

The Grapevine ~ November 2002

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

Dear Friends of St. Andrew's:

It is hard to believe that by the time we are reading this edition of the Grapevine, it is November. We've set the clocks back, turned the heat on, and are making plans for Thanksgiving. This year, I think we have much to be thankful for. Some of the many blessings that come to mind:

We have a wonderful Interim Rector in the person of John Bonell. John has been a source of inspiration for many of us, provocative in his willingness to question and make us question. He has brought us Adult Education, family worship, and reminded us that we didn't need an organ to sing the Lord's praises.

We have a new organist that brings with him a creative mind and huge enthusiasm for the development of the music program. It is exciting to hear Christopher Maynard discuss with the Music Committee some of the possibilities for the future. And best of all, we will be graced with beautiful music for the holidays! (Ed. note: Chris

plans to have the Choir rehearse for a few weeks before they begin - probably the first Sunday in Advent. In the meantime, enjoy the wonderful music!)



Happy Thanksgiving!

We have a dedicated Church School Director in Val Carey. Val has been tireless in her work with both teachers and children, preparing a curriculum that provides education, values, and spirituality for our younger members.

We have a dynamic and hardworking Vestry. The group has coalesced, and the camaraderie makes the work less stressful. Each of our members has risen to the challenge of keeping

St. Andrew's operational. Further, we've been able to see the needs outside of our congregation, and focus some time, energy, and resources on supporting the efforts of the Arlington Neighborhood.

We have a beautiful, historic building in the heart of downtown Methuen. And we are working to make it more attractive, more inviting, and more accessible. Struc-

(Continued on page 2)

Reminder:
The new church schedule is
8am for Rite 1 Holy
Communion (thee and thou)
9am for Christian Education
10am Rite II Holy Eucharist
service and fellowship
afterward in the Parish Hall.
All are welcome!

In Memory of...

Memorial Fund

John E. Hoyle
Kenneth Shaw

Building Preservation Memorial Fund

John A. Crosbie

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To contact the Grapevine for articles, please call 978-686-0840 or e-mail the editor, Cynthia J. Sulesky at Grapevine@StAndrewsMethuen.org or leave a message in the "Grapevine" folder on the Rector's door.

To inform the Grapevine of address changes, or to add or cancel a subscription, please contact the Church Office at 978-689-0463 and leave a message.

Visit St. Andrew's Church on line!
OctobGo to <http://www.StAndrewsMethuen.org>

tural repairs, yard clean-ups, the memorial garden, and new lights in the parish hall are all making a difference.

We have each other. St. Andrew's is full of friendships- new and old. We share a love for God and a desire to grow in our spiritual life. We share the joys of new life, the sorrows of life ended, the hope for a world better for our having been a part of it.

St. Andrew's has seen its share of hard times and disappointments. But the next time you are inclined to complain or find fault, stop and remember just some of the many gifts God has provided us and say a prayer of Thanksgiving instead! And keep these gifts in mind as you give prayerful consideration to your Pledge this month, and how you will support the Church and its work. It is only when we give freely that we are open to the immense love and joy of the Lord!

In Christ,

Laura

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed!

Please sign the sheet posted at the end of the coffee table.

To promote our church as a "welcoming" congregation, each family - whether single, couples, or "married with children" - of St. Andrews are encouraged to sign up for one (or more) Coffee Hour. It is VERY welcoming to offer coffee and a little snack after church!

The Bishop Barbara C. Harris

Woven into our lives, indeed

Gleaned from the October issue of the Episcopal Times.

This will be my final column for The Episcopal Times, and it was intended to be a reflection on my transition into retirement. In some sense it might be regarded as such. As a child, I frequently heard my grandmother offer a folksy expression that it took me some years to understand. She often would say: “Circumstances alter conditions.” Indeed circumstances do alter conditions, and a particular circumstance has altered the condition under which I write this reflection.

In early September I was invited to a luncheon at St. Peter’s Church in Weston. Some 80 women—mostly modest ladies in my own age group, whom I would hazard a guess you would not generally encounter at most major diocesan events—came to celebrate my ministry and presented me with a magnificent quilt, made up of beautiful squares hand stitched by literally hundreds of people throughout the diocese. Nearly 90 congregations, along with the Society of St. Margaret, the Order of St. Anne and the Union of Black Episcopalians, contributed to this labor of love by designing, creating and submitting the squares that were framed and hand quilted. While I will never know or be able to name all the people who contributed to this work of art, the participation of many is recorded in a wonderful scrapbook made up of notes and cards from the contributing congregations describing the designers, designs and those who stitched them. There is also a photo album that documents the entire process of the quilt’s creation.

The project was conceived by the Rev. Juliana Anderson and the Rev. Carol Flett, the rector of St. Peter’s Church in Weston, who guided the process to completion. The Rev. Ms. Flett provided the space where a core group of quilters worked for 11 months

to bring the quilt into being. Women from many other congregations joined in the work. Beyond that, they shared meals and life stories and made new friendships.

The label on the back of the quilt, beautifully stitched onto a replica of a mitre, begins with the words: “You are woven into our lives.” What a tribute. What a gift of love and Christian affection which the apostle Paul admonishes us to express in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. As the dedication was read aloud, dissolved in tears I realized what this transition into retirement is all about.

It is about a soft good-bye to a host of fellow Christians whom I have carried in my heart and in my prayers for the past 13 years. It is about entrusting to others the pastoral concern I have tried to express to clergy and laity of this wonderful little corner of the vineyard we know as the Diocese of Massachusetts. It is about having known the support and affirmation in ministry given by the people of this diocese to an outsider whom they embraced as one of their own. It is about having listened and learned of the varied ministries exercised by the laity and clergy in eastern Massachusetts—and beyond—that help to sustain and empower those on the margins—the least, the lost and the left out. It is about the love of Jesus.

Certainly this transition is more than an incredibly beautiful quilt and other tangible expressions I already have received with deep gratitude—icons (one of which was expertly executed by young children), paintings, an authentic bean pot, cards, letters and monetary gifts—it is a treasury of memories, great and good, of an opportunity to serve and to be served and to bear witness that the Good News of Jesus Christ can be lived out day by

(Continued on next page)



day with those who claim him as Saviour and Lord and with those whose faith in the God of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, the God of Isaac and Rebekah, and the God of Jacob, Rachael and Leah weaves our lives together in ways that inextricably bind us in ties that not even death can sever.

And so I would close this final column, as I do most sermons and addresses, with a favorite and old familiar hymn:

*"Bless be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above*

*"Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.*

*"We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear,*

*"When we asunder part
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again."*

Alleluia, Amen!

Bishop Suffragan-Elect

Ordination and Consecration of the Rev. Gayle Elizabeth Harris



The Rev. Gayle Elizabeth Harris has been the Rector of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Church in Rochester, New York, since 1992. Formerly an Adjunct Professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, she taught a course on the life and

mission of contemporary Anglican parishes. Before 1992, she was the priest-in-charge at the Holy Communion Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.

A graduate and former trustee and Alumni Council president of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, she has served on many diocesan committees in Rochester; she was on the Dean Search Committee for the National Cathedral, and was President and member of the Standing Committee, and on the Suffragan Bishop Nominating Committee in Washington, D.C. The Rev. Harris has also been a Deputy to the 1997 and 2000 General Conventions, and on the Board of Trustees of the Church Pension Fund.

She is married to the Rev. Peter W. Peters, Ph.D. They have three adult children and one grandchild.

Ordination and Consecration

When: January 18, 2003, 11:00 a.m.

Where: Trinity Church, Copley Square

Who: Congregations in the diocese will shortly receive information with details regarding attendance and seating at this event.

Questions? Email smcarthur@diomass.org

Community Involvement

"Family Food"

- Cereal (all kinds)
- Spaghetti / Pasta
- Jars/Cans of Spaghetti sauce
- Canned vegetables
- Canned soups
- Tuna

And in "cash" form:

- Bread (money to buy it fresh)
- Milk (money to buy fresh)

Please help us support this project. Contact Peggy Baker, Len Brown, Tom Baker, or David Marsh. (See back page.)

Stewardship: Together We Grow

"All that we are and all that we have has come from God, and still belongs to God and is to be used for God's glory."

-from a parish stewardship letter

All members of the St. Andrew's community are asked to contribute financially, as best as they are able, to the work of the parish. Below are some frequently asked questions about pledging...

What is a pledge? - As a form of Christian stewardship, a pledge is an undertaking to contribute a specific amount to the support of St. Andrew's parish and its ministries for the coming year. Your pledge can be fulfilled in weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual payments. Pledges can be paid by check for accurate recording, and you can use the weekly pledge envelopes provided to each pledger at the beginning of the year. Pledge contributions can be placed in the collection plate on Sundays or mailed to the parish office. Although all contributions to St. Andrew's are welcome, in any form and at any time, making a pledge implies a commitment to the ongoing life of the parish.

How much should I pledge? - That is a matter between you and God. Theologically, we believe that everything we have is a gift from God, and that our task as baptized people is to "keep the gift moving" - to share what we have so that more can be given. *"All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."*

Isn't so much focus on money unchristian? - That depends on how you define focus. If focus means a preoccupation with money for its own sake, then it is indeed unchristian. As Jesus said, you cannot worship both God and money. But it is striking how often Jesus used stories about money in a positive way to talk about the nature of Christian love. In the New Testament writings, money is sacramental. The way we use our money

- whether we hoard it or take risks with it; whether we focus on it for its own sake or see it as a means to further God's love in the world - speaks volumes about how we regard our lives, and our relationship to the God who is the source of all we have, not just our money.

What is proportional giving? - Rather than choose a fixed sum to pledge every year, one prayerfully and realistically determines what proportion of income to set aside for ministry, and then pledges accordingly. The proportion will vary from person to person, and over time. Some may start at 1%, others at 3% or 4%, others may seek over several years to approach the Biblical standard of 10%. We give back in gratitude to God a fair proportion of the gifts we have been given.

Do I have to pledge to be a member of St. Andrew's? - No, anyone who walks through our doors and worships with us regularly is considered a member. We hope all who consider themselves members will make a pledge.

Who knows how much I pledge? Does the rector know? - At St. Andrew's, your pledge is confidential. Only the treasurer and pledge recorder know how much anyone pledges, and that is only so a record of your pledge history can be sent to you at year's end for tax purposes. The information is available to no one else. The rector does not know what you pledge, only whether you pledge. The confidentiality of our pledges is crucial to our life we must contribute to the parish ourselves. Strong pledging marks an important difference between a parish that is dying and one that is alive and growing in the ministry of Christ in the world. *Ed Note: Thanks to St. George's Durham for the information*

**Altar Guild Seeks to Welcome
New Members!!**

Please see Gail Ratcliffe, or any
Altar Guild member
after the 10 o'clock service.