

A St. Andrew's Prayer

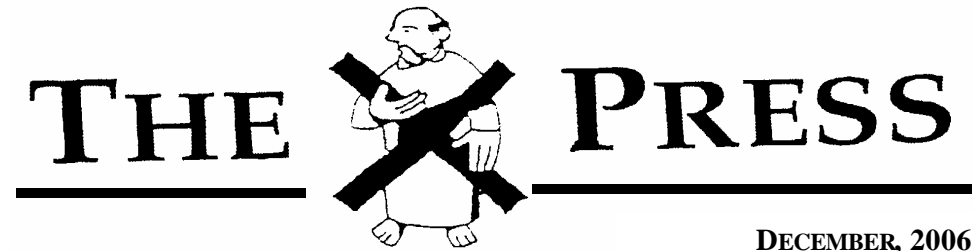
O God, who has taught us to trust in Thee as our loving Father;
Open our hearts to share that most daring faith
which thou has revealed to Thy servants in all ages,
til the littleness of our knowledge is lost in the greatness of Thy love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Written by the Right Rev. Charles Lewis Slattery
Vicar, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 1894-1896
Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts 1927-1930

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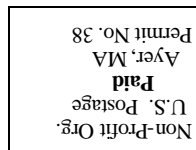
DECEMBER, 2006

Dear People of Saint Andrew's,

Advent, which begins on 3 December, is about waiting, anticipating and expecting. But waiting for what? The first thing that comes to mind is Christmas which we can anticipate with excitement and dread. Excitement because of the joy and beauty of Christmas' meaning and dread because of the stress and tension of the season. The Church also emphasizes particularly at the beginning of Advent the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time. We wait for those two comings as Christians, the first and second comings of Jesus, but of course we expect and anticipate more in our consumer-driven society.

Waiting is never easy and patience is not one of my virtues. Recently I took a class here in Manchester on "mindfulness" and learning techniques for being present to the moment through breathing and other methods of concentration, learning to relax and focus on what is being experienced right now. I realized how much my mind wanted to go to things in the past or an imaginary future and how difficult it was to patiently enjoy and experience the moment present, the only moment we have. It's hard work. I won't use this space to go into all the class involved or taught me except to say I have a long way to go.

Advent offers us an opportunity and challenge to wait for God's revealing, not in a passive way as we might when we wait for the



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weather to change, but being engaged in all the events of Christ's Advent(s) set against the backdrop of incredible seasonal stress, frightening world events, and our own personal issues. It is however in those comings that the ultimate meaning of creation is summed and understood and our waiting by being present to the immediate moment of God's presence can change how we deal with this time. It's not the lights, the tinsel, the parties, the gifts but being present to Jesus who came and will come again but now is also present who will take the time to take some deep breaths and let the Holy Spirit reveal God's love and how we are God's beloved. That is the best antidote to the stress and the fullest way of really experiencing the power and meaning of Christmas. Let's wait and be present, a challenge but worth it!

Faithfully in Him,



Alan B. MacKillop
Priest in Residence



KEEP 'EM COMING!

The Stewardship Committee (and everybody else, as a matter of fact) is elated by the wonderful response to the pledge campaign: New people have pledged, pledges have been raised and we are within sight of the goal. There will be a complete report in the January X-Press – but meanwhile, if you have not yet made a commitment to the ministry of St. Andrew's - DO IT NOW!

A Note from the Treasurer: If you want to make an offering to the church, which you also plan to use in calculating your 2006 income tax, remember it has to be made by December 31st!

YOUNG LIFE DINNERS ...

Saint Andrew's is providing dinners to Young Life every other week on Wednesday when over 20 young people meet at the home in Devens of Eric Stoltzfus, YL Director. This is a great help to Eric and his wife who have young children and very limited budget. Young Life is reaching teens who probably most churches would not touch, many from dysfunctional backgrounds through a program that begins in a social setting and gradually presents the gospel in a setting where they experience community and a sense of belonging and being valued. These dinners are being coordinated by Nicola Barlow and a number of parishioners have contributed this fall but more are needed. If you would be willing to make a dinner please call Nicola at 978-448-8951. She will be glad to hear from you and YL will appreciate it.

And Other Outreach News

The Vestry in November confirmed recommendations of the Outreach Commission for disbursements to Episcopal Relief and Development, especially directed toward continuing help for Gulf Coast reconstruction, the Diocese of Katanga in Africa, our companion diocese in Tanzania, Africa, Our Prison Neighbors, a ministry at the prison in Shirley, Loaves and Fishes, Habitat for Humanity and Gail White, our missionary in Spain with the South American Missionary Society.

Editor's Note:

Next Issue: January 2007

Deadline: December 17th

Send submissions to: acahill@hybricon.com, or drop off your submissions at the Church Office during office hours or in the Peabody Room on Sundays.

Questions? Please call me at: (978) 448-4053 (home) or (978) 772-5422 x 323 (work).

*Be sure to include your name and telephone number on **all** submissions!*

A Word from the Membership Commission

Advent is a wonderful time at St. Andrew's. When students return home and friends & family gather for the holidays, rather than staying home with them on Sunday mornings, won't you consider bringing them along with you to St. Andrew's? There will be pews reserved near the Snuggery for families with infants. If you get a late start, come anyway; we'd rather have you late than not at all! This has been a year of strength and growth; let's finish the year by filling the sanctuary every Sunday in Advent. See you in church!

High o'er the lonely hills black turns to gray,
Bird-song the valley fills, mists fold away
Gray wakes to green again,
Beauty is seen again,
Gold and serene again dawneth the day.

So, o'er the hills of life, stormy, forlorn,
Out of the cloud and strife sunrise is born;
Swift grows the light for us,
Ended is night for us,
Soundless and bright for us breaketh God's morn.

Hear we no beat of drums, fanfare, nor cry,
When Christ the herald comes quietly nigh;
Splendor He makes on earth;
Color awakes on earth;
Suddenly breaks on earth light from the sky.

Bid then farewell to sleep: rise up and run!
What though the hill be steep? Strength's in the sun.
Now you shall find at last
Night's left behind at last,
And for mankind at last, Day has begun!

... Jan Struther

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year which always has it's own peculiarities because the morning service is for the Fourth Sunday in Advent with actual Christmas services beginning at 5:00 p.m. Keep that in mind as you come to church that day (perhaps twice). Please also note there will be no services on Christmas and New Year's Day.

Sunday, December 24

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

5:00 p.m. Family Eucharist with Carols

A child from the Sunday School will take the Figure of the Christ Child from the altar and place it in the manger

9:30 p.m. Preparatory Organ Music -Michael Smith

10:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist

Sunday, December 31



St. Andrew's Mailing List

Over the last few months, several individuals have remarked, "I used to receive "The X-Press but I don't anymore," or "I grew up in this parish and would enjoy knowing what is going on here." If you know someone who would like to receive "The X-Press" free of charge—students away from home, former parishioners, Episcopalians who are not attending another church regularly—please do contact Lynn Ferrillo in the parish office. We'd be pleased to add them to our mailing list to receive "The X-Press" and postcards about upcoming events at St. Andrew's.

In A Manger



An Exhibition of Nativities from Around the World

Saturday, December 9, 2006
10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
Parish Hall

FREE ADMISSION

- ★ More than 150 Nativities from around the world
 - ★ Tabletop Nativities
 - ★ Miniature Nativities
 - ★ Christmas Tree with Nativity Ornaments
- ★ Homemade Christmas Cookies and Cider
- ★ Children's Activity Table
- ★ Bring Family and Friends
- ★ Children Especially Welcome

★Austria ★Chile ★China ★Colombia ★France ★Germany ★Guatemala ★Haiti ★
★India ★Israel ★Italy ★Kenya ★Madagascar ★Mexico ★Nigeria ★Peru ★
★Phillippines ★Poland ★Russia ★Slovak Republic ★Tanzania ★USA ★Viet Nam ★

NOTE: If you are loaning a nativity, please try to drop it off at the Parish Hall before noon Friday, December 8th and plan to pick it up after church on Sunday, December 10th.

Vestry Meeting Highlights

Highlights from the October, 2006 Vestry Meeting:

- ✘ Priest-in-Residence Report: One year elapsed since Fr. Alan has returned. Stabilization and growth has occurred; Sunday School has grown to 30 registrants. Need to establish St. Andrew's Safe Church Practice Policies (as requested by the diocese). New church directory to be done in-house with the help of Carolyn who will take photos. A white mahogany cross has been installed on cupola using donated funds.
- ✘ Senior Warden's Report: Handicap Access Ramp— still need to receive written quotes in order to go forward with project (informal estimates received are in the area of \$12k). Sign Design — Drawings close to being finished by Groton designer. Sound System— Dick Dabrowski to contact vendor re feedback problems experienced last week. Exterior Church Cleaning — Russ asked that parishioners be asked their opinions before any plans are made to clean the outside stone on the church. Russ suggested that a policy be established to limit the discussions of Vestry-related business to Vestry meetings rather than e-mail.
- ✘ Junior Wardens' Report: Mary reported that the basement dampness is causing the vestments (which are stored there) to smell. Carolyn suggested using a non-electrical dehumidifying product in the basement to combat the problem.
- ✘ Investment Policy: Based on a discussion with Steven Pierce (Diocesan Comptroller), Marilyn requested that a financial policy be established by the Vestry to outline the investment accounts as to: The location of investment records; The procedure for choosing the trustee handling the accounts; The procedure for auditing the accounts; The need to be bonded to protect both the church's and volunteers' assets. Sue suggested that investment accounts be shown on our books now that income is no longer used as the basis for the diocesan assessment. Newly established Safe Practices sub-committee to oversee the establishment of the church's investment and financial policies .
- ✘ Treasurer's Report: Income difference between 2006 Actual and 2006 Budget to date of negative \$8,345.74 due to timing issues (November fair), fewer building renters, 3 months the rectory remained unrented and some pledges not realized. Expense difference between 2006 Actual and 2006 Budget to date of negative \$12,255.93 due to increased costs of liability insurance and janitorial services as well as payroll tax left over from 2005 and unbudgeted church painting. Report included first draft of a 2007 budget which will be discussed at the next Vestry meeting.
- ✘ Commission Reports:
 - ✘ Membership: Working on church directory; Road signs that had been ordered have been received; Planning on sending a postcard per month to parishioners regarding a church happening (Holiday Fair, In a Manger, etc.).
 - ✘ Stewardship: Sue reported that we have received two pledges in the amount of \$9,100 (off to a great start!).
 - ✘ New Business: Tri-Church Service—Suggested it be held during the Dec. 9th "In a Manger" to include an old-fashioned carol sing and soup supper.

Annual Convention

The annual Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts took place on October 27 and 28, 2006. Father MacKillop attended along with St. Andrew's delegates Jeanne Cassin and Kim Lindo. The Convention opened with a Meditation by Bishop Shaw in which he enumerated the goals of the Diocese:

- To plan new worshipping communities
- To send new assistance to urban congregations and fully fund them
- To create a program to fund parish capital campaigns, enabling congregations to develop leadership and skills
- To support new campuses and young adult ministries
- To engage in mission through parish-based partnerships – local, domestic and global
- To address issues of social and economic justice through corporate and individual advocacy
- To work for AIDS prevention, education and awareness in Africa
- To provide practical resources and training opportunities for congregations in evangelism, stewardship, congregational development and Christian formation.

Dr. Robert Radtke of the Episcopal Relief and Development spoke. The ERD, formerly known as the Presiding Bishop's Fund, is a not-for-profit corporation whose targets are Disaster, Disease and Entrenched Poverty, and Dr. Radtke spoke about each of these and the efforts of the ERD to address them. Of particular interest was his statement that malaria killed one million people per year, 90% in sub-Saharan Africa (twice the number of deaths from AIDS), and that one way in which ERD had addressed this problem was by providing insecticide-treated nets. Dr. Radtke said that we could assist ERD in its mission by prayer, advocacy, money donations and volunteering (referring us to their website) and by contacting their Office of Church Relations.

We attended two very interesting lunch presentations, one on Katrina relief activities and one on the Jubilee Ministries, a ministry to sub-Saharan Africa that has mobilized a number of Massachusetts parishes to find creative ways to raise funds. The Jubilee Ministries are particularly compelling because the money raised is sent directly to missionaries living in Africa who use it to buy rice and beans to provide one protein-rich meal a week to African communities. The Katrina presentation was a reminder that a huge portion of Katrina relief has been and is being organized by church organizations.

Convention approved the 2007 budget and a new formula for assessing the individual parishes and voted on a number of resolutions. Bishop Shaw discussed the importance of accountability and the need for a means of assessing the Diocese's progress in its mission of Inviting, Forming, Sending and Serving. He also reminded us that there would be a special Convention in March of 2007 to discuss congregational support and development, stewardship and other matters.

- Jeanne Cassin

December Events

FOOD FOR THE POOR. On Sunday 3 December Fr. Don Brown, an Episcopal priest working with Food for the Poor reaching people in the south and Caribbean will be sharing this important work at the 8 and 10 AM services. We welcome Fr. Brown as we think about the opportunities to reach out, in Jesus' Name to the poor and hungry. There will also be wreath-making that Sunday as well with materials that will be provided; a good start to Advent all around.

NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS. This beautiful service, originated in the 1920s at King's College Chapel, Cambridge UK and broadcast throughout the world will be offered at Groton School. This annual event will take place on Friday 8 December at 7:30PM under the direction of our own Michael Smith and is a special opportunity to entry the drama and magic of this holy season.

THE BISHOP IS COMING. The Right Reverend Thomas M. Shaw SSJE, bishop of MA, will be with us for an Episcopal Visitation on Sunday 17 December at a united service at 9AM when he will share the vision for mission in this diocese and will be available to hear us share with him at a parish brunch following the service. He will also be meeting with the Vestry and others later. This is an exiting opportunity to share what we have accomplished, our hopes and dreams as well as those he will talk about with us. Let's all be there and put our best foot forward as we welcome our chief pastor to our parish community.

MAKE A WREATH FOR ADVENT. Come to the Parish Hall, share a cup of coffee and make an Advent Wreath on Sunday, December 3rd between the two services. Wreath-making supplies will be available for a small donation. Please bring your own wreath form if you have one.



We Did It! And Then Some

Many thanks to everyone who made St. Andrew's Harvest Fair on Saturday, November 12th such a resounding success (\$5,000) – the workers, the customers, even Mother Nature! An exceptionally fine day brought lots of shoppers of all ages to the many festive tables in the parish hall. Santa Claus was a favorite destination for the young ones, and everyone enjoyed the beef stew, sandwiches, pie, etc. cheerfully served up by the youth, Mary & Vivian Ferrillo and Leah & Jason Smith, who also did a great job decorating the hall and being generally very helpful. Special thanks to organizers Barbara Kamb, Sue Hildreth and Mary Medieros, and to the vendors too.

AND THAT'S NOT ALL! There'll be another opportunity on December 10th in the Peabody Room after both services to snap up those decorations and gifts for Christmas that weren't taken the first time around. No excuses.

Need Wheels?

NEED A RIDE to Sunday services or some other St. Andrew's event? Bad weather making you nervous? Car in the shop? Given up driving? No problem!

We can help with weekly or one-time transportation. Membership Commission member Judy Adams has organized a St. Andrew's Share-A-Ride Program. Please speak with her at coffee hour after the 10:00 a.m. service on Sundays or leave a message for her at the Parish Office (978-772-2615). She will match you up with a St. Andrew's volunteer driver in your neighborhood.

Community Carol Sing

When: Saturday, December 9, 4:30 pm (Immediately following "In A Manger")

Where: In the Church

Come and sing Christmas carols on December 9. This "sing" will be held in the church at 4:30 p.m. when "In a Manger" closes. We want to reach out to the whole community with this event and urge you to invite your family, friends and neighbors. Wouldn't it be great to turn this into an annual event?

THE YEAR'S BEST (actual) HEADLINES OF 2005

Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says *[No, really?]*

Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers *[Now that's taking things a bit far!]*

Is There a Ring of Debris around Uranus? *[! Do they ever read what they write?]*

Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over *[What a guy!]*

Miners Refuse to Work after Death *[Good-for-nothing' lazy so-and-sos!]*

Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant *[See if that works any better than a fair trial!]*

War Dims Hope for Peace *[I can see where it might have that effect!]*

If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last Awhile *[You think?!]*

Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures *[Who would have thought!]*

Enfield (London) Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide *[They may be on to something!]*

Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges *[You mean there's something stronger than duct tape?!]*

Man Struck By Lightning: Faces Battery Charge *[He probably IS the battery charge]*

New Study of Obesity Looks for Larger Test Group *[Weren't they fat enough?!]*

Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft *[That's what he gets for eating those beans!]*

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks *[Taste like chicken?]*

Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half *[Chainsaw Massacre all over again!]*

Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors *[Boy, are they tall!]*

And the winner is....

Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead
[Did I read that sign right?]

December 2006

St. Andrew's Church

Tel: (978) 772-2615

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM M, W, Th, F
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM Tuesday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
<p>Other Parish Hall events: 12/4, 12/11, 12/18, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts 12/5, 12/12, 12/19, 7-9 p.m. Parents Helping Parents 12/7, 12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 7-10 p.m. AA meeting</p>					1	2																																																																																																		
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