

The Guardian

MARCH/APRIL 2025

FROM THE RECTORY

Dear St. Michael's,

I returned to Vermont on the evening of February 2 from my month away at the Upaya Zen Center, the first part of my sabbatical. It is not perhaps the best idea to split a sabbatical in two parts, but the January Winter Practice Period was something I really wanted to do AND I did not want to miss Lent, Holy Week and Easter with St. Michael's. This means I am at St. Michael's until May 11, then the Reverend Thad Bennett will be filling in as St. Michael's sabbatical priest until August 6.

I had a wonderful, intense and restful time during the Winter Practice Period at Upaya. I experience deep silence and stillness, great beauty and much learning. I've told people that my time away was a bit like being on a different planet — I stayed in one place the entire month (the Zen center) and I was plunged into a different religious tradition, a different routine and a different culture. In some ways, my sense of disorientation and newness was very enlivening and beautiful. As Suzuki Roshi says in his famous book, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind*, I was certainly a beginner and “with beginner's mind, there are many possibilities.” I am still trying to integrate and understand my experience, but for now I can say that my time away gave me rest from regular life, from the news, from email and from my own mind and thoughts, which I really appreciated.

My return to Brattleboro has been a full of surprises — some interesting and some quite hard. Right after I came home, my whole family got the flu and then I got the flu. There were snowstorms on the first two Sundays after I returned, so I have not yet been able to greet everyone yet! What has been the hardest has been the death of three parishioners in the last three weeks: Jack North, Betty Elwell and Greg Lesch. While Jack and Betty's deaths were not unexpected, Greg's was a shock to me, to St. Michael's and to the Brattleboro community. Greg served as thurifer at the Christmas Eve service before I left town and was seemingly healthy. When I returned in February, I found out that his cancer had returned and tragically, was extremely aggressive. Greg was really at the heart of our church and our worship together and I/we cannot quite imagine St. Michael's without him. We will be grieving these parishioners for a long time, even as we commend them to God and know that in the mystery of the Communion of Saints, that are still part of us.

Soon we will recognize Ash Wednesday, beginning our yearly season of Lent. Given the instability of our nation and the deaths we have experienced, the austerity and truth-telling nature of Lent, I look forward to this time for us to deepen our trust in God and our commitment to Jesus Christ.

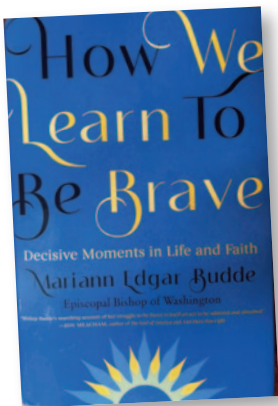
Yours in Christ,


Mary Lindquist, Rector

NEWS OF THE PARISH

**ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 12
NOON AND 5:30 PM**

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which lands on March 5 this year. Ash Wednesday, a reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God, marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season and is commonly observed with ashes and fasting. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness. The liturgy, which includes the imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist, will be offered at St. Michael's at 12 noon and 5:30 pm (with music). All are welcome.

**LENTEN SEASON BOOK STUDY:
HOW WE LEARN TO BE BRAVE,
BY BISHOP MARIANN BUDDÉ****TUESDAYS, 5–6:15PM, MARCH 11–APRIL 8**

On January 21, 2025, many Americans were introduced to Bishop Mariann Budde thanks to what The New York Times called “an extraordinary act of public resistance.” During her prayer service for Donald J. Trump's second inauguration, Bishop Budde addressed the president directly, imploring him “to have mercy on the people in our country who are scared now,” from those who are part of the LGBTQ+ community to immigrants and refugees.

As part of our Lenten observance, Mary Lindquist will offer a time of prayer and book study on Budde's 2023 book, *How We Learn to be Brave*. Please purchase the book, which can be obtained in hard copy, Kindle or as an audiobook, prior to the first session. This will be a hybrid offering (in-person and on Zoom). Please let Mary know if you have any questions. The deadline for signing up is Friday, March 7.

**ST. MICHAEL'S LITURGY TRAINING,
SATURDAYS IN MARCH**

One of my key take-aways from my retreat in New Mexico is the importance of mindfulness, attention and precision in our celebration of liturgy. I would like to invite readers, intercessors, lay assistants and usher to some special sessions of liturgy practice in March. These trainings will be for new people and experienced people alike and they will take place on Saturday mornings at 9:30 am and take less than an hour.

March 15, 9:30am — Lay Assistants

March 22, 9:30am — Readers and Intercessors

March 29, 9:30am — Ushers

**TEAM HOLY WEEK
SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 12 PM,
THE CHOIR ROOM**

The holiest, most important time in the Christian year is Holy Week, from Palm Sunday (April 13) to Easter Day (April 20). At St. Michael's, we especially focus on the Triduum (Maundy Thursday–Easter, April 17–20). Last Lent we started a new tradition at St. Michael's — Team Holy Week. The idea is that liturgy is about participation, so instead of doling out parts for folks to do, we call together a team of people who are willing to participate fully — a whole team effort. Because of the commitment, dedication and creativity of Team Holy Week the last two years, Holy Week was a deeply transformative experience for many. All are welcome to participate, even if this is your first time observing this holy time.

- We will need readers, prayer leaders, cooks, altar help, kitchen help, musicians, singers & more.
- Come to a planning meeting at 12 pm (after church and some refreshments) on Sunday, March 9 to understand the story arc of the triduum and decide how you would like to participate.
- Please contact me at mary@stmichaelsvermont.org If you are interested in participating, but can't attend the meeting.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

**ADULT FORUM 2025 LENTEN SERIES:
THE LORD'S PRAYER**

This Lent, we will focus on the Lord's Prayer, the most universally prayed of all the Christian prayers.

Each Sunday we will explore one line of the prayer. Five different discussion leaders will bring their own perspectives and offer time for reflection and discussion.

March 9, Lent 1: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name — *Kim Peavey*

March 16, Lent 2: Thy kingdom come thy will be done — *Mary Lindquist*

March 23, Lent 3: Give us this day our daily bread — *Craig Irvine*

March 30, Lent 4: Forgive us our sins — *Phillip Wilson*

April 5, Lent 5: Deliver us from evil — *Adwoa Wilson*

The Lord's Prayer, by John Dominic Crossan

The Lord's Prayer is Christianity's greatest prayer. It is also Christianity's strangest prayer. It is prayed by all Christians but it never mentions Christ. It is prayed in all churches, but it never mentions church. It is prayed on all Sundays, but it never mentions Sunday. It is called the "Lord's Prayer" but it never mentions "Lord". It is prayed by fundamentalist Christians, but it never

mentions the inspired inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth, the miracles, the atoning death, or bodily resurrection of Christ. It is prayed by evangelical Christians but never mentions...the gospel. It is prayed by Pentecostal Christians, but it never mentions ecstasy or the Holy Spirit. It is prayed by Congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic Christians but it never mentions congregation, priest, bishop or pope. It is prayed by Christians who focus on Christ's substitutionary atonement for human sin, but it never mentions Christ, substitution, sacrifice, atonement or sin. It is prayed by Christians who focus on the next life in heaven or in hell, but it never mentions the next life, heaven or hell....

It is, you might say, a Jewish prayer from the Jewish Jesus...But that only invites us to start the question of strangeness all over again. It does not mention covenant or law, Temple or Torah, circumcision or purity...

What if the Lord's Prayer is neither a Jewish prayer for Jews nor yet a Christian prayer for Christians?

What if it is a prayer from the heart of Judaism on the lips of Christianity for the conscience of the world? What if it is a radical manifesto and a hymn of hope for all humanity in language addressed to all the earth?

From *The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of the Lord's Prayer*, by John Dominic Crossan

STM

The Youth Group's visit to the Humane Society and their Waffle Sale to benefit the Humane Society.



HOLY WEEK & EASTER



HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Palm Sunday, April 13

8 am Holy Eucharist

10:15 am Holy Eucharist & Procession with Palms

Wednesday, April 16

12 pm Holy Eucharist

7:00 pm Tenebrae Service

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 5:30pm

5:30 pm Maundy Thursday Service (beginning with
Dinner in the Undercroft)

8 pm Nightwatch

Good Friday, April 18

8:00 am Proper liturgy for Good Friday
(no music or veneration of the cross)

7:00 pm Proper liturgy for Good Friday with
veneration of the cross (St. Michael's)

Holy Saturday, April 19

9-9:30 am Holy Saturday

7:30 pm The Great Vigil of Easter
followed by a celebratory reception

Sunday, Easter day, April 20

8 am Holy Eucharist

10:15 am Festival Holy Eucharist

NEWS OF THE PARISH

VESTRY RETREAT 2025

It was an icy day in between storms for the 2025 Vestry Retreat at John Spooner (Junior Warden) and Craig Irvine's lovely home, looking out at a striking Vermont winter vista. After gathering, we joined in prayer for the work ahead, and sang a hymn that reminded us to "listen closely to your heart." That thought resonated as we shared brief spiritual backgrounds and answered "What is alive for you right now?" Like the Episcopal Church in general, our Vestry representatives found myriad pathways and diverse passions for what is now drawing their spiritual attention.

Missing, and in our prayers, was our dear brother Greg Lesch, recently elected to the Vestry, and sick in the hospital. The next part of the retreat was a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the vestry, sometimes described as the church's "board of directors" but differing from other boards by providing spiritual and moral leadership as well as overseeing the fiscal and legal business of the church. Vestry members signed up to be "liasons," to ministries within the church where they are already actively involved, or where they will periodically "check in" with various teams. This is a very valuable avenue for communication to take place, so please take advantage of getting to know your vestry members! We also hope for more opportunities for sharing our thoughts with an expanded "Vestry Greeter" and "Vestry Listener" schedule this year.

A very important part of our retreat was brainstorming to discern where we might be called as a community in the year ahead. This will be particularly important when our rector is on sabbatical this summer, in the hope that the time may be one of renewal for us as a congregation as well as for Mary.

—Susan Heimer, Sr. Warden

SUMMARY OF VESTRY MEETING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2025

The first meeting of the 2025 Vestry was held on February 20, 2025. Sadly, this was the day after Greg Lesch, one of our newly elected Vestry members, had passed away unexpectedly at a hospital in Boston. The first portion of the Vestry meeting included prayers for Greg and his family by Senior Warden Susan Heimer and personal remembrances by Mary Lindquist, our Rector, who had worked with Greg as a lay assistant and invaluable parishioner for many years. New Vestry member Belle Coles recalled that she had known Greg as a high school student, an actor, a choir member, and a community leader. Other Vestry members expressed their regret in not being able to work with Greg on the Vestry in the coming year.

Treasurer Gwen Mousin delivered the monthly Treasurer's Report and presented the Vestry with the proposed 2025 budget. Treasurer Mousin indicated that the transition to the new Realm software to manage donations and expenses is partially complete, with donations now being recorded in Realm by the parish counters. The Church has also used Realm to send out Giving Statements to parishioners and encouraged them to report any errors. The migration to the accounting portion of Realm will be completed in mid-March.

The 2025 budget projects increased income of \$20,000 and increased expenses of \$26,300 over the 2024 budget, projecting a \$19,000 deficit. The Rector commented that these projected deficits typically disappear by the end of the year. Treasurer Mousin indicated that 16 parishioners attended a budget meeting on February 2, 2025, and asked for clarification about various budget items. The Vestry approved the 2025 budget and thanked Treasurer Mousin for so capably managing the parish finances, the budget, and the migration to the Realm software. The Rector and the Treasurer also presented the 2025 Parochial Report to be filed with the Vermont Diocese. This report collects service, attendance, financial, and ministry information for the previous year. Paul Gallagher suggested edits to a paragraph on the refugee ministry which the Rector will adopt. The Vestry approved the report as amended.

The Rector's Report reviewed preparations for Lent and Holy Week, which will include a book study and two upcoming baptisms. The Rector indicated that, on February 16, 28 church members attended a Zoom meeting on "Responding in Faith to Current Events," led by Jeff Lewis and Judy Davis. The group will be meeting again in the following weeks.

Senior Warden Susan Heimer initiated discussion about the four months this summer when Rector Lindquist will be temporarily replaced by the Reverend Thad Bennett. Reverend Bennett asked the Vestry to reflect on what the Church's plans and goals are for the months of Rector Lindquist's Sabbatical. Warden Heimer noted that this issue was discussed at the Vestry retreat held on February 15. A number of suggestions were made including:

- Sharing of spiritual backgrounds during services,
- Involvement in the Episcopal Path for Creation Justice,
- Youth Group lunches and/or retreats with seniors,
- Meetings with the refugee students,
- Picnics.

For the refugee ministry, Paul Gallagher reported that, in light of the federal defunding of aid, his group is seeking more volunteers to support the refugee college students and also newly arrived refugee families.

For the Building Hope for the Earth ministry, Cary Gaunt indicated that she attended an Episcopal Path for Creation Justice meeting which is organizing retreats, forums, and other events to respond to the current environmental and political crisis. She felt that this ministry could be merged with the Building Hope for Earth Ministry.

NEWS OF THE PARISH

The Vestry also wrote thank you notes to John Spooner and Craig Irvine, for hosting the February 15 Vestry retreat, to Jeff Lewis and Judy Davis, for organizing the February 16 Zoom meeting on responding to current events, and to Tom Ely, for preaching during Rector Lindquist's sabbatical retreat. At the close of the meeting, Cary Gaunt offered the moving night prayer from the New Zealand Prayer Book, ending with, "The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities."

STM

ST. MICHAEL'S TAG SALE NEWS

The members of the St. Michael's Tag Sale Ministry are once again planning our annual Terrific Tag Sale, slated for Sat., May 3. We are looking forward to another great sale with lots of excellent items to offer "for sale" (mostly by monetary donation). We are very pleased that the proceeds will go to both Loaves and Fishes and the Prouty Family Fund this year.

On Sun., February 16, we began accepting selective items to "sell" at the Tag Sale. Housewares, clothing, shoes, linens, jewelry, puzzles and books (please, no textbooks!) may be brought to the Church anytime that the building is open. We ask that all donations be in good condition: gently used, clean, nothing stained, broken or with pieces missing. The only electronics we can accept are (working) small household or kitchen appliances and lamps. (see guidelines below).

We will begin accepting furniture and sporting goods in early April. Stay tuned!

Almost all donated items may be left inside one of the 2 designated Tag Sale closets ("Clothing and Linens" or "Housewares") off the hallway outside Horizon Preschool (entrance through the church's back door near the parking lot.) Boxes of book donations should be taken into the Undercroft and stored beneath the long tables beneath the bookshelves, next to the stage.

Please label them "TAG SALE 2025".

Please review our donation guidelines when setting aside donations for the sale:

CLOTHING — any season, adult and child. Must be clean, no stains or rips, good condition.

SHOES — adult and children's, any season, lightly worn shoes, hiking boots, boots, sandals, etc.

JEWELRY — in good condition.

LINENS — good condition, no stains, clean; please label as to size of sheets if known.

HOUSEWARES — must have all parts, clean, unbroken, in good condition.

APPLIANCES — only small kitchen electronics, working, clean, all parts with it. Sorry, NO AUDIO, COMPUTER OR OTHER ELECTRONICS OR APPLIANCES!!

TOYS — only puzzles with all the pieces! Sorry, no other toys.

BOOKS — books in good condition are welcome as long as they have not been stored in a damp basement. PLEASE, NO TEXTBOOKS OR OLD MAGAZINES!!

FURNITURE — PLEASE SAVE until beginning of April due to lack of storage. Please note our furniture policy: ALL furniture will need to be reviewed by Tag Sale team member (either photo or in person) before being accepted. Please, no furniture made from particle board (fiber board). Also, while we will be doing some pick-ups in April, we will not be able to move heavy items either up or down a flight of stairs.

Thank you so much —with your donations and assistance, we look forward to another terrific sale this spring! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

—Liz Vick ebethvick@gmail.com 802-579-5536

MARCH/APRIL 2025 CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

March 2	Susan Kochinskas
March 3	Christine Hart, Kiersten McKenney
March 4	Jenna Webb
March 5	Joshua Fritz
March 7	Ladd Osborne, John Linscheid
March 11	Teri Robinson, Marie Lawrence
March 15	Benson Bobrick, Jeffrey Hiam
March 16	Chris Chapman
March 18	Erin Pesut
March 17	Gabriel Sistare
March 19	Karen Guthrie
March 20	Bob Walker
March 22	Bruce Lawrence
March 24	James Wilmott, Joan Pinilla, Margery McCrum, Sherill Wilson
March 25	Kate LeBlanc
March 28	Tom Woodbury, Elizabeth Moore
March 30	Craig Newbert
March 31	Jan Bennett
April 2	Becky Anderson
April 7	Neil Montgomery
April 8	Kelli Allen
April 10	Sherry Stimmel
April 11	Peter Johnson, Kurt Johnson
April 12	J. Michael Wilmott, Devin Starlanyl, Cary Storm
April 13	Diane Clouet, Ron Bell, Lyndsay Hesselbach
April 15	Ian McBean, Emily Brown, Ian Harrison
April 16	Katie-Beth Ryan
April 18	Douglas Switzer
April 21	Jonas Ackerman-Hovis
April 22	Marcia Steckler
April 24	Charlie Veltkamp
April 25	Alison Hale
April 27	Susan Heimer, John Daly
April 28	Rich Cogliano
April 29	Marta McBean, Annie Landenberger, Brian Hesselbach
April 30	Lawrin Crispe



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

LECTIONARY FOR MARCH/APRIL

To see all the readings for each Sunday, go to
<http://www.lectionarypage.net/#march>
<http://www.lectionarypage.net/#april>
 You will find there the collects, lessons and psalms
 for each Sunday and feast day.

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The Guardian is published monthly by St. Michael's Episcopal Church. News items, announcements, articles, etc. should be submitted to parishadmin@stmichaelsvermont.org by the 15th of the month for consideration.

The Guardian mailing list: Contact Susie Webster-Toleno with address changes or requests to be added or removed from *The Guardian* mailing list.
parishadmin@stmichaelsvermont.org or 802-254-6048.

Printed on recycled paper 100% post consumer, PCF

The Guardian

a Christ-centered community of practice awakening to the abiding presence of God



OUR WORSHIP TOGETHER

SUNDAYS	8:00 am	Quiet service of prayer and Eucharist
	10:15 am	Prayer, music and Eucharist. (in-person and online)
WEEKDAYS	8:00 am	Morning Prayer (online) and Tues.–Thurs. in Chapel
WEDNESDAYS	11:30 am	Centering Prayer (in-person)
	12:00	Eucharist (in-person)
THURSDAYS	5:30 pm	Contemplative service (in-person and online)
SATURDAYS	8:00 am	Centering Prayer (in-person)