

E-Portion July/August 2007

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Summer Schedule

Worship: From July 1st to August 26th services of Holy Eucharist will be celebrated on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m. and Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Summer Choir: Lend us your voice! Join the choir this summer for just one week, or several weeks. The "summer choir" will practice on Sunday mornings at 8:00. We'll be singing familiar hymns and a few new songs. Come and join us for music and fellowship. Questions? See a choir member.

Nursery Child Care: Nursery care continues through the summer at both Saturday and Sunday services for babies and children through age 8.

Church School: There is no Church School during the summer months, however Children's Worship bulletins and crayons will be available on the table in the back.

Church Softball League: Anyone 16 or older interested in playing on the St. Francis team will find information on the table in the narthex. Games are played on Sundays at 5:00 p.m. at Davis Hill and Mt. View Middle School.

Office Hours: Beginning Monday, July 2nd through Labor Day the parish office will be open Monday through Wednesday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Rector's Notes

Like St. Francis, the parish I served for almost five years as Associate Rector in Westport, CT is also moving through a Capital Campaign and doing renovations. Since I am still on their mailing list, I have watched that process unfold in tandem with ours. On one of their mailings there was a paragraph with the heading, "Prayer, Not Pressure." Below it was a statement I believe has characterized our own campaign as well: *this process has been prayerful, not manipulative. We know that there is work to be done. We desire that everyone be a part of that work. Regardless of whether the gift offered is large or small, if it comes from a generous heart it will be received in that same spirit.*

This approach has been no accident. When we began to move toward implementing the vision that had been brewing here for years, the vestry and I turned to two former wardens, Nancy Pope and Kathleen O'Connor, to lead us in this work. Both of these two extraordinary women would be the first to tell you that they have not done this work alone. Each has led very capable committees with dedicated volunteers; Nancy's committee working to hire contractors and make recommendations to vestry about the scope of these projects while Kathleen and her committee have been communicating that vision and asking for our financial support. All of this has been undergirded by a commitment to prayer. As we take time this summer to rest and reflect, I hope you will take the time to personally thank Nancy and Kathleen and their committee members for all of their hard work.

As your rector, what I have seen is that this has become an opportunity for all of us to grow in Christ. We have faced challenges, but we've faced them together. As with any construction project there have been surprises. But we've been surprised together. There have been different opinions offered on aesthetic decisions. But I have seen the pride we have been taking in this project as a community; it is work that needed to be done and we've taken it on with grace. I thank God for that.

We have been talking a lot of late about property needs. If you are newer to St. Francis you should know that this is not our norm! (In fact one could argue that it is precisely because we tend to be so outward-focused on mission in the world that we have needed to take care of these things in order to get back to business.)

As we've worshipped in Fellowship Hall a number of people have told me how much they have enjoyed that time. It has been akin to what the founders of St. Francis (and the early Christians) did when they gathered in homes. I think we have used that opportunity to build community in new ways and I hope we take those learnings back into our renovated liturgical space as we look toward the fall. We will do some things differently as that space influences our worship. But there are some constants. Word and Sacrament knit us together, as our denomination as inherited them through the *Book of Common Prayer*.

That new space will, I trust, help us to worship God in a place of beauty. But it will not in and of itself make our worship meaningful. Liturgy is still the work of the people—of *this* people in *this* time and *this* place. We are formed in worship as a people who are sent into the world as ambassadors of Christ.

I think we have known all along that this project is a means to an end; not an end in itself. We need buildings and spaces in which to gather—to be formed as Christ’s Body. But ultimately we are a people in mission—salt to the earth and light to the world. As we look toward the fall and completing the first phase of this work, I want to invite us back to that larger vision, summarized in the prayer of our patron, St. Francis: “*Lord, make us instruments of thy peace...*”

In Christ,
Rich

Vestry Notes: On June 13, 2007 the vestry voted to accept the resignation of Judy Morse from the Vestry. Judy changed jobs and moved to Brookfield this winter. We will miss her and wish her well. Laura Caswell was appointed to complete Judy’s term on Vestry.

Refresh, Renew, Rejoice! Capital Campaign

Thank you, thank you, thank you!! As of this writing our pledges have surpassed \$285,000 towards our goal of \$325,000. We will continue to receive pledges over the summer. Remember to pass in any pledge payments you would like to make in the green payment envelopes. If you need more you may pick them up at the church or call the office to request that they be mailed to you.

Kathleen O'Connor for the Capital Campaign Committee

Mission Matters

Change is the Only Constant

I was not at St. Francis for many Sundays when I first met Bunny Huddleston, was impressed with her dedication to the church and its mission committee, and asked to sign on as a member. Bunny works fast and skillfully, and that is a major part of the reason why she will be greatly missed when she and Darrell move into their so-richly deserved retirement next month. Undoubtedly, there are many more reasons for St. Francis to miss Bunny, but those are the ones I know best. It is very clear from what the Mission Committee does and how thoughtfully it does it, that Bunny has been a good and faithful steward.

So it is with comfort in the strengths of the parish, its leadership, and the Mission Committee itself that I agreed to succeed Bunny as chair. By way of getting acquainted, I should let you know that my wife Gail and I have been active in Episcopal parishes since 1973, first in Muncie, Indiana, and, then, for 30 years at St. Mary’s in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey. We both did lots of things, but I was privileged to serve on the Vestry, as Senior Warden, as a Eucharistic Minister, doing some adult education, and in the choir. Gail and I co-chaired the equivalent of the Mission Committee that worked in a local residence for persons with mental illness, a very busy food pantry, a soup kitchen in Asbury Park, and as part of a diocesan commitment to Costa Rica and then to El Salvador. For almost thirty years I was the CEO of the United Way of Monmouth County, NJ, working with volunteers and professionals to identify needed services and support their delivery. Retiring in 2002, I do nonprofit consulting and have been an Adjunct Professor of Social Work at Monmouth University and Wheelock College in Boston. We moved home to Massachusetts last fall when Gail retired after a successful career with the Ocean County Library system, headquartered in Toms River, NJ.

Change is the only constant: we salute Bunny’s move on to new challenges in New Hampshire; I look forward to some here.

Jim Bourque

Top Eight Foods for the Summer.....A Tradition of Help

This summer, we will again be collecting much needed food for the Wachusett Food Pantry located at the First Baptist Church, Holden. On the average the Pantry serves over 100 families per month, offering them one weeks worth of groceries. To help stock the Pantry on certain foods, we have specified items for each week during the summer.

Week 1	June 30/July 1	Cereal
Week 2	July 7/8	Picnic items (condiments, etc.)
Week 3	July 14/15	100% Fruit Juices
Week 4	July 21/22	Canned Fruit
Week 5	July 28/29	Pancake Mix
Week 6	August 4/5	Pancake Syrup
Week 7	August 11/12	Dessert Mixes (Jello, etc)
Week 8	August 18/19	Healthy Snacks

Food may be left in the Wachusett Food Pantry bucket found by the Mission Table in the narthex. Please remember to check your expiration dates. Expired food cannot be distributed by the Pantry. Need more information? Please contact Jim Bourque or Donna Alarie at 508-886-6031. Thank you for your donations!

Mission Stitchin'

During services on June 2/3 ten baptismal gowns were blessed and are now in the process of being sent to the Haitian Foundation. Thanks to all those who helped with this mission and to Eleanor Bird for coordinating the project.

Mustard Seed ~ The teams that serve at the Mustard Seed will be looking to add new servers this fall. If you are interested please contact Eleanor Bird at 978-464-5564 or email her at birdwes@earthlink.net

Don't forget the next Prayer Shawl Meeting will be Monday, July 16th at 10:00 a.m. in the Narthex. Call Beryl Turner at 508-829-3223 for more information. Hope to see you there.

The next Mission Meeting is Monday, September 10th. Come join us.

Think Snow

The Mission Team is hoping to collect knit hats and mittens for distribution this fall and winter for children, teens and adults in need. So, if you see any good sales or want to knit a set or two, please do so. More information will be available in the next Little Portion.

St. Clare House Garden ~ If you have a half-day or day to dedicate to some gardening, the areas in front of and on the side of St. Clare House need some "TLC." Mostly this simply involves weeding and trimming back. You can do this on your own schedule; don't worry about stepping on toes!

KITES

You're ready for college but are you prepared for life?

Part of leaving childhood behind is sorting through the things you've accumulated over the past eighteen years of your life and deciding what to keep and what to throw out. The same thing is true for making choices about your relationship with God.

Beginning Wednesday, July 11th at 6 pm and scheduled for 6 consecutive Wednesday evenings, young adults are invited for dinner, beach volleyball and book study at the Grinstead's house. Discussions center on the book, *Own Your Faith*, by Mark Tabb. Please sign the form at the church or phone (508)799-5756 to indicate interest in attending.

The deadline for the next Little Portion is Thursday, August 23rd

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, August 30th.

(Please note this issue will include all information for our return to regular worship and ministry schedules.)