



The Grapevine

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

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church
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November/December 2010

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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,

This will be the last Grapevine edition before the first of the year. It hardly seems possible that it's Thanksgiving already. It has been quite a year for St. Andrew's. The time has flown.

First, thank you to everyone for making my recent Institution as your rector a Spirit-filled experience. Whether you were among the many who prepared for the celebration, or attended, or kept us in your prayers while others attended, each of you in your own way made it exciting and memorable. One of my dreams

about ministry, becoming a rector, has now come true.

The coming months can be an emotional rollercoaster, both in church terms and in broader life terms. In the church, we move from the happy time of gratitude to God for our blessings on Thanksgiving, through a somewhat somber penitential season of Advent, then to the joy of celebrating Christmas. The world encourages us to be constantly "up" at this time of year. At first glance, Advent seems out of step. But maybe that's the point. Advent encourages us to avoid the secular temptation to think of the coming months in solely material ways that involve mega shopping, goods and parties. Advent calls us to be quiet and reflect on who we really are in relation to God, and what it really means to be people of God. Part of that is acknowledging that we sometimes get it wrong, but God loves us nevertheless. God loves us so much that God chose to bring us salvation personally by birth as the baby Jesus. We ask ourselves the question, how might we celebrate this through lives turned more toward our Savior? Advent helps us remember these things. Advent helps us truly prepare for Christmas.

Elsewhere in this Grapevine you will read about lots of other parish news. One vital item is our stewardship effort. Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas are good times to reflect on ways that our faith can bear fruit, and be a lively faith, by participation in our community of faith through gifts of our time, talent and treasure. One good basic way is to come to church. It's a wonderful gift to give your self, and to everyone else who finds joy in gathering together for worship in prayer, and nourishment in Holy Communion. There are many personal acts of charity to consider by involvement in

parish ministries. We certainly could use more help. A ministry fair on Sunday November 21st will celebrate and illustrate this. There is also participation through your response to our annual pledge drive. Talking about money feels awkward at times. But the truth is that without it, St. Andrew's cannot offer what it now does, let alone delve into additional ministries and activities. Please be prayerfully generous.

My Christmas letter will come out after Thanksgiving. So, for now I'll wish you the best for that holiday. May God bless you abundantly, and may you give God thanks.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Rev. Joe +

FROM OUR SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Friends:

Autumn is upon us – the time of year when the leaves turn, the days grow shorter, a chill is in the air and we talk about stewardship. St. Andrew's is a lively faith community blessed with many people doing much good work. Most of that good work is made possible only through the generosity of our members and we are grateful for your financial support during the past year. We are fully aware of the uncertain economic times in which we live and acknowledge that some of us have had to stretch to fulfill our financial commitments to St. Andrew's.

The highlights from last year's pledge campaign are as follows:

- Total pledging units = 50
- Total amount pledged = \$47,580
- Average Annual Pledge = \$951
- 26% of Pledges fall in the \$0-\$5 per week range (annualized \$0-\$260)
- 9 Increased Pledges; 5 Decreased Pledges

How exciting it was to see 9 increases in these economic times!

Your generous financial contributions have helped keep our lively faith over the last year in many ways, including:

- our Sunday morning service
- our newly-instituted Rector
- our Sunday School, including a summer VBS program
- our Parish secretary, sexton and organist
- our availability to all who come through our doors with pastoral needs
- providing a safe meeting space for neighborhood groups
- providing a venue for special needs dances
- providing a food pantry for our neighbors in need
- having fun as we gather for fellowship and fundraising

Our goals for the upcoming year include:

- Increasing our total annual pledge amount to \$50,000. That translates into an increase of only \$0.94 per pledging unit per week. That is a very achievable goal!
- Increasing our total number of pledging units to 53. Fifty-three pledging units would take us to our number for 2009. **If you are currently contributing to our loose offering, please consider signing a pledge card.** With your pledge in hand, we can count you for budgeting purposes.

Truth be told, friends, it takes money to keep our faith lively. If we are to continue to offer the programs and services we all know and love, as well as have hope for a bright and lively future, we need your financial commitment. The Vestry uses your signed pledge card to set our budget for the next year. We are happy to accept your pledge payment annually, monthly, or weekly. We can also accept electronic payments from those of you who use your bank's bill pay feature.

We have planned a series of stewardship events for the weeks leading up to our annual pledge card Sunday which we hope will give you the information and inspiration you need for careful and prayerful consideration of your pledge for next year. Those events are described elsewhere in this issue and we

hope that you will also find the time to participate. For our homebound and anyone who may wish to get a jump on the December 5th deadline for turning in your pledge card, we are also including a copy of the card in this issue. Please fill it out and then return it to the church to the attention of our Pledge Recorder.

With a grateful heart,
Janet

FROM THE TREASURER

Income: \$91,339
Expenses: \$77,012

Pledge payments to date: \$39,227.19; 98% of total pledged

Thank you to everyone for keeping your pledges current. That plus our rents being properly managed and current, place us in a good income situation. Everyone has been working to keep costs down too. Thank you. We are in a good position as we prepare for our winter bills and some necessary maintenance to our properties.

Lastly, I want to thank Paula Campbell, Patti Eldred and all who worked on the rummage sale, which contributed \$985 to our bottom line. To put it in perspective, that is equivalent to a weekly pledge of almost \$19. The whole parish appreciates their efforts.

Jim Beagan



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Bishop Tom Shaw will be visiting St. Andrew's on Saturday, December 4th. A light luncheon will follow the service with an opportunity for Q&A with Bishop Tom. Bishop Tom will also be meeting with the confirmation class and Vestry during his visit. We hope you'll find a few hours in what we know is a

very busy time of year for everyone to be present for Bishop Tom's visit.

HAVE YOU SEEN...

The November issue of Methuen Life? There is a nice article, complete with pictures, of the Blessing of the Animals service we held at Methuen's Greycourt Park in early October. Free copies are available on newsstands around town. You may also see the November edition online at www.methuenlife.com.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL FLOWERS



Christmas Memorial Flower offerings are due by December 15th. Anyone wishing to have loved ones mentioned in the Christmas bulletin should fill out one of the Christmas Memorial Offering Envelopes which will be located on the tables at the entrances to the church or may be requested from the office. Please see someone on the Altar Guild if you have questions.

IMPORTANT STEWARDSHIP DATES *KEEP YOUR FAITH LIVELY*

December 5th

Stewardship Sunday -- Come see a Powerpoint presentation in church and turn in your pledge card.

November 21st

Ministry Fair -- Come learn about the many ways in which you can keep your faith lively.

November 14th

Stewardship Skit -- Our Sunday school children will perform a stewardship-themed skit during the 9:30 service.

November 7th

Kickoff Sunday -- Come hear Rev. Joe's thoughts on stewardship.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FLEA MARKET

Many thanks to our chairwomen, Paula Campbell and Patti Eldred, and the many volunteers who helped make this year's flea market a big success. Special thanks also go to the folks who donated homemade soups and baked goods for the event. As is always the case, we heard many compliments about the food that comes out of our kitchen. It was also great to see a few of our newcomers participate in this event. In addition to great fun and fellowship, we added about \$1000 to our general budget. Thank you!



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Robert Pauley, Madeline McKeon and Hannah McDonald (Janet McDonald's daughter) on being selected for this year's Academic Bowl team at the Timony Grammar School. Academic Bowl is a 5-month long academic competition involving 300+ 7th and 8th grade students from Methuen, Lawrence, Andover and North Andover. Go Robert, Madeline and Hannah!



ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 5th

Hanging of the Greens follows the 9:30 service

Sunday, Dec. 12th

Lessons and Carols during the 9:30 service

Sunday, Dec. 19th

Christmas Pageant during the 9:30 service

Friday, Dec. 24th (Christmas Eve)

6:30pm Family Service with music

10:45 pm Eucharist with music

(Each Christmas Eve service will begin with a carol sing.)

Saturday, Dec. 25th (Christmas)

9am Rite II without music

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



Saint Andrew's Sunday school will be performing the Christmas Pageant "Love Came Down at Christmas" on December 19, 2010 during the 9:30AM service. We need actors, stage crew, set people, costume helpers, and readers/speakers. Sign-up sheets will be available during coffee hour on 11/14. Practices will be held on November 21st and 28th with a full dress rehearsal on December 12th. Costumes will be assigned after church on November 21st. Parents and others wishing to help out should contact MaryEllen Briggs or Valerie Carey.

ALL THINGS GREEN



Please speak to Jim Beagan or Janet Ratcliffe if you are interested in joining them on St. Andrew's newly formed Green Committee. We'll be exploring the new Green Grants Initiative program offered by the Diocese and ways that we might utilize it to reduce St. Andrew's carbon footprint. We taken some steps in this regard with the installation of our restroom hand dryers and the use of the paper recycling bin in the parking lot, but there is much more work to be done. All hands are welcome. This is a great opportunity for any of our young people who are interested in environmental matters and may also be looking for a service project.

Also, please see the information that follows regarding the NOAH challenge. Free home energy audits are available!



TAKE THE NOAH CHALLENGE

LOWER YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT & YOUR ENERGY BILL

- ❖ *NOAH spent 120 YEARS building an ark!*
- ❖ *CAN YOU TAKE 5 MINUTES TO SCHEDULE A FREE ENERGY ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR HOME OR HOUSE OF WORSHIP?*

- ❖ *NOAH spent 10 MONTHS IN AN ARK to save creation!*
- ❖ *CAN YOU LOWER YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT to help save creation & to save yourself some money?*

- ❖ *NOAH gathered 2 of EVERY KIND OF ANIMAL!*
- ❖ *CAN YOU PERSUADE 2 OTHER PEOPLE TO TAKE THE CHALLENGE?*

THE CONGREGATION THAT SIGNS UP THE MOST PEOPLE
WINS A FREE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ASSESSMENT
By Mass. Interfaith Power & Light

- 1 -- **SIGN UP:** Go to www.MIPandL.org & click on the **NOAH CHALLENGE**
- 2 -- Enlist two others to take the challenge

WHO

Customers of major electric or gas utilities who live in 1-4 unit buildings.

WHAT

FREE HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENT including

- **Free CFLs, faucet aerators & efficient showerheads**

REBATES

- **75% instant rebate up to \$2,000** for insulation;
- 100% up to \$2,000 for Boston residents if income >60% & <120% of median)
- \$500 -- for ductless mini-split heat pumps
- \$300 or \$400 -- for central A/C or heat pump (depending on efficiency)
- \$200 – for swimming pool pumps
- \$ 50 – for refrigerators & freezers

LOANS

- **0% to 3% APR loans up to \$15,000** for heating, and hot water system & control upgrades, insulation, air sealing and duct system improvements.

FEDERAL TAX CREDITS

- **30% of the cost of energy efficiency** measures (capped at \$1,500) OR
- **30% of the cost of renewable energy systems** like solar (not capped)

HOW

Log on to www.MIP&L.org and click on the **NOAH CHALLENGE**,
or
Mail in the registration form.

Cut the form below and mail it to MIP&L, 197 Herrick Rd., Suite 22, Newton MA 02459



Name

Daytime Phone

Address (Street, Town, State & Zip)

Heating fuel
(Gas, oil, propane, or elec.)

Do you Own or Rent?

Email Address

MEMORIALS



Organ Memorial Fund

Robert McMichael

Music Memorial Fund

Rene A. Miville



Pledge Card

I/We want to keep my/our faith lively and pledge the following the St. Andrew's for 2011:

Total Annual Amount of \$ _____ to be paid:

\$ _____ weekly

_____ I/We wish to use envelopes.

\$ _____ monthly

_____ I/We would like information on electronic giving.

\$ _____ quarterly

\$ _____ semi-annually OR

\$ _____ in one lump sum.

Name (Print): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____

It is important that we receive your card no later than December 5th. Please bring this card to church that day or mail it to us at:

**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
90 Broadway
Methuen, MA 01844
Attn: Pledge Recorder**