

The St. Andrew's Xpress

March 2009

Dear People of Saint Andrew's,

Lent is upon us, the forty-day period of preparation for Easter that encourages us to fast, pray and give for the needs of others. Lent began in the church's early centuries as a time to prepare for baptism after a nearly two year time of instruction. We are asked to accompany Jesus from his temptations in the wilderness to his journey to the saving events of Holy Week, centering on his death on the cross. Lenten disciplines are not forms of self-improvement like New Year resolutions but a time of reflection, real time diverted from things that are not necessarily bad but making more time to focus on the real meaning of life, of our relationship with God and God's call upon us for mission and service. That means making a decision of prioritizing our time and attention with all the other distractions and claims upon our time. I would be happy to help anyone develop a Lenten discipline, and do encourage using our worship schedule on Sundays and Wednesdays for the Eucharist.

I also want to encourage all of you to come to our Lenten mid-week program that starts with a soup supper at 6:00 p.m. followed at 7:00 p.m. by a book discussion based on Bishop Shaw's recently-published book, "Conversations with Scripture and with Each Other." It will be a valuable spring board for developing a deeper spiritual life in the parish based on both scripture and Bishop Shaw's astute insights into biblical narratives and into our lives together as members of the church of Jesus Christ. We

have forms in the Peabody Room to sign up both for the book and for participating in the soup suppers, to bring soup, bread or rolls or drinks. Please consider this valuable opportunity to grow together this Lent with the help of our bishop M. Thomas Shaw SSJE. He is one of the great spiritual leaders in the Episcopal Church

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will see information about our diocesan learning day on March 7th. I want to tell you that the speaker, Brian McLaren, is one of the best and most profound Christian thinkers I have come across. I was fortunate to hear him in San Diego when I met with the clergy of that diocese where I am canonically resident when Erica and I were out visiting our son and his wife. I have read Brian McLaren and wanted to take advantage of his meeting with the clergy while I was there. Hearing him, reading his book and talking to him were powerful experiences for me, and I want to have as many people as possible hear him on March 7th. This man is powerful and is not to be missed. Join me in Boston that day.

May God help all of us to have and keep a good and holy Lent.

Faithfully in Jesus,

Fr. Alan

(The Rev.) Alan B. MacKillop

The St. Andrew's Xpress

A monthly Newsletter serving the
Central Massachusetts community

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NOTE: Remember to mark your calendar for the
April 2009 newsletter deadline:

Monday, March 16, 2009

Diocesan Spring Learning Event
Featuring



Brian McLaren, author of *Everything Must Change*

Saturday, March 9, 2009
Boston University, George Sherman Union
775 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston
9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Brian McLaren, a noted international speaker and a leading voice in the emergent church movement, was listed by *Time* magazine as one of America's 25 most influential evangelicals. By special invitation of the archbishop of Canterbury, he addressed the assembled bishops at the July 2008 Lambeth Conference on the gifts of Anglicanism to meet the challenge of evangelism in the world today.

Advance registration is required at www.diomass.org.
For more information call (617) 482-4826, ext. 645

Brian McLaren's book, *Everything Must Change*, is available to help individuals and groups prepare for the event.

\$15.00 General Admission
\$10.00 Box Lunch (or you may bring a bag lunch)

In addition, the Rev. Marsha Hoecker will lead a five-week study of *Everything Must Change* at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Westford, on Wednesday evenings. The first session will begin at 7:30 p.m. on March 4. The series is open to anyone, and members of the Nashoba Valley Episcopal Partnership Churches are especially welcome.

How Christianity is Changing and Why



Author and Episcopal Church leader, Phyllis Tickle, will lead a learning event based on her most recent book, “The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why.” The event will be held on Thursday, March 26, 2009 from 11:30 a.m.

to 7:30 p.m. at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, 138 Tremont Street, Boston.

At this gathering, she will explore emerging shifts in the Christian landscape, along with lessons and opportunities for the mainline liturgical church.

All are welcome to attend Phyllis Tickle’s keynote address and discussions from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and worship from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The program cost is \$25.00, and lunch is \$15.00. For registration, go to web site: www.thecrossingboston.org. You can also register at www.diomass.org.

For more information, call Marie Harkey at (419) 346-4549 or you can email her at mkarkey@gmail.com.

Good Friday Offering



Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has asked for support for the annual

Good Friday Offering as an opportunity to demonstrate solidarity with Anglicans and all Christians in the Holy Land. For the past 87 years, a Good Friday Offering has been taken up for the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. The offering supports hospitals, schools, orphanages and other programs that serve Christians, Jews and Muslims alike. The bishops also invite the diocesan community to join in common prayer during Lent on issues of mutual concern: the environment, peace, health care, the economy and racism. Envelopes for offering will be available in each of the pews at St. Andrew’s.

Vestry Highlights

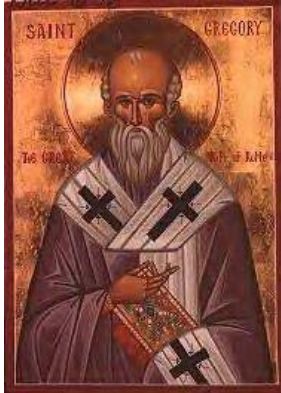
Fr. Alan explained that his title is now Priest-in-Charge since his past title of Priest-in-Residence is no longer being used by the diocese

It was decided that we engage the services of Chad Hemenway for the church’s snowplowing. Pricing was cheaper than what was quoted from Ray Williams, and Chad has a sander on his truck. Problem with unauthorized cars parking in parking lot during snowstorm and parking in the handicap space. Suggested that we install handicap sign in front of handicap space. Suggested that we contact the police department about methods of use to keep cars out of lot during snow removal.

Stewardship Campaign Completion: John Ott will call individuals he feels are likely to pledge and send a letter to all others on the mailing list who have not pledged. John and Dick are working on a campaign appeal to those people who have been loyal in the past but for any number of reasons are no longer attending St. Andrew’s and ask them if they would be willing to make a contribution to the church in 2009. Vote on amended budget to include: salary increases for Fr. Alan MacKillop, Lynn Ferrillo, Nancy Mayo and Kyle Bertulli.

From the Editor

Gregory the Great, the First Monk to Become Pope



Pope St. Gregory I, aka St. Gregory the Great

It is possible that Gregory--Greek, Gregorius, meaning “vigilant” or “watchman”--was born during or shortly after the Plague of Justinian. The pandemic disease, caused by flea-bearing rats harboring in the grain being shipped from the southernmost regions of Egypt, was beginning its surge across the Eastern Roman Empire at a time near his birth in Rome. The exact date is unknown, but most experts estimate sometime around AD 540-545. When Gregory was a young boy, Italy was suffering the devastations of hunger and pestilence, which was brought about by the invasion of the Goths during the reign of Emperor Justinian I.

Gregory’s great-great-grandfather was Pope Felix III (pope from 483 to 492). His father, Gordianus, was a *Regionarius* in the Roman Church and appears to have been a wealthy descendant of the *gen amicia*, a noble Roman senatorial family. He owned large estates throughout Sicily and a palace on Caelian Hill, one of the Seven Hills of Rome, today overlooking the Via di San Gregorio.

Prior to her marriage, little is known about Gregory’s mother, Silvia, other than she came from a distinguished family. Following the death of her husband and known for her great piety, she entered religious seclusion at

Cella Nova near the basilica of St. Paul. Silvia was later venerated as a saint.

Johannes Diaconus--John the Deacon of Rome--wrote in his biography of St. Gregory the Great a description of the family from portraits done in fresco. According to Johannes, Pope Gregory “was ‘rather bald’ with a ‘tawny’ beard like his father’s.” His sideburns were “long and carefully curled. His nose was thin and straight and slightly aquiline. His forehead was high. He had thick, ‘subdivided’ lips and a chin ‘of a comely prominence’ and ‘beautiful hands.’”

Gregory was well educated with an excellence in grammar, dialectic and rhetoric. He also took courses in legal studies. Greatly influenced by his religious upbringing, he also spent a great deal of time meditating on the Scriptures. With his educational foundation, he turned to public life as a career. By the time he reached his early thirties, he was appointed to the Office of Prefect of the City of Rome, the highest civil honor in the city.

For two years, Gregory inwardly struggled between the position of Prefect and his lifelong yearning for the monastery. Following in the footsteps of his mother and three paternal aunts who were nuns, two of which were also canonized, he abandoned his career to devote his life to God. After the death of his father, Gregory used his inherited fortune to convert the six estates in Sicily into monasteries. The mansion on Caelian Hill, over which he also built a monastery, was dedicated to the Apostle St. Andrew (ca. 574). He lived in retirement and seclusion at the Monastery of St. Andrew until he was called and ordained by Pope Pelagius II as one of the seven deacons of Rome. After Gregory’s death in 604, the monastery on the hill was rededicated as San Gregorio Magno al Celio.

In 579, Gregory was dispatched by the Pope on a diplomatic mission as permanent ambassador to the imperial court in Constantinople, where he would remain for more than five years.

Gregory Continued from Page 5

Gregory was called back to Rome in 585, where he was thrilled to be appointed abbot at the Monastery of St. Andrew. This gave him the opportunity to teach the Holy Scriptures and complete his literary work, *Magna Moralia*, lectures on the Book of Job.

The year before Gregory was elected Pope, Italy was devastated by a country-wide flood, one that caused the Tiber to overflow its banks, destroying buildings, houses, farms and granaries of the churches where huge volumes of corn were stored. Businesses were collapsing, streets were barren, pestilence was spreading throughout the cities and towns, and wagons carried countless corpses to their common burial in the pits dug in faraway fields. And in 590, Pelagius II died.

The life of the devoted monk, Gregory, would take a dramatic turn when the cloistered life he loved would come to a sudden halt. He wrote to the Emperor Maurice, begging him not to confirm his election as pope. Gregory was terrified and even planned a course of action to flee. But to no avail. He was overtaken and carried to the Basilica of St. Peter where he was consecrated Pope Gregory on 3 September, 590.

During his papacy, he substituted all lay attendants with clerics; fed the refugees with corn from the churches; saw to spiritual needs with many of his sermons still in existence today; instituted the "stations" still observed and noted in the Roman Missal; passed six decrees which deal with ecclesiastical discipline; funded numerous charities; helped sooth relationships with other churches, countries and governments; negotiated a peace agreement with the Lombards who had invaded Italy; and he was responsible for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

After a few years of great suffering from pain and despondency, Saint Gregory died on 12 March, 604 and was buried in front of the sacristy in the portico of St. Peter's Basilica. His canonization immediately followed his death. One of his oratories is engraved over the tomb of his beloved mother, Silvia.

A Note from Barbara LeDeaux Volunteers Needed for Loaves & Fishes

I've been volunteering at Loaves & Fishes for about 5 years and have found it to be a good way to meet people and also serve the community. I have done a variety of tasks: stocking shelves (the food pantry is set up like a grocery store), cleaning, screening clients and distributing the food and household items. The system of food and clothing distribution is by need, and everything is organized on the computer to keep track of things.

As you may know, Loaves & Fishes was originally begun at St. Andrew's Church but has moved from place to place after that, including the Federated Church in Ayer and the Conference Center at Devens until the new building was erected a few years ago. The facility is open on Wednesdays and Fridays as well as first and third Saturdays, and there are special hours at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The site administrator is Pamela Myllykangas, but the pantry depends on volunteers from churches and businesses to keep things moving. See their website at www.devenspantry.org and think about volunteering yourself!

Altar Flowers



The 2009 Altar Flower chart is posted in the Peabody Room, so please feel free to sign up to donate flowers or call the church office at 978-772-2615. Thank you!

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

March 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	2. 9:30 am Bible Study	3.	4. 12 Noon HE with Healing Prayers 6:00 pm Soup Supper & Book Study	5. 12:20 pm St. Andrew's Weavers 6:30 pm AA 7:00 pm Choir	6.	7.
8. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service DST Begins	9. 9:30 am Bible Study	10.	11. 12 Noon HE with Healing Prayers 6:00 pm Soup Supper & Book Study	12. 12:20 pm St. Andrew's Weavers 6:30 pm AA 7:00 pm Choir	13.	14.
15. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	16. 9:30 am Bible Study Xpress Deadline	17. 7:30 pm Vestry Meeting 	18. 12 Noon HE with Healing Prayers 6:00 pm Soup Supper & Book Study	19. 12:20 pm St. Andrew's Weavers 6:30 pm AA 7:00 pm Choir	20. First Day of Spring 	21.
22. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	23. 9:30 am Bible Study	24.	25. 12 Noon HE with Healing Prayers 6:00 pm Soup Supper & Book Study	26. 12:20 pm St. Andrew's Weavers 6:30 pm AA 7:00 pm Choir	27.	28.
29. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	30. 9:30 am Bible Study	31.				

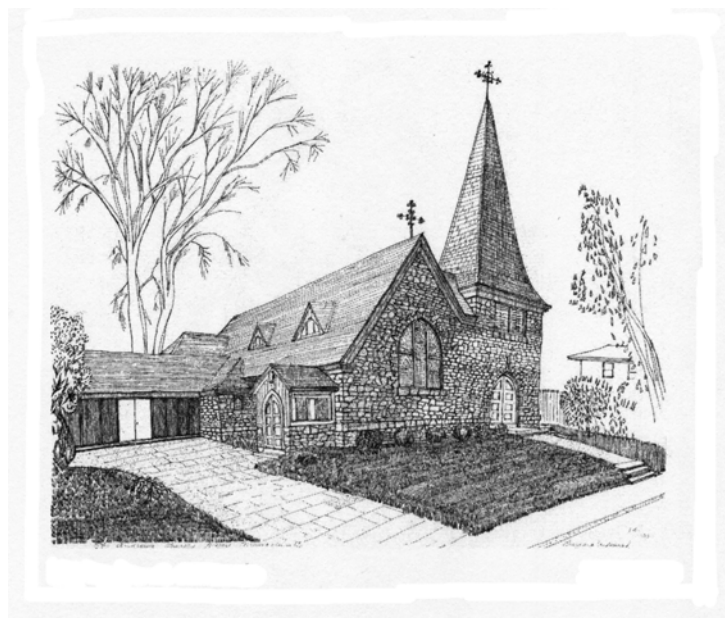
Daylight-Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 8th

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

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Expressing Faith, Community, and Love

The St. Andrew's Xpress is a monthly newsletter for the St. Andrew's parish family and friends. Comments, suggestions and photographs are welcome. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please check the box.