

## NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

I want to thank everyone who helped me to be able to travel to Dallas, TX for what may go down in the annals of the Episcopal Church as one of the most significant meetings in its storied history.

This event, held on October 6-9, was sponsored by the American Anglican Council in response to the recent decisions by the General Convention related to same-sex relationships. There were over 2,700 people in attendance including 800+ priests, 40+ bishops, and 103 Seminarians.

This meeting helped galvanize many orthodox Episcopal believers to work together to maintain a unity with the Anglican Communion while calling upon the Episcopal Church to repent of its decisions to depart from the majority of the Anglicans worldwide.

I will summarize the actions of the conference so that you may get a sense of what will happen next.

First, the AAC conference passed a “Call to Action” which stated the following:

+We proclaim the Lord’s Great Commandment and Great Commission to be our life’s highest calling.

+We repudiate the 74<sup>th</sup> General Convention’s confirmation of a non-celibate homosexual to be a bishop of the Church, and its acceptance of same-sex blessings as part of our common life. These actions have broken fellowship with the larger body of Christ and have brought the Episcopal Church under God’s judgment.

+We repent of our part in the sins of the Episcopal Church, and we pray for all those who are being led astray by these actions.

+We call the leadership of the Episcopal Church to repent of and reverse the unbiblical and schismatic actions of the General Convention.

+We declare our commitment to the Lord’s life-giving teaching about sexuality and marriage embraced by Christians throughout all ages, and as affirmed by the 1998 Lambeth Conference. We celebrate God’s unconditional love for all people, and we proclaim God’s transforming power for everyone seeking sexual purity and wholeness.

+We redirect our financial resources, to the fullest extent possible, towards biblically orthodox mission and ministry, and away from those structures that support the unrighteous actions of the General Convention. We will support our partners in the Anglican Communion.

+We appeal to the Primates of the Anglican Communion to intervene in the Episcopal Church to:

- a. Discipline those bishops in the Episcopal Church who, by their actions, have departed from biblical faith and order;
- b. Guide the realignment of Anglicanism in North America;
- c. Encourage orthodox bishops as they extend episcopal oversight, pastoral care, and apostolic mission across current diocesan boundaries, and
- d. Support isolated and beleaguered parishes and individuals in their life and witness as faithful Anglican Christians.

Most of those in attendance signed the above Call to Action and these were delivered to the Primates of the Anglican Communion who met a week later. These Primates (including the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church) unanimously decided the following related to the whole Anglican Communion (of which the Episcopal Church is a part):

1. The Global church achieved consensus despite huge obstacles. The Primates exercised strong moral leadership. They have made their voice heard.
2. The Lambeth teaching on human sexuality (1998) is reaffirmed. It has moral force and commands the respect of the Communion.
3. The Scriptures are regarded as the basis of our faith.
4. No group has the right to impose their view (on human sexuality) in a unilateral manner.
5. The actions of ECUSA and New Westminster are wrong and both are on notice.
6. As a 'bishop', Gene Robinson will not be recognized by most of the Anglican world.
7. The action to consecrate him as a bishop in the church is schismatic.
8. The consecration in New Hampshire will tear the fabric of the Anglican Communion at its deepest level.
9. The Primates are calling for adequate episcopal oversight for the protection of those who are dissenting from the teaching and practices of their provinces concerning the innovations on human sexuality.
10. The actions of the Diocese of New Westminster are rebuked and decried as schismatic.
11. The Archbishop of Canterbury's appointed commission will oversee the responsible realignment for the sake of maintaining communion with the Anglican Communion.

So, what does this mean for us? The decisions of the Primates, while it did not contain some of what we wanted, sets the groundwork for a realignment of the Anglican Communion which will give

those wishing to align themselves with orthodox Anglicans around the world a possible way to do that should the Episcopal Church proceed on the path it appears to be going.

We are in discussion with other Episcopal churches in our area regarding the future of orthodox Episcopal churches in Western New York. We are looking at canonical and Religious Corporation law related to our property, buildings and funds as it may be affected in the future. We will be redirecting funds to support ministries that better reflect our philosophy of ministry.

The conference in Dallas declared that “we are not leaving the Episcopal Church, but rather the Episcopal Church has left the teachings of the Anglican Communion.”

As you can see the decisions of the leaders of the American Episcopal Church represent a fringe minority while those who espouse orthodox, biblical morality represent the majority of worldwide Anglicanism and worldwide Christianity as well.

We received letters of support from other denominations, including a letter directly from Pope John Paul II. We heard testimonies from two men who lived as homosexuals for over twenty years each. They testified that they have embraced biblical morality and are no longer living a homosexual lifestyle. One is a priest who got married after leaving homosexuality and now has nine children. The other is living a celibate life. They both told of many groups around the country which are made up of those who are working their way out of homosexuality. These two men were living examples of the possibility that one

can stop unbiblical sexual activity and live in obedience to God.

Ultimately, I can tell you to be patient. Hang in there. Continue to support St. Michael's as we continue to seek God's direction for us in the future. Most of all, keep praying. Prayer is firing the winning shot.

I encourage any of you who have questions about the conference, our position as a church, or about the reasons why we are opposed to the decisions of the recent General Convention, to please talk to me at your convenience

LET US GROW!

Fr. Roger

### **KEEP UPDATED**

If you would like to keep updated on the ongoing conflict within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion you might visit the following websites:

[www.americananglican.org](http://www.americananglican.org)  
[www.virtuosityonline.org](http://www.virtuosityonline.org).

### **PENCE CANS**

The Pence Can Offering is an opportunity each of us has to use mite box containers (located in the vestibule of the church) to put in our loose change and extra money. This money is used for special needs of the church that are not covered by the annual budget. Recently we used this fund to pay for our church carpet cleaning.

Those having PC funds please get them in. We will count them some time this month at a time convenient to the counters. Please turn your boxes in any Sunday. They do cost \$.10 each and in order to save the counters' time, perhaps you would like to count out your pennies

and write a check or place the money in an envelope and re-use your boxes. Not necessary, but a thought to all. Thank you.

### **COVENANT/COMMITMENT SUNDAY**

As we wrote you in our October NEWSLETTER, November 9<sup>th</sup> will be Covenant/Commitment Sunday. You will receive letters, Pledge Cards and a Diocesan Pledge sheet shortly in the mail. Please consider your pledge carefully and bring it to church on Commitment Sunday.

On that Sunday we will burn the pledge cards as an offering to God and we will collect the cards on which you place the amount you wish to give to the Diocese and National Church this next year. These will be kept for our records.

We will be presenting the 2004 budget at the Annual Parish Meeting. We anticipate budgeting for our growth, which means certain key areas will need to be increased to facilitate that growth. Please consider this, as you get ready to make your pledge to God.

### **QUIET DAY**

December 3<sup>rd</sup> will be our Annual Quiet Day when the Congregation is invited to join us in prayer and meditation with a simple lunch to follow. Father Richard Mollison of St. Stephen's, Niagara Falls, will lead us. This will help us to put a Christian focus amid all the joyous confusion of the Christmas season.

I encourage any of you who have questions about the conference, our position as a church, or about the reasons why we are opposed to the decisions of the recent General Convention, to please talk to me at your convenience

### **THURSDAY NIGHT ALIVE**

A mid-week gathering of St. Michael's will feature Holy Communion, Contemporary worship with Prayer and Praise, and Bible teaching. This "Thursday Night Alive" will be held on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in the church Nave. Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians are welcome.

On the other Thursdays of the month anyone is welcome to meet for prayer, sharing, praise in the Conference Room at 7 p.m.

### **CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

Tuesday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> is our Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Italian Village Restaurant. Tickets are \$12.50 and menu choices are Manicotti, Chicken Cordon Bleu and Pork Chops. See Lois Conliffe for Tickets.

### **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

Please remember to bring your gift-filled shoeboxes to church by November 9<sup>th</sup>. These boxes will be sent to children all over the world affected by wars, natural disasters and poverty. In addition to the gift boxes, the children receive a storybook about God's greatest gift – the Lord Jesus Christ. Last year over 6,000 boxes were sent from Western New York. Each shoebox shows Christ's love to the boys and girls. You can bring love, joy and hope to these children.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM**

There will be a combination Nov/Dec. meeting December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

**WORSHIP TEAM** – November 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

### **ADDRESS CHANGE:**

Please advise us if there have been any changes in your address, phone number or E-mail address as we are in the

process of printing a new directory for the Parish and we do like to have every thing correct before it is finished.

Also, we like to keep your birthdays and anniversaries updated, so please advise us if you are not on the posted lists. Thank you to those of you who responded to my recent request. –Madeline – Parish Secretary

### **THANK YOU**

In October, we received donations of a generous check to purchase office supplies, paper clips, a case of 8 x 11 paper, a case of legal size paper and several packs of paper for the office – thank you so much as it really does help us to cut down on expenses when you are generous enough to donate office supplies.

### **VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS**

+Assistant Treasurer reported that all bills are paid except for the Diocesan Assessment.

+Sr. Warden announced that two new refrigerators were purchased replacing the 25+ year-old ones in the kitchen.

+Ed G. will make list of needed tools for the church.

+Missions and Outreach announced their monthly giving to worthwhile local projects. Upcoming hands on ministry to be arranged at Friends of the Night People.

+New Picture Directory nearly complete. Mike Ham in charge.

+Covenant Sunday will be held on 11/9 at which time pledge cards will be burned.

### **ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

The celebration of the Feast of All Saints will be transferred to Sunday, November 2. On this day you will be encouraged to add the name/s of a loved one/s to our list of those saints that we want to remember before God.

## MY PLEDGE

*Bob Jones*

I do not pledge to nail and wood  
That makes a church that looks good.  
I do not pledge to the cross that's there  
Nor to the table or the chair.  
I do not pledge to the temple tax  
Nor the candles made of wax.  
I do not pledge to fix a leak  
Nor to listen to a preacher speak.  
My pledge I give to God above  
To thank him for His grace and love.  
I pledge to His son who died for me  
And from my sin He set me free.  
I pledge to His Spirit that He gives  
To teach me the way that I should live.  
I pledge to thank Him for all I derive  
And that is why I pledge my tithe.

**“Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test,” says the LORD of hosts, “see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.” *Malachi 3: 10***

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 3 Patti Moghabghab | 14 Addie Broome   |
| 4 Meghan Eckle     | 15 Debbie Mendel  |
| 8 Ronna Bulera     | 15 Deborah Bulera |
| 8 Rose Miller      | 18 Brian Webster  |
| 13 Olive Beutler   | 25 Betty Walker   |
| 13 Chuck Gardinier | 30 Erin VanLente  |

## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11/17 – Nancy & Roger Grist  
11/19 – Donna & Richard Strain  
11/21 – Jane & Leslie Robinson

## HORNS OF PLENTY CONCERT

This concert, with a variety of artists, benefits Episcopal Community Services and area Food Pantries. The date is Saturday Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> at the Riviera Theater in North Tonawanda. Tickets are \$10.00 per person, \$8.00 for Seniors and Students, and may be purchased through

ECS at 881-0660 or by calling the Riviera at 692-2113. There is also a Brass Rail ticket for \$50.00, with a Cocktail Reception before the concert at the Carnegie Art Center in North Tonawanda, with a string orchestra playing. This also gives you reserved seats in the center balcony.

## HIGH TEA LUNCHEON

On Saturday, November 1, 2003 at 12:00 noon there will be a “High Tea” for the ladies of St. Michael’s. The cost is \$5.00 per person and all you need to do is purchase a ticket and come. No fuss – no muss. This will be a great time for us all to get together and just visit and have some yummy treats.

## THURSDAY NIGHT ALIVE PRAYER AND PRAISE

Do you enjoy singing contemporary songs, having a time of Bible teaching, sharing and prayer? Would you like to combine this with Communion? If so, you are invited to our Thursday Night Alive service on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in the Church. Come and bring a friend. The service will last about an hour.

Other Thursdays we meet together for a time of Prayer and Praise, sharing, a short Bible teaching and fellowship. All are welcome to join us in the Conference room at 7 p.m.

## WOMEN’S GUILD

Our Women’s Guild meeting will be held on November 5<sup>th</sup> after our noontime brown bag lunch. Dessert will be provided.

Boxes for Project “Christmas Child” should be in along with the \$5.00 fee for handling. At this time also we will be taking reservations for our Christmas Luncheon at the Italian Village on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO US!!!**

ChurchActs recently announced the winners of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual John Akers Congregational Communication Awards. Our own Bob Weekley won an Award of Merit for General Excellence for a Website and Honorable Mention for a Seeker Friendly Website.

Father Roger won an Award of Merit for his June NEWSLETTER "Notes from the Rector" column on "Receiving the Holy Spirit". Madeline Schwedt, Editor, won Honorable Mention for the Most Improved Newsletter. The awards were presented at the Convention Banquet.

### **THE POWER OF ONE**

*Author Unknown*

One song can spark a moment  
One flower can wake the dream  
One tree can start a forest  
One bird can herald spring  
One smile begins a friendship  
One handclasp lifts a soul  
One star can guide a ship at sea  
One word can frame the goal  
One vote can change a nation  
One sunbeam lights a room  
One candle wipes out darkness  
One laugh will conquer gloom  
One step must start each journey  
One word must start a prayer  
One hope will raise our spirits  
One touch can show you care  
One voice can speak with wisdom  
One heart can know what is true  
One soul can make a difference  
Your life belongs to you.

## **THANKSGIVING DAY**

Thanksgiving Day 11/27 will feature a service at 9:30 a.m. This service will include hymns, opportunities for corporate thanksgiving, and Holy Communion.

## **MISSIONS AND OUTREACH**

Would like to know if there are any charities you would like us to become involved with. We are currently helping Canaan House, Friends of the Night People, and Kevin Guest House. We would love to have your input. Contact: Bob DuVall, Dave & Mary Noonan, Joan Webster and Shirley Szen. Our next meeting is Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. at St. Michael's and is open to all.

## **UNITED THANK OFFERING**

We were able to send over \$600.00 to the Diocesan Thank Offering Fund. Western New York received two grants. Niagara Falls Episcopal Urban Ministry requested \$54,484.00 and received \$15,550.00. Christian Resource/Media Center at St. Mary's Salamanca requested \$9,797.83 and received \$8,000.00. St. Mary's also received a Church Periodical Club grant of \$1500.00. So you see, our offerings are at work here as well as abroad.

## **HELP WANTED**

Our adopted School #61 needs volunteers in many areas. Could you spare a half-day, a few hours, or any time at all to assist teachers and children with any of these learning skills?

- Recognizing colors
- Practicing vocabulary (flash cards)
- Counting objects
- Reading stories

This is practice with pupils on a one-to-one basis.

Assistance is also needed in the music room. Help is also needed on "Treat Friday" when bags of popcorn are distributed.

Discipline is strict at the school and the staff is most appreciative.

Thank you for considering this appeal. If you are available, contact Bea Haley or Virginia Bradley.

## **RECIPE CORNER**

1 Can Texas Ranch Beans  
1 small Onion chopped – about ½ cup  
2 large Tomatoes diced  
1 cup Shredded Cheese  
Catalina Dressing  
½ pkg. Fritos  
Mix all ingredients and place in refrigerator (you can leave in Fridge overnight). Add Fritos just before you serve. *Alexandra Grist*

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- 12/3- Women's Quiet Day
- 12/21- Hanging of the Greens
- 12/24- Christmas Eve services 5:30 p.m. Family Service – 11:00 p.m. Traditional Christmas service.
- 12/25- Christmas Day – 10:30 a.m.

## **ADVENT IS COMING**

Advent is the first season of the church year. It is a season of preparation for the celebration of Jesus' first coming (Incarnation) and his Second coming (Parousia). The season of Advent begins on November 30 and concludes with the celebration of Christmas. The church is decked out in blue or purple reflecting the penitential nature of the season and the royalty of Jesus as our coming King.

## **INSTRUCTED EUCHARISTS**

Did you ever wonder why we do some of the things we do during the service of Holy Eucharist? Do you find that the service has lost some of its meaning?

If you answered yes to either or both of these questions you are in luck. On November 9, 16, 23 Fr. Roger will be explaining certain aspects of our service and liturgy on each of these Sundays.

This is a great opportunity for you to invite friends, neighbors and relatives whom you have wanted to interest in coming to church. Take a chance. Invite an unchurched guest.

## **JOINT VESTRY MEETING**

St. Michael's Vestry will be meeting with the Vestries of St. Bartholomew's, St. Stephen's and others. We will be discussing our response to the recent Primates meeting, Diocesan Convention and AAC meeting. The meeting will be at St. Bart's at 7 p.m. November 11.

The regular Vestry meeting will be November 18 at 7 p.m. at St. Michael's.

## **THANKSGIVING BASKETS**

We who have so much to be thankful for can show our appreciation by giving to others, as our St. Michael's family always does. Donations of the makings for a Thanksgiving dinner of canned goods, soup, cranberry sauce, spaghetti sauces, pasta, turkeys or cash are appreciated. You may leave the food donations on the back counter in the kitchen, cash donations may be put in an envelope and place on the collection plate. Thank you.

## **PLEASE CALL THE PARISH OFFICE – 836-0220**

1. When a member of your family is in the hospital.
2. When you learn of a death in a parish family.
3. When your class, group or committee plans to have a meeting. We **MUST** have classes and meetings on the calendar to avoid conflicts.
4. When your address and/or phone number is changed.
5. When you learn of someone who may be a prospect for our church.
6. When you feel we can assist you in ANY way.