

## E-Portion ~ June 2009



About ten to fifteen years ago a phenomenon occurred in the Episcopal Church (yes I was about fifteen but I notice these things). The Diocese of Western Massachusetts started talking about Christian Formation instead of Christian Education. It seems like a small change in wording, but it is actually a huge change in the theology of education in the church.

### Education vs. Formation

- Education implies Biblical learning and classroom style teaching.
- Formation happens anytime we choose to theologically reflect on a new situation (Bible teaching, missions trips, community service, and even secular life dilemmas which are shaped by our Christian values).
- Education implies that our learning about God may one day be complete.
- Formation is a lifelong process of learning and reflection.
- Education usually reflects a teacher/student system.
- Formation means that all engaged in the process learn from each other.

The language change from Education to Formation helps us to think of our learning about God in a new way. We are encouraged to be a community of life long learners who think theologically about every aspect of our lives. One of my first endeavors in Christian Formation was to help write a national church document. The Charter for Lifelong Christian formation will be posed as a resolution for general convention this year. The document talks about Christian formation in terms of "Invitation", "Inspiration" and "Transformation" on our Christian Journey. I encourage you to take a look at on the web at [www.formationcharter.com](http://www.formationcharter.com).

Part of my job as Christian Formation Missioner for the Diocese is to help churches reflect on their own continuum for lifelong formation. The St. Francis Christian Formation Committee sat down in November of this year to do just that. We begin with an excellent church school program that lays the foundations for life long learner by providing a fun and educational atmosphere for both student and teacher learning. The youth programs (Rite 13, Jr/Sr. High Youth group and work camp) give opportunities for spiritual growth as well as fellowship and mission. Finally, our adult studies include Bible, book, missions work, community service and worship opportunities. As great as our programs are it is always good to reevaluate where are and where we are going. Especially for our teenagers the opportunities are so plentiful they may lack coherence. Many of our youth teach church school, are involved in music, and try to fit in their own formation. Over the summer a youth committee will be looking into how our youth programs enhance our goals for lifelong formation. We will look for gaps in formation opportunities, the spiritual needs of teenagers in the Wachusett district, and how parents can aid with formation opportunities at home. I am excited about how the Charter for Lifelong formation calls us to be intentional in building our faith both individually and as a community. I look forward to being a part of God's call to lifelong formation at St. Francis next year.

~Jill

## Year-end Calendar:



May 31<sup>st</sup>: Pentecost - Church School for Preschool and Kindergarten only.  
June 7<sup>th</sup>: Pageant rehearsal. All children will be out for the whole service.  
June 14<sup>th</sup>: Pageant presentation

All children are invited to our banner making party on June 21st during the 10:00 a.m. service. We will meet in Fellowship Hall to present "thank you" gifts to the teachers, sing songs, and create this year's banner. All members of the congregation are invited to join us for cake and juice (or coffee) after the service!

We hope all of the children in our Church School program will come and celebrate another wonderful year of learning and growing together in Christ!



### Don't Miss the Hit Game Show of the Summer!!!

VBS is coming to St. Francis ~ July 13-17, 9:00 a.m. - NOON  
Registration deadline is June 14th!!

Studio Go is the hottest game show in town this summer, so you won't want to miss it!!! Contestants will learn to GO - Go Lead, Go Risk, Go Tell, Go Obey, and Go Serve. Be a contestant, a leader, or a behind the scenes helper. We need them all!!! Sign up sheets for participants and volunteers can be found in the narthex on our sign-up table. Contestants (Participants) should be ages 5-12, adult volunteers are needed to facilitate various activity stations, and teenagers age 15 and up are needed to help with groups. We will also need volunteers prior to the week of VBS to help with scenery, props and other prep work. Please contact Jill Williams or Donna Mann (508) 210-3142 with questions.



On Sunday, June 7th, this year's EfM graduates will be recognized at the 10:00 a.m. service.

Kathleen O'Connor, Nancy Brunelle, Susan Bastardo, and Cynthia McIntyre have completed the four-year program of Bible Study and theological reflection. Each year of their study focused on a different area of Scripture, church history, or theological study.

The St. Francis EfM group meets weekly from September to May for discussion and theological reflection. There are openings for new members in the fall. If you are interested please contact one of the group's mentors: Robin Carlo ([rcarlo5@mac.com](mailto:rcarlo5@mac.com)) or Cynthia McIntyre ([mcintyre.c@comcast.net](mailto:mcintyre.c@comcast.net)).



Recipes are still needed for the cookbook. We are only 1/4 of the way to 400 recipes. We've extended the deadline for recipes through the summer. Would you please take some time to fill out one or two recipes over the summer?

Recipe forms may be found on the table in the narthex as well as the basket where you can place the filled out forms, or you can email your recipes to Gloriann Switzer at [switzs@charter.net](mailto:switzs@charter.net) or to the church at [stfran@verizon.net](mailto:stfran@verizon.net).



Nicole Alarie will attend Assumption College  
Christopher Bullock will attend Brown University  
Zachary Bylaska-Davies will attend Franklin Pierce University  
Matthew Gleysteen will attend American University  
Alexander Heinricher will attend Carnegie Mellon University  
Griffin Reilly will attend Suffolk Business School  
Graham Simpson will attend Harvard College  
Chelsea Stanovich will attend Roger Williams University  
Julianna Thibeault will attend Mount Wachusett Community College  
Sarah Trafton will attend the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley  
University

If any graduating high school senior has inadvertently been missed please accept our sincere apologies and notify the church office.



Two items this month:

Firstly, thank you for your generosity. During Holy Week., through the open plate collection, St. Francis donated \$300 to the Greater Worcester County Foodbank on Maundy Thursday, \$520 to the Anglican Church in Jerusalem on Good Friday, and \$2,493 to the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance Walk for the Homeless. Thanks to your generous commitment through the Mission Committee budget we were able to help a Haitian medical student purchase her textbooks for the summer semester (\$100) and gave \$1,000 to the Many Hands Sustainability Center. You'll hear a lot more about this organization. Located in

Barre, Many Hands partners with the residents of Dismas House, teaching them a strong work ethic and useful skills in a community sustained agriculture project—an organic farm. The funds will be used for transportation from Worcester to Barre.

Later in June the Committee will make an appeal for used outdoor clothing and used farming or gardening tools that will be passed on to Many Hands for the folks from Dismas House. To learn more, talk to Rebecca or Tom Miller, parishioners who are active in the Many Hands program.

Secondly, speaking of learning more, there will be a presentation on the El Salvador project at and after the 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. services the first weekend in June—June 6-7. Nancy Brunelle will be preaching at all services; there will be a potluck supper after the 5:00 service on Saturday and a special coffee hour after the 10:00 service. Noah Bullock, an American Missioner supported by Cristosal who oversees the project funded by St. Francis will be with us for the weekend. He and Kathy Halloran will speak at the coffee hour on Sunday.

Please take some time to learn about El Salvador, its people, and our role in accompanying them on a mutual journey. You won't regret it.



Many thanks everyone. Keep those Shawls coming in. There was a special request made in May and a prayer shawl was blessed and handed on to the anonymous donor who left \$10. Thank you. This will provide yarn for two shawls. Happy knitting and crocheting

PS4FS (Prayer Shawls For Fallen Soldiers)

Since October 2007 2,800 prayer shawls have been delivered to families of our military fallen. The thank you letters are very heartfelt memories.

Beryl Turner

## Senior Luncheon Goes Caribbean



On May 20th fifty parish members and guests attended our annual senior luncheon. All worshipped together and then feasted on a meal with a Caribbean flavor. Of special note were the floral centerpieces and candy bar favors created by Joan Balkus. The rector's door even became an oasis of palm trees. Thanks to décor contributions by Beth Ann Carrigan. Many hands and hearts pitched in to make it a memorable occasion filled with fellowship, food, and fun!

Thanks to all who contributed to the planning, shopping, set-up, serving, and clean-up.

Chris Berglund  
Tom Ritacco  
Bev Giarusso  
Jenn Stanovich  
Hathy Simpson  
Sarah Zlody

Laura Caswell  
Kathleen O'Connor  
Dianne Thibeault  
Paul McIntyre  
Karen Kappas  
Maria Zlody

Joan Balkus  
Chrisy Jones  
Kristen Barnes  
Robert O'Connor  
Mary Lindfors  
Ann Polletta

Rich Simpson  
Gloriann Switzer  
Cindy Katinas  
Sharlene O'Connor  
Linda Rayworth  
Karen Heath

*A BIG Thank You to everyone who assisted in making this such a wonderful occasion. The Fellowship is unbelievable. Again thank you so much. Your efforts are very much appreciated.  
Beryl & Doug Turner*

*Many thanks to everyone who hosted the Senior Luncheon. From the ringing of the bell which called us to the service to walking out the door with candy bar in hand we enjoyed each other, new friends, good food, excellent service and even perfect weather! You know you are at St. Francis when you have such a happy active group of seniors.*

*Alice Carr*

### Summer issue includes July and August

Information and service schedules are due in the office by  
**Thursday, June 18th**

Articles may be put in the Office mailbox or emailed to  
stfran@verizon.net.

Mailing date is Thursday, June 25th.



### Mountaintinabuleers 10th Anniversary and Reunion

**Sunday, June 14th  
4:00 p.m.  
St. Francis Episcopal Church**

Current and Alumni Handbell Choirs will combine with Brass, Organ, and Percussion for an evening of music from the 10 years of Handbell Ringing at Wachusett Regional High School.

## Joan Johnson Memorial Service

All St. Francis members and friends who knew long-time, active parishioner, Joan Johnson are invited to attend a Memorial Service honoring her at the Assumption College Chapel on Monday, June 8, at 4:30 p.m. She was loved by students, employees, faculty, and administration for her more than 20 years at the college before her retirement and move to Cape Cod. Reception immediately following at the Testa Science Center near the Chapel.



*St. Francis,*

*Recently I had the pleasure of a visit from Dr. Richard (Rich) Simpson offering me the Eucharist and an Easter bag of lovely gifts from St. Francis Church. Thanks so much!*

*I miss Sunday morning service and I miss seeing the people with whom I've enjoyed warm relationships all these many years.*

*One Sunday morning, hopefully, I'll be able to attend and participate in the 10 o'clock service in my 3rd row seat.*

*Hopefully,  
Anita Cole*

### **I Am a Newcomer**—(from The Parish Newsletter of All Saints)

You cannot know the reason I am here this morning. It may be as simple as a move to your town or as complicated as a personal crisis that leads me to seek strength from God. In either case, I am here. I will probably remain here and come back to worship with you next Sunday and the Sunday after that if you will do something for me. Won't you please...

- ⊥ *Smile at me as I walk in your door.* You are the first impression of the church, and this impression will probably stay with me for a long time.
- ⊥ *Help me find my place in the service.* I will not find your help an intrusion. In fact, I will remember your kindness.
- ⊥ *Speak to me during the coffee hour.* I know you want to see your friends and settle that piece of committee business, but I may find it hard to believe that you truly care for the "stranger in your midst."
- ⊥ *Tell me good things about your church.* I want to believe that I have come to some place where people love each other and where they believe that they are doing something exciting and important for God, for each other, and with the wider community.
- ⊥ *Notice me, even if I am not a "family."* I don't want to feel invisible just because I am unmarried, a single parent, a teenager, or an older person.
- ⊥ *Talk to me again the second week* when I come back, and the third and the fourth. I am still not part of your parish family.
- ⊥ *Invite me—without the 'hardsell' - to become a part of some church activity or ministry, even to join and go deeper.* I need more than worship each Sunday. I need to know that I am accepted and affirmed by a group of people within the church who know me by my first name and who care about me as an individual.

If you can find it in your heart to do these things for me, I will come back...maybe even forever. I will worship with you...and I may even join your choir, work on your projects, teach in your church school, pledge to your parish, and become a committed member in your church. In so doing, I will find my own life immeasurably enriched.