

NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

Now that summer is over, for all intents and purposes, it is time to begin to think about the coming fall season with all of the activities it brings.

I want to share with you what is coming up. In September we begin our church school program again. I want to urge you to give some thought to helping our young people by being a Sunday School teacher. This year we will be using extremely easy materials to prepare and present. Our current teachers have been teaching for a long time and appreciate those of you who could come along side of them to fill in from time to time, or to team teach with them. If you want to help, see the related article in this newsletter.

The fall is an ideal time to concentrate on church growth. Many people will be open to thinking about visiting a church, if only they were asked or invited. Even if you don't feel that comfortable sharing your faith with another, you can invite someone to church (perhaps offering to pick them up). Many who try this method of invitation also offer to take their invitee out to breakfast/brunch after church to talk about the service and answer any questions that might be raised. Pray about those that the Lord might want you to invite.

We will be looking toward the report submitted by the Eames Commission in October. This commission has been charged with looking for a way to solve the crisis in the Episcopal Church brought about by the Gene Robinson debacle. This will be a pivotal time for our denomination, and may very well be the instrument that brings about a realignment of the Anglican Communion. This report will also have an impact upon St. Michael's as it will give the Vestry a better sense of what course of action, if any, should be taken.

Fall is also a great time to purpose to get into a small group or

Bible study group. We have two Bible studies on going. One is held from 9:15 until 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings in the parish hall (see related article)

The other study is on Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. after the 9:30 Holy Eucharist and Healing service (see related article).

A small group you might be interested in joining is held on Thursday nights at the church Conference room. This group meets at 7 p.m. for prayer, contemporary worship and Bible discussion. Communion is celebrated once a month on the third Thursday.

I want to ask you, "What are you willing to do to help St. Michael's grow? What are you willing to do to help yourself grow in Christ and His word?"

Christ and St. Michael's is counting on YOU!

LET US GROW!

Fr. Roger

ASK THE RECTOR

How can God be both loving and just?

It would seem that love and justice are incompatible attributes. If God is just, He must punish sin. But if He is loving, He would forgive sin. How then can He be both?

The attributes (characteristics) of God are not contradictory. He is both absolutely just and yet unconditionally loving. Each attribute complements the other. God is "justly holy" and "holy just." That is, His justice is administered in love, and His love is distributed justly.

The perfect example of how God's love and justice kiss is in the cross. In His love, God sent His Son to pay the penalty for our sins so that His justice could be satisfied and His love released. For "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). And sin against the eternal God demands eternal death (see Revelation 20:14-15). So when Christ died for our sins (see Romans 5:8), the Just suffered for the unjust (see 1 Peter 3:18) that he might bring us to God. "God made him who knew no sin to be

sin for us; so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

God’s justice demands that sin be punished, but His love compels Him to save sinners. So by Christ’s death for us His justice is satisfied and His love released. Thus, there is no contradiction between absolute justice and unconditional love. To illustrate, God is like the judge who, after passing out the punishment to the guilty defendant, laid aside his robe, stood alongside the convicted, and paid the fine for him. Jesus did the same for us on Calvary. Surely justice and mercy kissed at the cross.

Of course, this means that each individual must acknowledge God’s righteous justice by acknowledging that we have sinned (broken God’s commandments) and deserve God’s punishment (eternal damnation). That opens the door for us to appeal to our Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ, who offers to us the defense of his living the perfect life in our place (perfectly obeying all of the commandments all of the time), suffering and dying on the cross on our behalf (to take away our sins), and rising from the dead to prove that he is the perfect One to plead our case.

By then receiving Christ into our lives and accepting all that he has done for us, we satisfy God’s justice and we release God’s love in our hearts through the Holy Spirit whom He has given us (Romans 5:5). God does not force His love on anyone, nor does He give His love to everyone. While His love is available to everyone it is only given to those who receive it through God’s prescribed agent of love, Jesus Christ.

? Adapted from *Who Made God* by Ravi Zacharias and Norman Geisler.

WHY CHRISTIANITY?

In the book *Human Accomplishment*, social scientist Charles Murray came to a conclusion which, as a

nonreligious man, surprised him: After years of historical study, he discovered that the key to the flowering of science, art, enlightened governance, and many other good things in Europe, was the Christian religion’s influence on individuals and societies.

“Christianity’s revolutionary potential begins with its core teachings that all human beings are invited into a personal relationship with God, that all individuals are equal in God’s sight regardless of their earthly station, and that salvation is available to all who believe and act accordingly. It is a theology that empowers and energizes individuals as no other philosophy or religion had ever done before,” Murray summarized recently in *The American Enterprise*.

The emphasis on individual righteousness, personal character, and accountability before God doesn’t just give Christians ways to draw near to the divine. It also provides them with valuable tools that help them live more decently on earth. George Washington argued in his Farewell Address that “morality is a necessary spring of popular government,” and he advised Americans to keep a tight grip on their Christian faith.” – from *Citizen Magazine* – June 2004.

WEBSITE ADDRESS

If you haven’t visited our website lately, check it out at www.st-michaels-buffalo.org. People from all over the country have visited our website and some have left very favorable comments on the “Guestbook” page of our website.

Bob Weekley updates this website for us regularly. It even has a calendar of activities and services in case you lose this newsletter.

AUGUST VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

+Treasurer reported a positive balance in the checking account with all bills paid.
+Administration Team reported that the Coat Room was cleaned, will be

working on improving Ladies Restroom, and taking an inventory of items at the church property.

+Confirmation classes are beginning for our youth in preparation for the Confirmation service with Bp. Ackermann.

+Outreach Team is continuing to distribute money to various outreach projects.

+Worship Team is continuing to work on new songbooks. A decision was made to forego the “one service Sundays” on the fifth Sundays in order to be more accommodating to visitors and because attendance at the one service was never as much as the attendances when two services were held. There will still be special occasions when we will have one service to gather together the whole St. Michael’s family.

+In lieu of our annual Parish Retreat the Vestry will look into having an in-house retreat of some sort.

+The Executive Committee of the Vestry has been renamed “the Research and Development Committee” to better reflect what it is charged with doing. This Committee will continue to look at options for the future of St. Michael’s and make recommendations to the Vestry.

SUNDAY SCHOOL KICKOFF

I hope everyone has had a fun-filled and relaxing summer vacation. We are looking forward to seeing the children together again, and to our upcoming school year. School begins 9/12/04. Please arrive at 10:25, just prior to the 10:30 service. Homework: (don't worry, it's easy!) Please bring in something that represents a favorite part of your summer vacation, i.e.: seashell from the beach, a photo, etc. See you on the 12th!

God Bless,
Diane Meacham and the Sunday School Team :)

LIVING WATERS CLASS

In November Lovejoy church will be offering a Living Waters class. It will be 22 weeks in length. Living Waters is a ministry concerning gender issues. It will be led by a Christian counselor and a woman who has a ministry to former lesbians.

Some of the topics covered are: Acknowledging Our Need, the Father's Pursuit of Us, Jesus, the Son, the Realignment and Empowering of the Will, Welcoming Him Into Our Brokenness, Triggers of Gender Insecurity, Broken Boundaries, Invaded Heart, Narcissism and Relational Idolatry, The Cross: Resurrecting the true Self, Forgiving Others, Hope for Gender Wholeness: Restoring the True Feminine and Masculine, Freedom From Sexual Addiction, Healthy Heterosexuality and more.

You may want to attend or you may know of someone who would like to attend.

DO YOU LIKE TO SING?

Our organist Don Bliss and our Choir Director Ronna Bulera are looking for anyone who loves to sing to be a part of the Choir. Won't you come and make a joyful noise unto the Lord? You may show up in the choir room (in the office wing upstairs) on Sunday mornings around 9:15 or you may call Ronna at 683-9904.

NEW BIBLE STUDIES TO START IN SEPTEMBER

The Sunday Morning Bible Study at 9:15 a.m. will be tackling another book of the Bible in September. Come join us as we look into the birth and growth of the early Church recorded in the Book of Acts.

The Wednesday morning Bible study will be finishing up the book of Romans and deciding what to study next. This study begins at 10 a.m. after the Holy Eucharist and Healing service at 9:30 a.m.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

There is a lot of confusion about fetal stem cell research. Here are some things you may not know.

Monday, August 9, marked the third anniversary of President Bush's decision on the funding of human embryonic stem cell research. There is no ban, and never was, on stem cell research.

The President's decision related only to federal funding of human embryonic stem cell research. President Bush maintained the prohibition that had been in place since 1996 which did not allow the government to pay for the destruction of human embryos in order to create stem cell lines for research. However, his decision, for the first time in U.S. government history, allowed for federal funding of research on embryonic stem cell lines that had already been created through private research. In the three years since the decision, almost \$25 million in taxpayer money has been spent on human embryonic stem cell research, with more promised. Yet the results are lackluster at best, and the researchers admit it will be many years, if ever, before embryonic stem cells might treat a human.

In the meantime, and relatively unnoticed, adult stem cells have successfully treated hundreds of patients for conditions such as heart damage, spinal cord injury, blindness and cancer. The public deserves to know the real facts -- that embryonic stem cell research is unlikely to treat patients, while adult stem cells are the real promise for real treatments.

The cry should be not for a loosening of the federal policy on embryonic stem cells, but an aggressive expansion of adult stem cell research.

(Tony Perkins is the president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C.)

OKTOBERFEST COMING

The Men's Brotherhood would like all the men of St. Michael & All Angels to join us. We are planning an Oktoberfest for Saturday, October 2ND. There will be a German dinner complete with sausage and beer, followed by a concert

Doors open at 6 PM, Concert at 7:30 PM. For tickets or further information contact Gary Kadow, President; Bob DuVall, Vice-President, Mark Bidell, Secretary or John Bidell, Treasurer.

If you would like to help please contact Gary at 832-5469.

PARISH RETREAT

St. Michael's members are urged to mark off Friday and Saturday, October 8th and 9th on your calendar. We will come together to have an inhouse retreat this year. We will have various meditations or talks along with some great fellowship. More information will be forthcoming in the October newsletter.

KUDOS TO GARY KADOW

Our author-in-residence, Gary Kadow, was recently honored by President Bush with a letter of thanks for his book, "10 Days of Hell and Heroes."

At the request of Senator Jack Quinn, Gary had sent the President an autographed copy of his book. For any of you who would like a copy of Gary's experiences in the days following 9/11, Gary and Father Roger have copies available at a moderate cost. Thank you, Gary, for a job well done.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH HOME

Do you want to be rid of all those treasures that truly belong in a thrift shop? Do a good deed and donate them to the Episcopal Church Home Thrift Shop. Drop items off at our Guardian Angel Gift Shop any time and I will see

that they get to the ECH. All proceeds are used to enhance the lives of the residents. Thank you. *Georgia Peden*, Associate Board Episcopal Church Home

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL GIFT SHOP is again open after Sunday services. Remember us when you wish to purchase a special gift.

MEALS ON WHEELS of Buffalo & Erie County need volunteers to deliver food to the homebound. Even one shift per month is appreciated. Call 822-

MID-WEEK PRAYER AND PRAISE

Would you like a service in which we sing contemporary songs, have a time of Bible teaching, sharing and prayer? If so, you are invited to our Thursday Night Alive service on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room. Come and bring a friend. The service will last about an hour.

WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Our 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Healing and Bible Study is every Wednesday morning. Join us for a mid-week spiritual lift.

THANK YOUS

Dear Church family. We cannot thank you enough for all the prayers given for Chuck and me in our hour of need! As you know by now, they have really helped! Prayer is a very powerful tool in one's household and should be used every day along with "Thank you, Lord." We will never forget you. Love, Eve and Chuck David

UNITED THANK OFFERING

In spite of a less than perfect summer as far as weather goes – we have many things for which to be thankful! Our family, our Church family at St. Michael's, safe trips for our loved ones, get-togethers with friends, neighbors and family. All of these, plus countless other thanks make up our offerings in the Blue Box. The Fall

Ingathering will be on Sunday, October 10th at both services. *Virginia Bradley*, UTO Coordinator.

THE WOMEN'S GUILD

We will resume meetings on Wednesday, September 8th. At that time, we'll discuss program and projects. Of Special Interest will be "Project Christmas Child" and perhaps a report of our very successful Bake Sale in late October.

Now is the time the officers want your input, so please make a special effort to be present.

As usual – lunch will be brown bag, but dessert will be provided with a good will offering to be taken to help our treasury along.

See you there September 8th. Holy Communion, Healing, Bible Study and noon luncheon with meeting to follow.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

The Women of St. Michael's Guild are participating in "Operation Christmas Child", a project of Samaritan's Purse, headed by Franklin Graham. The project involves filling shoe boxes with Christmas gifts for children around the world who live in war zones and extreme poverty. "Operation Christmas child" touches millions of lives each year and is an opportunity for children to experience the love of Jesus Christ. Everyone is invited to participate in the project. A display showing how to wrap and fill the boxes will be set up in the parish hall. Information will be available with gift suggestions and age groups of the boys and girls. If you are unable to fill a box, perhaps you could bring a gift for one of the boxes on display. We request that all gifts and boxes be brought to the church by November 10th. They may be left at the Gift Shop or given to Shirley Szen. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

5 Patricia Herd 24 Kathryn Meyers
5 Gordon Allen 24 Carol Weekley
7 Keith Weekley 27 Ken Preston
7 Torrey Weekley 28 Eve David
9 Florian Mendel 28 Elizabeth Scheeler
11 Brian Weber 29 Edward Gorczyca
29 Brendan Gorczyca

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

9/9/78 Deborah & Dennis DiLiberto
9/9 April & Charles Infantino
9/15/89 Darlene & Brian Weber
9/18/54 Mary & Gordon Allen
9/29/95 Loretta & John Bidell
9/30/88 Deborah & Mark Emerson

PROUD GRANDPARENTS

Chuck and Eve David were ecstatic to hear their grandson, Tony Tuzzolino, has been offered a contract with the Swiss Hockey Team, but he has decided to stay with the Italian Olympic Team in Zaldona.

Nicky is with a team in Sarnia, Canada.

MISSION RESPONSIBILITY: The people at Canaan House are our sisters in Christ. Their needs are many; from all kinds of paper and plastic products, laundry and cleaning products and personal items including lotions, shampoos, toothpaste and toothbrushes, even combs and other personal grooming products. Some of these women really have nothing. When we shop and “buy one, get one free,” perhaps we could donate the free item to our friends at Canaan House

Shirley Trail recently said that it seems whenever she thinks they can't keep going, St. Michael's comes through for them with a cash donation to pay bills or gifts for the residents. She thanks all of you for your continued concern and asks God's blessing on everyone. *Joan & Brian Webster.*

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH EXPECT?

What does the Church expect of her members? What requirements does the Episcopal Church place on its membership? How might we make the Lordship of Jesus Christ known in our community and culture and how can we do a better job of working, praying, and giving to the spread of God's Kingdom? All of these questions should be seen as interrelated, because they share the same goal – the implanting and nurture of a transforming faith based on God's will that, “we complete His work in the world, and bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.” (Eucharistic Prayer D)

These expectations are meant to shape, mold, and challenge us to live a transforming life and to bring that life to bear in the world in which we live – they include:

1. We will worship God in His Church every Sunday and every major Holy Day, unless prevented by serious illness or other grave cause.
2. We will observe, in a fitting manner, the feasts and fasts of the Church Calendar and will regularly receive Holy Communion, after adequate preparation.
3. We will say our prayers daily, in the morning and evening, as well as grace at meals.
4. We will take an active part, whenever possible, in the activities and organizations of the local parish, especially those which cultivate our spiritual life, empower us to respond to our call to serve our neighbors and bring the spiritually hungry to the knowledge of our Lord.
5. We will give to the support of the parish, diocese and mission fields an amount that is both sacrificial and reflective of the reality that all things which are in our possession come of God. We will also respond to all reasonable appeals of the Church on special

- occasions and if able, subscribe to and read a Church periodical.
6. If we are blessed with the gift of children we will not only see that they are baptized on an appropriate Sunday or Holy Day, but will instruct our children in the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church. We will also make sure that our children will be presented to the Bishop for confirmation when they are prepared “to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism.” (Rubrics for Confirmation)
 7. If we are to be joined in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony it will be solemnized in the proper seasons and by a priest of the Church.
 8. We will own a copy of the Book of Common Prayer and use it.
 9. We will ask the parish priest for a letter of transfer when we move to another parish and make sure the new parish has all pertinent information, including our weekly pledge.
 10. We will make wills arranging for the disposal of our temporal goods and, in so far as we are able, leave bequests for religious and charitable work.
 11. We will make arrangements for our proper burial from the Church giving the congregation opportunity to be present.
 12. Above all we will attempt to live our lives in conformance with the Summary of the Law, the vision of the Beatitudes, while taking seriously our Lord’s warning about the end of the ages and our need to love as he and the Father love.

Fr. William Willoughby III, St. Paul’s, Savannah, Georgia in The Anglican Digest, Michaelmas 2003.

BARBERSHOP HARMONY

Bob Weekley and his 4 Counts will be at the Riviera Theatre, Webster Street, North Tonawanda on September 18th at 8 p.m. There is a FREE organ concert at 7:30 on the Mighty Wurlitzer. See Bob for tickets – this is usually a “sell-out” concert, so get yours quickly. Bob and his Quartet are members of the Buffalo NY Chapter of SPEBSQSA (The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.), more commonly known as the Barbershop Harmony Society that has over 38,000 members nationwide.

If you would like to sing with a Barbershop chorus or quartet - male OR female - talk to Bob.

Thank you, Norma Miranda, for the wonderful donation of the new microwave for the kitchen. You know it is deeply appreciated!

Thank you also, Bob Howard, for the box of envelopes. Thank you to the anonymous donors of paper for the office and to Elizabeth Walker and Virginia Bradley for monetary donations for office supplies. And now I know you all do read THE NEWSLETTER! Bless you all, Madeline

SUNDAY SCHOOL

It is again time for Sunday School – read Diane Meacham’s article on page 4.

THANK YOU

My thanks to Bea Haley and also Alexandra Grist for filling in at the office while I was on vacation. They did a wonderful job and I appreciate the work they did.

REMINDERS

The Prayer Lists are on the bulletin boards in the Narthex and Dining Hall. If you wish to add someone, or if they have been healed, please give me a note, a phone call or email. The list gets very long, but we certainly don't want to forget all those in need. Also, The Prayer Chain requests are many and we like to know when the prayers are no longer needed.

Another request – if you move, change phone numbers or email addresses, or if we do not have birthdays or anniversaries, please let us know. Thank you.