



St. Michael's Newsletter

Come and See:

December 2013

From the Associate

Rector

AN ADVENT MESSAGE...

Saturday was my favorite day of the week as a child. I would wake up before the sun rose and wait for the household to rise with the sunshine. I think of Advent like that. We wait in anticipation of the dawn of a new age that arrives with the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

The season of Advent is the darkest time of the year, the days are short; flowers and bushes are covered and sheltered from the winter cold. We wait for the light to increase. Most of us don't realize that the Christian Calendar follows the pagan custom of celebrating the "coming of light" on the 21st of December, the Winter Solstice. It is no coincidence that Christmas is celebrated at the same time. Jesus is the Light of the World, we celebrate his birth simultaneously with the earth's orbit.

Advent is a season of waiting, knowing that the "light of the world" will increase. And that Jesus is about to enter the world, our world. If we keep our focus on that event, the greatest event of all time, then we will understand that the Christmas tree and all the hype about buying and getting gifts is dwarfed by comparison.

I pray each Advent Season for the strength to not be driven by commercialism and to center myself on the real excitement that is the coming of Christ into the world. I pray for all of us at St Michael's, that we may be impressed with the sacred blessing of this wonderful season and not be overwhelmed by the secular world that so dominates our lives. I pray that we may be alive and awake to the light of Christ that is coming into our world once again.

A divinity school professor once said it like this, "The joy of the Lord is like a long low chuckle." May we come to Christmas assured of that precious joy and shelter it from all that pulls us away.

Blessings,
The Rev. Dr. Joyce Caggiano

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About the Parish

Deaths:

Eleanor R. Beaty, 88, of Fernandina Beach, FL, passed away early morning on November 10th.

Wreath Making

Toy Drive

NOTES from NOLA

By the time this Newsletter arrives, lots will have happened! Three planning meetings will have been held for the trip, Café du Monde will have visited St Michael's, and beautiful Christmas ornaments will have been finished by both adults and the church school. And many thanks are in order –

Margery Buckingham and her sister, Kathy, Lana Agnew, Sheila Monks, and Martha Cotton for crafting the beautiful star ornaments designed by Margery. These will be for sale during December as our one fundraisers and are the only financial support from the parish aside from the generous donation from the Outreach Commission endowment fund. They make wonderful Christmas gifts and be sure to get one for your own tree!

Margery Buckingham and Marilyn Cheney for organizing the children's ornament making

Joan Faulkner and Martha Cotton for heading up Café du Monde and to all the past and present Mission Trip volunteers for sharing their time and talents to make this such a success

James Scott for once again ordering the beignets and coffee straight from Café du Monde in New Orleans

Members of the Milton High School jazz band for providing our music

There are still spots open for more parishioners and friends to come – cost is less than \$500 and scholarships are available. The trip is not until January 25th through February 1st but we need to hear from you NOW! Please contact Judy Rice at jrice327@aol.com to sign up. We'd love to have you and your friends join us!

Put a Manger in your Heart

On December 11th at 7:30 p.m. take time out from the stress of the Christmas Season. Relax and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. We will listen to readings, meditations, and music in the candlelit Upper Parish Hall. Light refreshments will be served. Participants are encouraged to bring thoughts, poems, and readings to share, or just come and listen. It is an evening to warm your soul and truly put Christ in Christmas.

~Sponsored by the Education Commission

Vestry Nominations

The process for nominating new members to the Vestry has begun. Please consider people you would like to see in these leadership positions and submit their names to the office or to members of the committee. The nominating committee consists of the Rector, Hall Kirkham; the Wardens, Mary Truslow and Sheila Monks; and three members of the parish-at-large: Michael Theobald, Becky Simonds and Jamie McKnight.

FLOWER MEMORIALS

Please consider making a donation to the Flower Guild as a memorial or thanksgiving to support the expense of our joyous flower arrangements in celebration of Christmas. I thank you in advance for your consideration and contribution.

~Lucinda Larson

MONDAY LUNCH PROGRAM THANK YOU

Monday, November 4th, was one of the first colder days of the fall. This led to a big crowd of hungry folks at the Monday Lunch Program at the Cathedral of St. Paul in downtown Boston. Lunch was served to almost 150 homeless, elderly and working poor clients. A big THANK YOU to the cooks and servers who helped St. Michael's host this month: Mary Wendell, Joan Sholley, Bill Mullen, Kathy Almeida, Norman James and a friend, Dina Roberts Bray, and Jamie McKnight. Special thanks to our shopper Joan Faulkner and to all who donated Halloween Candy - it was much appreciated by all. St. Michael's hosts the Monday Lunch Program the first Monday of each month and we can always use more help. There is a signup sheet in the Upper Parish Hall. Our next date to host the Monday Lunch Program will be December 2nd.



St. Michael's Christmas Auction Friday December 6th



"Making bourbon balls for the fair is where I first met...."
 "I am still dreaming about that sunset over Caspian Lake"
 "The church and the hall looked transformed...
 so beautiful!"
 "Can you believe Sam could even find high heels
 in his size?"
 "Who is the caterer? The food is great!"
 "I don't know where I am going to put this....
 but I just have to have it."

These are just some of the quotes from people who have attended the St. Michael's auction over the years, and they represent a wide range of the number of ways in which you can be involved with the auction.

You can meet new friends by volunteering to help with collecting auction items or setting up on the day of the auction. You can make new memories or re-visit old ones by bidding on and winning a stay in a vacation home in the live auction.

You can get some of your Christmas shopping done and maybe have a chance to clean out your attic by donating a treasure or two.

You can forget all those Thanksgiving calories and enjoy some new ones, while being entertained in a beautiful setting with old and new friends.

The Christmas Auction is our biggest fund raiser of the year, and an important line item in our yearly operational budget. We hope that you will come and join in the fun that not only helps our bottom line, but is a great way to build fellowship, and to strengthen our commitment to the greater community.

This year your invitation will come via your email, so be sure to take a look and save the date.

"Come and See"

and make some new quotes happen.

For more information contact Becky Simonds at
 617-333-0561 - (olsenfamily1053@gmail.com)

or

Anne Wood at 617-894-0280 - (amwood55@yahoo.com)

or

fill in one of the inserts in the weekly bulletin.



Christmas Pageant News

We are delighted that parishioner, John Higgins, has stepped forward to direct this year's Children's Christmas Pageant. John is gathering names of children interested in taking part in the pageant, and parents who can help behind the scenes. Information sheets and sign-up sheets can be found in the back of the Church and in the Upper Parish Hall. Sunday, November 24th will be the collection time for sign-ups, and rehearsals will begin after church on December 8th. Rehearsals will run for 30 to 45 minutes on Sundays, December 8th and 15th, and there will be a shorter rehearsal after church on the 22nd. Dress rehearsal will be held on Monday, December 23rd, time to be determined. If you have questions, John can be reached at johnthiggins@yahoo.com.



Calling all Santa's Secret Helpers!

Help us make an inner-city child's Christmas wishes come true by answering their Letter to Santa.

As we've done the past few years, we will take 50 letters written by families (mostly single mothers) who cannot afford to buy presents for their kids.

By fulfilling the wish list of these children, you'll help ensure that they will have, at least, one present to open on Christmas Day.

For more information, contact Erin Lehman at [617.331.3283](tel:617.331.3283) or lehman81@gmail.com

Advent Wreath-Making

On Sunday, December 1st, in the Lower Parish Hall, everyone will have a wonderful opportunity to make and take home their own Advent wreaths. Fresh evergreens, ribbons, and decoration. will be supplied. Bring your own wreath form, or buy one there. Holders and candles will be for sale at the wreath-making: \$5.00 for candles only; \$12.00 for candles and wire holder. This activity is lots of fun, one the whole family can enjoy and take home a finished product!

~Lana Agnew, Education Commission

Women of St. Michael's Winter Book Group



My admiration for Francy Hays has grown ten-fold. How can one possibly choose just three books from so many wonderful authors? My top contenders ranged from Peter Gomes, Harvey Cox, C. S. Lewis and William Sloan Coffin to Elaine Pagels and a host of others. Hopefully you will all enjoy the ones I have chosen. I am eternally grateful for Sheila Monk's final push to help me narrow the field down from over twenty contenders.

**Friday Evening, January 10th at 7:30 p.m.
at the home of Ingrid Beattie**

***A Geography of Faith, An Altar in the World*
by Barbara Brown Taylor**

Our group read her acclaimed novel, *Leaving Church*. She is now a teacher and highly acclaimed author. In her latest book, she "reveals meaningful ways to discover the sacred in the small things we do and see, from simple practices such as walking, working, and prayer. She shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go, in nearly everything we do" - *Harper Collins'* publishers. Her prose turns the mundane into joy. A five-star read.

**Friday Evening, February 7th at 7:30 p.m.
At the home of Martha Cotton**

***I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai**

The riveting biography of the young Pakistani activist who took a bullet in the head from a Taliban fighter who leapt on her bus shouting, "Who is Malala?" Her crime? Speaking about the God-given right of girls to attend school. When she spoke at the U. N., the entire body stood up to cheer for this brave sixteen-year-old girl. An amazing journey.

**Friday Evening, March 7th at 7:30 p.m.
at the home of Mary Truslow**

***Help, Thanks, Wow* by Anne Lamot**

One of the *New York Times* best-selling authors writes brilliantly about "the three simple prayers essential to coming through tough times, difficult days and the hardships of daily life." We have read Anne Lamot in the past and trekked into Boston to hear her speak in the middle of a raging snowstorm. This book will not disappoint you!

All women of the parish are invited to come and share their insights on these three very different books.

~ Heather Putnam

♪ Notes ♪ from the Director of Music

A Different Kind of Steward

Dear Friends,

As we move ever so quickly into the “most wonderful time of the year,” I want to encourage you to be stewards of our parish. No, this type of stewardship does not involve an offering envelope, but rather your presence and support. The Music Ministry's Advent and Christmas offerings at St. Michael's are a wonderful way to involve the entire Milton community, whether they regularly attend St. Michael's or not, and enjoy the Christmas spirit with family, friends, and neighbors.

Our annual **Advent Processional** will be held on **Sunday, December 1st** at **5:00 p.m.** This year is unique in that the service falls at the end of Thanksgiving weekend, and I cannot think of a better way to kickoff the Christmas season than with this beautiful, candlelit service. The Chancel Choir and Schola Cantorum will once again be joined by the Canterbury Strings, which comprises some of Milton High School's finest musicians. This is just one of the many ways that St. Michael's is working to involve our community, and is a wonderful way to reflect, pray, and prepare for the Advent season.

This year's **Service of Lessons and Carols** entitled, *Sing, Choirs of Angels*, will be held on **Sunday, December 22nd** at **5:00 p.m.** with a light reception to follow. Join the entire music ministry including the Chancel Choir, Cathedral Choir, Schola Cantorum, and Westminster Brass as we jubilantly celebrate the coming of Christmas. This service features your beloved Christmas readings, carols, hymns, and anthems - and perhaps a few new favorites as well.

This is your chance to be a steward of St. Michael's and show everyone what an incredible church home we share! These services are truly unique and a wonderful way to welcome Christmas and begin or continue a holiday tradition. All services are free and all are welcome. Look for future posts on the St. Michael's Facebook page or follow the Music Ministry on Twitter @SaintMMusic so that you can share these events with friends and family. On behalf of the entire Music Ministry at St. Michael's, I wish you and yours a safe, happy, and blessed Advent and Christmas season.

~ Frank Van Atta, Director of Music

October 22nd and November 5th Vestry Highlights

The Vestry met on October 22nd and November 5th. Highlights are as follows:

Technology Upgrade: Abe Cardoza explained that the selected vendor has proven to be unsatisfactory. He has now engaged Ricoh, the vendor for our copier and fax machine. He has found them to be both more responsive and less expensive. At Ricoh's suggestion, we have joined the Ministry Resources Network, a procurement group that will provide savings on purchases.

Audit: The 2012 audit letter was approved by the Vestry with thanks to Bryan Haggerty who chaired the Internal Audit Committee.

Financial Review: After discussing the recommendations of the Audit Committee, the Vestry voted to have a rotating, non-signatory member of the Vestry review bank statements and the church ledger on a quarterly basis and report back to the Vestry at the next regular meeting.

Stewardship: Allison Norton gave a stewardship report with the help of co-chair, Bob Hiss. Charts were provided. In summary, 2014 pledges received are in pace with those received for 2013. 183 pledges received out of 260 from last year's total. 9 new pledges. An analysis reveals that an estimated 73 more pledges are needed to meet fundraising goal. There are at this time 61 pledges that have not been received.

~Margery Buckingham, Vestry Clerk

**ANNUAL 'THANKS-FOR-GIVING' SERVICE
HONORS DR. SARGON DONABED**

The annual Thanks-for-Giving Service sponsored by the Milton Interfaith Clergy Association took place on Sunday afternoon, November 24th. Each year St. Michael's takes this opportunity to recognize a member or members of the parish who offer their gifts of volunteer time to local organizations, and we have in our community an enormous pool of folks who commit well beyond their own lives to enrich and support God's Creation that unfolds around us.

This year we recognize Dr. Sargon Donabed for his commitment to the Milton Animal League's Animal Shelter. I asked Sargon for his thoughts about the volunteer work he does, and he has graciously responded with the following commentary:

* * *

I am honored to accept this recognition on behalf of the many people at the Milton Animal Shelter who regularly donate their precious time to spend hours giving second chances to animals in need, as well as all those at St. Michael's Church who regularly engage in a variety of volunteer work.

The Milton Animal League/Shelter is a community of loving, caring volunteers whom I look forward to seeing each time I go. In the half dozen years I have worked there, I have seen such kindness that brings me great comfort; and I must say the animals bring the volunteers as much comfort as we hope we are bringing them. In many ways I feel the spirit of the community of people who share such a love for animals to be as much a home to me as any other. And while it is hard work, especially in winter when volunteers are shoveling snow and de-icing kennels, we still share a laugh and a smile knowing we enjoy the toil for the sake of the animals, and what the shelter represents.

Interestingly, what initially drew me to St. Michael's Church was the announcement of the annual St. Francis animal blessing years ago when I moved back from almost seven years in Toronto, Canada. I brought my feline companion, Ghost, and was met by smiles from Sam and Ranjit at the time, and soon after meeting Karen and her companion, Toby. I felt a deep connection to a community that remembered we shared this earth in companionship with our fellow creatures. It made me feel as though I had a place there, and I will always be grateful for that. I always felt nature is an easel for divine revelation.

There is a great morsel of wisdom once put down by Maximus the Confessor, a 7th century monk: "God is breath. For the breath of the wind is shared by all, goes everywhere." If we truly believe that this world is created by and invested with the spirit and grace of God then each

and every creature, every being, is linked, and in my eyes, with no hierarchy. Kindness, compassion, hope, love, and mercy are the essence of divinity, and who could be more deserving than those (like shelter animals) who have been left bereft of such benevolence? I have always admired those who live that grace given to them by helping by serving in this very Jesus-like way. I think every volunteer, anyone who has lent a helping hand or smile, knows they are moved by a powerful duty that is never a burden, but rather an act of pure reverence and joy.

Thank you Hall, and St Michael's parish, and all the volunteers of the Milton Animal League. Ghost, Cheeks, my parents, brother, wife Shami and I are blessed to be in such company.

* * *



Christmas Flower Dedication

*The holidays are a time for remembering those who are special to us. A memorial or thanksgiving may be given in any amount for Christmas flowers. Checks made payable to St. Michael's Parish, with the notation "Christmas Flowers," may be sent to, or dropped off to the church office along with the message you would like printed in the bulletin. You may also fill out this form and place it in the collection plate. All dedications must be in **by December 10th**. If you have any questions, please contact Lucinda Larson (617-696-9765) or the church office (617-698-1813).*

Message (circle one)

In memory of _____

In thanksgiving for _____

Given by: _____
(Donor's Name)

Advent Highlights

December 1 (Sunday)

8 and 10 a.m. Morning Prayer - Family Service
11:30 a.m. Advent Wreath-Making
5 p.m. Advent Processional, with Holy Communion

December 6 (Friday)

6:30 p.m. Christmas Auction

December 8 (Sunday)

8 and 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

December 11 (Wednesday)

7:30 p.m. Advent Meditation – An evening of readings, meditations, and music by candlelight.

December 14 (Saturday)

3-7 p.m. Open House at the Rectory – Mark your calendars and join Hall, Marjorie, Victoria, Edmond and other St Michael's friends when you are able to come by!

December 15 (Sunday)

8 and 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

December 19 (Thursday)

10 a.m. Christmas Gathering in Upper Parish Hall with readings, refreshments and singing

December 22 (Sunday) (One service)

8 and 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist
5 p.m. Lessons and Carols and Reception



BAPTISM

If anyone is interested in baptism,
please contact the parish office.

test prep with a social impact
EPISCOPALCITYTUTORING

ATTENTION ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND PARENTS!

Episcopal City Tutoring (ECT) is offering individualized SAT preparation to students preparing for college entrance exams.

When: Wednesdays, January 8th to March 5th,
from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. **or** 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Where: St. Michael's Episcopal Church
Lower Parish Hall

Cost: \$765/student

Why ECT?

We believe every student should have the opportunity to improve test scores and gain access to higher education. When you sign up with ECT, you'll receive high-quality, one-on-one SAT tutoring in both English and math. You'll also give a student in an underserved neighborhood access to the same individualized tutoring. ECT helps secure a bright future for both you and a student in need.

Our tutors are qualified educators experienced with helping students prepare for standardized tests. The 90-minute tutoring session allows teachers to focus on a student's unique needs and challenges, and communicate the most helpful strategies in a way that makes sense to the student. Tutors are also equipped to work with students that have special needs.

A student or family need not have any church affiliation to register for classes.

To register visit www.epicitytutoring.com or contact ECT Site Manager, Lindsey Snyder, at lindseyfarrellsnyder@gmail.com or at 617-669-6860.

Visit us on Facebook!



www.facebook.com/EpiscopalCityTutoring

**Top 10 Reasons to “Like”
St. Michael's Facebook Page**

10) Share Your Thoughts - Want to comment on a sermon or share some news? Have a question on a passage? Post on St. Michael's Facebook Page!

9) Opportunities to Serve and Grow - From youth groups, to book groups to Wednesday morning prayer – we'll remind you of events to help you honor your faith all week long.

8) A Great “Timeline” - We are the oldest Episcopal Church in Milton and our history goes back to 1895.

7) Audio and Written Sermons - We plan to post audio and/or written versions of each week's sermon.

6) News from the Diocese - We'll “share” news you can use from the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts' Facebook page.

5) Community News - See who we “like” and what's happening around town.

4) Great Photos - Where else will you see a photo of volunteers at the Monday Lunch Program, adorable adoptable pets being blessed, or our young adults helping at common cathedral?

3) Throwback Thursday Posts - Check out early images of the church St. Michael's parishioners.

2) Music - See what the Music Ministry has in store for upcoming services.

Stay Connected - Facebook is a tool that, when used correctly and in moderation, allows for greater connection in our church and our community. Come and see what St. Michael's Facebook Page is all about!



“Like” us! At [https://www.facebook.com/
StMichaelsEpiscopalChurchMiltonMa](https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsEpiscopalChurchMiltonMa)

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Katherine Campbell and Michael Theobald

If you've received this newsletter by mail, it's because you have requested it by mail or because we may not have your email address. In order to curtail costs and speed delivery, we're now sending the newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive the newsletter this way, please send your email address to mail@stmichaelsmilton.org. If you wish to continue to receive the newsletter by US mail, please call the office at 617-698-1813 to confirm. If we don't hear from you within the next month, we will assume that you no longer wish to receive the newsletter in either form and will remove your name from our mailing list.