

## E-Portion ~ October 2007

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### Weekend of the Feast of St. Francis

*We celebrate our patronal feast September 29–30, and re-dedicate our worship space at all three liturgies.*

*Saturday ~10:00 a.m. ~ St. Francis Open Golf Tournament at Kettlebrook, Paxton.*

*Picnic follows at St. Clare House. All are welcome.*

*5:00 p.m. ~ Holy Eucharist*

*Sunday ~ 8:00 a.m. ~ Holy Eucharist*

*10:00 a.m. ~ Holy Eucharist and Commissioning of 2008 Confirmands*

*3:00 p.m. ~ Blessing of the Animals*

### From Our Curate

As a new member of the St. Francis family I've been extremely blessed by your warm welcome and kind introductions. Thank you for helping me to feel so much a part of the community already. By now you've probably started to wonder exactly who it is you are welcoming. Some of you know me from when I was a child. Much of my early spiritual formation took place at St. Francis in the contemporary choir, liturgical dance ministry and during Sunday school. I think I've changed a little since then, but it is true that the spiritual roots I developed here are still very much a part of my spiritual practices now.

It's difficult to describe a decade or more of experiences that have led me back to you. We left St. Francis when I was sixteen so that my mother could begin work as the Christian Education Director at Church of the Good Shepherd in Clinton.... I was quickly recruited as a teacher's aid and eventually a youth leader. My time at Good Shepherd taught me a lot about working with children and youth; I began a crusade for young people and thought that I would continue on this path as a high school teacher. God had different plans.

College called me far away from all of my church roots. Much to my parents dismay I chose to attend Florida Southern College in Lakeland. It is a small Methodist college noted for its architecture and orange trees. Highlights of my college career include but are not limited to the following: changing majors three (no wait, four) times (dance, elementary education, English literature, and theater performance). I finally decided on the last two. I also auditioned for every play freshman year, got into none, and settled for working the box office. I auditioned for every play senior year and got into them all, and had no time for studying. I became a Resident Advisor for freshman girls, attended a charismatic Methodist church, and studied Spanish in Mexico. I had every intention of moving back to Massachusetts to teach high school English and theater. So, that's what I did.

I was a teacher's assistant for one year at Leicester High School. That's when God starting nudging me. Why was I working with youth in a secular environment that refused to let me talk about "the hope that is within me?" Why was my most favorite part of the day lunch hour with other teachers who seemed to long for spiritual discussion? Why did my teaching job just not seem

to fit? So, I began a yearlong discernment process for ministry. I can't quite explain the discernment process; it's rigorous and enlightening. I guess the most important part is that eight very wonderful people helped me realize God's call to me and then gave me the confidence to act on that call. Off to seminary I went.

Virginia Theological Seminary is known for its broad education and low-church worship. It's located in beautiful Alexandria, Virginia right outside of D.C. Highlights of my time in Virginia include the following: Learning about the intricacies of Jesus as fully human and fully divine through theologians like N.T. Wright, and Katherine Tanner; meeting other young people called to ministry; teaching dance, working at Olivet Episcopal Church; and meeting Andrew Williams. Andrew and I met my middle year at seminary. He lived upstairs and we would go running together in the mornings. I met his family on our first date, on our second date we went hiking through the beautiful mountains of Virginia and talked for hours, and by the third date I was pretty sure I'd found my future husband. Luckily he felt the same way.

Andrew and I were not sure just how we were going to manage two clergy careers, but we were able to work out that I would graduate a little early, having completed all my credit requirements, so that we could be together before we got married. In a true moment of God's grace, care, and awesomeness, we were both able to find ministry work in the diocese of Western Massachusetts. I was coming home! It's been a whirlwind since then. Andrew was ordained to the priesthood in January and was called as rector of both Trinity Church in Ware and St. Mary's in Palmer. I began work as Christian Formation Missioner and lived at Bement. In April I was made Bement Camp Director, we were married in May, I graduated and was ordained a deacon in June, and summer camp began in July. Phew! It makes me exhausted just to think about it.

All of this led me to you. This was probably too long an introduction, but I think it would be easy to forget that there has been more than decade between the little girl with the big eyes who sang with the choir and the young woman deacon I am now. I'm happy to be home, and I can't wait to see where the Holy Spirit leads us next!!!

Peace,  
Jill

### **Mission Matters**

By the first week of October we are back. We all spent too many of our formative years in school not to experience that fall is a time get started again, to find new challenges, and to attack new projects. We're all a year older; we're all entering a higher grade. Our approach to Mission is no different. There are some new things on the horizon and our approach to familiar things can have a new perspective.

The familiar things include the **Cropwalk**, the annual interfaith effort to work against hunger at home and around the world. It will take place on **Sunday, October 14**; Sue Delorme is heading up our St. Francis participation, assisted by Jane Dye. Registration is at 1:00 p.m. Whether you walk or support a walker, you'll be making a statement and helping a cause. Please see Sue or Jane after services for information. October is also the month for the **United Thank Offering (UTO)**; the weekend is **October 20 and 21**. UTO is part of the national church's outreach and serves women missionaries and church workers all over the world. Bev Giarusso is taking the lead.

The new challenges include, of course, the

**Fundacion Cristosal in El Salvador**. In November seven parishioners will be visiting the Anglican Church in that country to discern what we might do together to bring healing and life to its people. The title from our capital campaign and our personal relationships will be the catalyst. The participants will include Kathy Diehl, Nancy Brunelle, Jim Bourque, Maryann DiPinto, Lori Churchill, Graham Simpson, and Mary Jude Pigsley. The other new project doesn't even have a catchy new name yet. In September we started collecting children's mittens, gloves, and hats for distribution in late October to kids at the Richer School in Marlboro and the Horizons for Homeless Youth program in Worcester. The idea came from Kathy Nicholl who is also shepherding it along.

All of these projects are highlighted in the Mission Committee's fall display put together in the Narthex by Laurie Sanchez and Bev Giarusso. Be sure to stop by and take a look.

### **“God's Mission in the World” ~ An Ecumenical Study of Global Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals**

On four consecutive Wednesday evenings, beginning October 17, members of St. Francis are invited to gather with members of Immanuel Lutheran Church for a mid-week study series called “God's

Mission in the World.” Using a resource developed by a partnership of our two traditions (which has a nominal cost of \$5) the sessions will take a look at the reality of global poverty and listen to Holy Scripture to ask how we are being called to respond as Christians. The study includes an exploration of the Millennium Development Goals, adopted by more than 190 nations, including the United States, and The Episcopal Church to end extreme poverty in the world. The first two sessions (October 17 and 24) will be held at St. Francis, following the 7 p.m. Service of Holy Eucharist. The final two sessions (October 31 and November 7) will be held at Immanuel, also beginning at 7:00 p.m. but *ending* with Holy Communion at approximately 8:00 p.m. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex and/or feel free to talk with Rich.

**The Church Mouse Fair** is this month on **Saturday, October 20th** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please include the Fair on your calendar. We will be looking for you!!

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be an archaeologist? If so, here's your opportunity to start "digging:" into all those boxes, bags, corners and attics to see what you might find for **The Attic Treasures Room** or perhaps **The Books and Children's Rooms**. [Small household items, electrical appliances (in good working condition), baby items (must meet current safety codes), bedding, curtains, cooking supplies, housewares, paperback books, cookbooks, CD's, DVD's, video games, etc. Please note: we cannot accept tires, bikes, television sets, computers, encyclopedias, textbooks, subscription magazines, or any hard-covered books, due to recycling regulations.] Please bring your items to the Church from Monday to Friday, during the week of October 14th...the earlier the better! Also needed: **Baked Goods** [please bring baked items on Friday afternoon or evening], **Live Plants and/or Dried Flowers, Herbs, Arrangements; Donations of new or used jewelry;** your **crafting talents** if you are an at-home crafter; your **willingness to volunteer** to work [setting up tables on Friday, October 19th, and taking them down again after the Fair]...working a various tables the day of the Fair...or substituting for a short time so someone may have a short break; Your presence at the Fair and your support for the Mouse Café, staffed by our wonderful young people and their advisors; and finally...your help in the Miracle that takes place after the Fair when everything is packed-up, cleaned-up, vacuumed and furniture returned...all in time for the 5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist.

Every year, our Rector, Rich Simpson, shakes his head in happy disbelief that so much gets done so quickly, and so well, by so many wonderful volunteers who take part in the massive clean-up after the Fair. We'd love to have you volunteer to help with any part of the entire Church Mouse Fair. This is an equal-opportunity Fair...no prior experience required...just the willingness and good humor to lend a hand or two!! Thanks!

### **Newcomers Committee**

The Newcomers Committee will meet in the Library on Sunday, October 7th, following the 10:00 a.m. service. Anyone who is interested in joining the Newcomers Committee is welcome. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Diehl at [kdiehl@charter.net](mailto:kdiehl@charter.net) or Linda Letourneau at [lrkelly@aol.com](mailto:lrkelly@aol.com).

The first Newcomers Gathering will be held Friday evening, November 30, 2007 at the St Clare House-Save the Date!

### **Thursday Morning Bible/Book Study** ~ Starting October 4th at 9:30 a.m.

Topics up for discussion. Babysitting will be provided. Please contact Donna Mann if interested: (508) 210-3142, [donna@mannclan.us](mailto:donna@mannclan.us) or you can sign-up on the sheet on the table in the Narthex.

### **Church School/Nursery**

#### **Puppet Stand Needed**

This summer several puppets were purchased for our new church school curriculum. Right now they're being stored in a box. In order to display them properly and keep them from becoming crushed I'd like to put them on a puppet stand. This is basically a base with several dowels sticking out to put the puppets on. If anyone enjoys woodworking and would like to make a stand, it would be greatly appreciated! You will be reimbursed for materials. Please contact Susan Bastardo at the church office 508 829-3344 or [smbslp22@hotmail.com](mailto:smbslp22@hotmail.com). Thank you!

### **Nursery Assistant Needed**

Diana Antul, the new nursery coordinator, is looking for an assistant. The ideal candidate would be at least a junior in high school, able to be in the nursery at least every other Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and able to make phone calls to new volunteers to help with making a six month schedule. Anyone interested can call Diana at 978-630-3106 or email her at mumdee@gmail.com

### **Acolyte Training**

After the 10 a.m. service on Sunday, October 14, there will be a training session for all acolytes, both new and returning. If you are in grade 5 or older and are interested in becoming an acolyte, please attend this meeting. For more information, call acolyte coordinator Nancy Olesin at 978-464-2780.

**Did You Know????** Each week the people of God are sent out into the world to "do the work God has given us to do." This work includes not only what lawyers or nurses or business people do, but all that we do wherever we are.

Our congratulations to Kelly Letourneau, a Mountview Middle School student who was elected to serve as Student Government President this year.

In fact, Saint Franciscans have served in this role for four of the past five years at Mountview. Bryan Diehl, Graham Simpson, and Jack Holden are all past presidents of the student government.

### **The deadline for the next Little Portion is Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup>**

Please have all information to the office by this date. You can leave it in the Office mailbox or email it to stfran@verizon.net. The Little Portion will be mailed on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Thank You** To the Prayer Shawl Ministry

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for this lovely Prayer Shawl. I love it! It's so soft and comforting—especially on a cool morning. Many people have admired it and commented on how soft it is. Thanks again for your service to God, and by way of God to me.

With Love,  
Betsy Davidson