stop us in our tracks. Adding to this emotional burden is the household clutter each of us has accumulated over the years. It's difficult to discern your path in life when you are surrounded by stacks of paper, piles of books, unfinished projects, and just too much stuff.

In Letting Go: Organizing Strategies for Living you will learn simple, straightforward strategies for de-cluttering and organizing your home or office. Susan Venman, professional coach-organizer and owner of Breathing Space: Home & Office Organizing (www.breathing-space.com), will lead the discussion on issues and solutions. She offers a step-by-step plan to create efficient spaces that maximize available storage and streamline workflow. Bring your questions. This is an interactive workshop where your specific concerns will be addressed.



FOYER GROUPS: A GREAT WAY TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER

I've become a champion of supper groups, or Foyer Groups as we call them at St. Michael's, and here's how I came to write about this. Over five weeks in January and February I was in the book group on *My Bright Abyss* with about ten others, led by Mary, our Rector. We had a great time not only exploring things like the language(s) of faith and how suffering affects our beliefs and who God is to each of us, but also in getting to know one another on a deeper and more enjoyable level than we ever have a chance to do

sitting in a pew or at coffee hour. At the end of our last book session several people spoke about how nice it would be to be able to continue as a group, to continue to explore our faith as the new friends we've become.

There's a way to do this, as I've discovered. I've been in a supper group now for two years, and that's exactly what I've come to have, to share, and to really enjoy, even love, about breaking bread together several times a year. There are ten of us. Last Passover we celebrated Passover with our own Seder. We've helped one another through illnesses and grief, discovered common ground we never imagined, pot-lucked Indian, Middle Eastern, Italian, and Israeli meals, and laughed a whole bunch. We give one another recipes, plants, tools, rides, and always, always time, whatever comes up. We've become close and always relish the next time.

So, my friends, why not consider putting together your own supper group? Include those you hardly know. Discover once again the kindness of strangers. You'll never regret it. For ideas, for help, for more information speak to Lori Palmer, who's been heading up this effort for some time, or to me, or to any others you know in a supper group.

Craig Hammond



PARISH FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Operating Income/Expenses for January 2014

Total Pledges Received:
\$18,000 vs. Budget of \$18,330 (98.2% of Budget)
Total Operating Income:
\$33,849 vs. Budget of \$26,712 (126.7% of Budget)
Total Operating Expenses:
\$23,632 vs. Budget of \$32,177 (73.4%)



OUR MISSION & WORK

EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

**COMMUNITY MEETING
WITH MISSION AND OUTREACH MARCH 3**

St. Michael's parishioners are invited to a special meeting with the St. Michael's Mission and Outreach Team on Monday, March 3, at 5:15 p.m. Come and give your feedback about the St. Michael's current and future outreach efforts. We want to hear from you!



FIVE RISKS OF NOT HAVING A WILL

1. You lose control of the distribution of your assets. The court will determine how your assets are distributed to your heirs based on the laws in force in your locality.
2. No charitable or educational donations will be considered.
3. Taxes, fees, and expenses will be charged and could substantially reduce your estate.
4. It may take considerable time for your estate to be resolved and assets distributed.
5. You will have missed the opportunity to direct your estate toward the people, institutions, and causes of your lifetime interests.

Please be good stewards of your gifts. Make sure you have a will!

The Planned Giving Committee

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!



ADULT FORUM SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

March 2, *Reflections on the Vestry Retreat*—Members of the Vestry (the elected leaders of St. Michael's) will talk about their retreat at Holy Cross Monastery. Come hear what insights came out of their time of prayerful reflection.

March 9, *"A Middle East Primer"*—Led by Nicholas Porter. (See the article about our Lenten series for more information.)

March 16, 23 and April 6, *"Journey Through Lent"*—St. Michael's clergy will lead a series of Forums on the liturgies of the Lenten season: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. The topics and leaders for each Sunday will be published in upcoming email blasts and Sunday bulletins.

March 30, *"Devil's Play: Syria and Identity Politics"*—Led by Nicholas Porter.

You do not have to be a member of St. Michael's to attend a forum; all are welcome! If you have suggestions for forum topics, please contact any member of the committee: Bill Ames, Nancy Barber, Joel Hill, Mary Lindquist, Annamarie Pluhar, Ruth Tilghman, and Phillip Wilson.

WISDOM FROM THE TRADITION

O how inexpressible is the love and compassion and mercy of the Lord! He makes himself like a bird, so that the wandering soul can take refuge under his wings. The lifegiving Word says, 'How often have I desired to gather you as a bird gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused.' See, he has stretched out his wings and is waiting for the soul to come and rest under his wings.

The Macarian Homilies, 4th century



WANTED:

Kids who sing like angels

We are a very special lot.



Announcing the new **St. Michael's Choir School** beginning March 4th

St. Michael's Episcopal Church is thrilled to be starting a free afterschool program for children ages 7-11. The program will meet at on Tuesdays 3:45-4:45 pm.

The Choir School is led by well-known choral director Susan Dedell, and is open to all children regardless of religious affiliation, or level of musical ability.

The young singers will learn posture and breathing, tone quality and intonation, and notation basics for both pitch and rhythm. We will sing spiritual music from a variety of material drawn from both the classical repertoire as well as from contemporary and world music.

The St. Michael's Choir school offers children:

- An opportunity to develop musical skills
- An opportunity to learn sacred music from many different traditions
- An opportunity to develop teamwork and leadership skills
- An opportunity to have fun !

St. Michael's Episcopal Church is located at the corner of Bradley Avenue and Putney Road in Brattleboro, VT. www.stmichaelsvermont.org 802-254-6048

MARCH LECTIONARY

- Sunday, March 2:** Exodus 24: 12–18; Psalm 2 or 99; 2 Peter 1:16–21; Matthew 17:1–9
- Sunday, March 9:** Genesis 2:15–17, 3:1–7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12–19; Matthew 4:1–11
- Sunday, March 16:** Genesis 12:1–4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1–5, 13–17; John 3:1–17
- Sunday, March 23:** Exodus 17:1–7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1–11; John 4:5 –42
- Sunday, March 30:** 1 Samuel 16:1–13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8–14; John 9:1–41



MILESTONES & TRANSITIONS

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March 2	Susan Kochinskas
March 3	Christine Hart
March 5	Jodi Clark
March 6	Wayne Cook
March 7	Danny Herres
March 9	Eric Potter, Martin Leggott
March 11	Teri Robinson
March 14	Mimi Lilly
March 15	Michael Doty-Tolaro
March 16	Chris Chapman
March 18	Katherine Wagenbach
March 19	Ken Neilson, Karen Guthrie
March 20	Kurt Wagenbach, Bob Walker
March 21	Robert Kochinskas, Rick Gerdus
March 22	Joel Hill
March 24	James Wilmott, Joan Pinilla
March 25	Kate LeBlanc
March 26	Marilyn Benton, Trevor Borek
March 28	Tom Woodbury, Elizabeth Moore
March 29	Alan Dann, Braeden Smith
March 30	Craig Newbert
March 31	Jan Bennett

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

March 1	Ellen & Chris Lovell
March 7	Elizabeth Vick & Craig Hammond
March 10	Devin Starlanyl & Rick Gerdus
March 12	Nancy & Jeffrey Durborow
March 23	Kate & Dana McGinn

VESTRY

OF ST. 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

MARCH 3—Community gathering with Outreach Team, 5:15 p.m.

MARCH 4—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5:30 p.m.

MARCH 5—Ash Wednesday Services 7:00 a.m., noon, 5:30 p.m.

MARCH 9—Lenten Evening Series on Middle East begins, 9:00 a.m.

MARCH 15—Bible study on Philippians begins, 9:30 a.m.