



# St. Michael's Newsletter

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## December 2016 Calendar

## From the Rector—The Light of Christ

*Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.*  
(Collect for 1 Advent)

The first Sunday of Advent, celebrated on Nov. 27 this year, marks the beginning of a new church year. It is a turning point; the liturgical cycle begins anew. For many the turning point likely was more fully realized by the fact that Thanksgiving Day and weekend was celebrated, and now plans are formulating for Christmas!

As a liturgical season with its specific readings and prayers, Advent spiritually prepares people for the “coming of the Lord.” It points to a new time to be ushered in and experienced, with the reign of God and the light of Christ at its core. “What has come into the world in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:3b-5) While we indeed do prepare for Christmas celebrations – liturgical and otherwise – Advent is not merely saying Christmas is coming! The season gives us an intentional time to receive in our hearts and minds the joyous gift that God is with us, inviting us into a new age.

One commentary I occasionally refer to suggests that we are asked in this season of Advent to develop a Christian sense of time. This entails more than



knowing the time of day, the season of the year, even more than making good use of the time we have (though this is not a bad thing to do!). “It is to sense the tension between the divine will and human ways, the ongoing struggle between good and evil that goes on around us and within us. The light of Christ has provided significant illumination. This is not only true on the grand, historical scale of human history; but it is also true within us as communities of believers and individuals. The Christian sense of time finally translates into a way of life whose contours are clear, and for that reason offers a clear set of options for those of us who have experience within ourselves the tension between good and evil, day and night, light and darkness.” (C. Holladay, *Preaching through the Christian Year, Year A*; Trinity Press International, Harrisburg PA c. 1992, p. 9)

In the many transitions we face individually and communally, in this Advent season may we further hold to this sense of Christian time, and may the light of Christ lead us in all hope and expectation.

- Fr. Andrew

**Worship & Music**



Come one, come all! This Thursday, December 1st at 7 pm we will light our wonderful Christmas Tree with carols and goodies to eat. Some members of the choirs will be leading us in singing favorite carols.

**Choral Evensong, Sunday, December 4th at 5 pm**

On Sunday, Dec. 4th at 5 pm the St. Michael's Choir will sing Choral Evensong with Canticles by Charles Stanford in C and music by Brahms.

**Christmas Services**

Our very talented Youth Choir will lead us at the Family Christmas Eve Service on the 24th at 5 pm, and the St. Michael's Choir will present a 20 minute prelude of beautiful Christmas music before the 10 pm Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist.

**Epiphany Lessons & Carols, January 8**

Because Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Sundays this year, we will allow the choir members to be with their families on New Year's Day and will present Epiphany Lessons and Carols on Sunday, January 8 at 5 pm.

May Advent and Christmas be a time for all of us to count our blessings, share generously with those less fortunate than we are, and to remember the coming of the light into our lives.

—Doug Major

**Advent & Christmas Special Services**

- Sunday, Dec. 4**      **2 Advent**  
5:00 p.m.      Evensong and Benediction
- Saturday, Dec. 24** **Christmas Eve**  
5:00 p.m.      Christmas Pageant with  
Family Eucharist, Rite II  
9:45 p.m.      Choral and Organ Music  
10:00 p.m.      Festal Eucharist, Rite II
- Sunday, Dec. 25** **Christmas Day**  
10:00 a.m.      Holy Eucharist with music
- Sunday, Jan. 1**      **1 Christmas**  
10:00 am      Holy Eucharist with music
- Sunday, Jan. 8**      **1 Epiphany**  
5:00 pm      Epiphany Lessons and Carols

**Christmas Giving**

St. Michael's Church is once again supporting the Marblehead Food Pantry by providing Christmas Gifts for Marblehead children in need. Gifts should be left unwrapped in a holiday gift bag with the red mitten attached under the tree by Tuesday, December 20th. A \$30 gift limit is suggested.



Where: Mittens are on the tree in the Parish Hall.

How: Clip or tear the punch hole of the mitten with the child's information, leaving the second blank mitten hanging on the tree for decoration. Buy a gift for the child and return the unwrapped gift in a gift bag under the Christmas Tree in the Parish Hall no later than Monday, December 20th.

Gifts will be distributed to The Marblehead Food Pantry on Thursday, December 22nd.      -Diane Christian

**Christmas Poinsettias & Memorial List**



*Names are needed by December 20th.*

Poinsettias adorn the church through the Christmas season until Epiphany. If you wish to have a poinsettia in memory of, or in thanksgiving for, a beloved one or for other blessings, please submit name(s) by Tuesday, Dec. 20th. The list of names is included in the Christmas Eve and Day bulletins. The suggested donation for a poinsettia is \$20.00 per listed name. Poinsettias are not included as part of perpetuity remembrance.—Anne Foster



## Church School & Youth



*Church School children with such focus making crafts for the fair.*

Hello Church School families –

I hope everyone had a lovely Thanksgiving and break!

**Church School** will resume Sunday, December 4 as we head into the second week of **Advent** ... already! We will be learning about this very special season in both Godly Play and Weaving God's Promises, all month.

We had a VERY busy and productive class last time we met in church school. Both classes worked diligently making crafts to be sold at the upcoming Heart of Christmas Fair. The younger



“elves” made: Hershey the Red-Nosed Reindeer Bars ... and the older “elves” made Snowman Soup. They all worked SO hard and with such focus!



**Christmas Pageant**— This Sunday, December 4 is the **FIRST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT PRACTICE!!** Come one, come all ... it's NOT too late to sign up! The practices will be on Sunday, December 4, 11 and 18 for about an hour, immediately following the 10:00 service. I am in need of adult volunteers who would be willing to help out at the rehearsals and at the actual pageant on Christmas Eve. Also, we are hoping to have our cast party/luncheon

on December 18 following the final dress rehearsal. If anyone is interested in hosting this great pageant tradition, please let me know!

At **Supper Club** we had a taste of Thanksgiving and of giving thanks. The kids took to the kitchen in teams, to make an apple pie and a pumpkin pie, both with home-made crust and whipped cream. They did a great job! Speaking of thanks ... thank you to Louise Wager for the huge (pre)Thanksgiving spread complete with all the fixings. And Tuesday, November 29, the group made Anglican prayer beads to contribute for sale at the Heart of Christmas Fair.

*—Kelley Callahan.*

<i>Fulfill a wish by taking a mitten from our Mitten Tree</i>	
Dec. 1	Annual Tree Lighting + Carols, 7 pm & chili bags & cider, 6-8 pm
Dec. 2	Heart of Christmas Fair Preview Party with Craft Night for Children, 6-8 pm
Dec. 3	Heart of Christmas Fair, 9 am—3 pm
Dec. 4:	Church School 9:45 am Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:15 am
Dec. 11	Church School 9:45 am Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:15 am
Dec. 12	Supper Club— Christmas Party 5-7 pm
Dec. 18	Church School 9:45 am Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal, 11:15 am Pageant Cast Party?? 12:15 pm
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Pageant & Service, 5 pm
Dec. 25	Christmas Day—no child care
Jan. 1	New Year's Day—No Church School

## A Personal Reflection on Stewardship—David Bittermann

Having grown up a Methodist – I knew that we had evolved from the Anglican church, but didn't have a strong understanding of those deeper traditions. My congregation seemed heavily focused on the Word – and on parsing out its meanings – but not so much on the mysteries (in fact, those might be viewed with suspicion).

When in college, I did what a lot of people my age did – filled my life with many new things; none of which included the church. Not that I lost faith, but there just didn't seem to be any time. My Mom and Dad made valiant attempts to fix that, making sure we got to church on campus whenever they came to visit - but it didn't stick. I was just too... "busy."

Years ago, when I was working in a small architectural firm in Greenfield (it was small enough that we were all like family), the office manager once remarked how uplifting Evensong had been the night before. I had never been to an evensong, and in fact was still not going to church regularly; but I thought – wow – that must have been something! I didn't follow up on it though. My inertia was too hard to overcome. Yet, that remark stuck with me.

Fast forward a number of years to about 1990. Although we had long since relocated to Marblehead, Peggy decided it was time to interrupt my inertia. She found St Michael's first, and was almost immediately embraced into its community. My "adoption" came shortly after.

What was MY attraction? – Probably the same reasons that appeal to many of you – a warm and caring community – open and non-judging – spiritual – acknowledging and even celebrating the mysteries – being a part of something much older – ageless – timeless – and the shiver you get hearing the opening phrase of "Christ the fair glory" on

Michaelmas.

I was attracted to the shared IMPORTANCE of spirituality – transcending the rational; defying what logic our own small brains can comprehend. Something that speaks to you emotionally – something that you just have to BELIEVE. I was attracted to what one might idealize in the notion of family – the comfort, the refuge, the unquestioning acceptance, and the unconditional love. It provided food for both the soul and the mind. And the EVENSONG, after all, was beyond compare!

So – we have all these wonderful things – but do we truly appreciate them? What do we do to ensure they will remain with us, and will be available to our children and grandchildren, and theirs as well? At St Michael's we are strongly aware of the contributions of our forebearers – that they have all somehow managed to keep it going, even through some very difficult times. They have kept it alive for US. It's both comforting and humbling to be a part of something that's been around for a long time, and has withstood the test of time.

What does it cost to keep this alive? I don't want to harp on the costs of operations or building maintenance. We all know what that takes, not only in terms of finances, but also in terms of time and talent. Each year we need to renew our commitment to sustain our ministries and missions; our daily operations, and this wonderful building.

I sometimes think of it as keeping a candle lit – perhaps even the sanctuary light. When it burns low, renew it. Don't let it go out. Let's continue to be here to help others, yet unmet, to share with them our community, and to help find or to reacquaint with God. —David Bittermann



### 2017 Pledge Drive

Have you submitted your pledge for 2017? Give thanks and submit your pledge offering so the Vestry can plan for a year spreading the light of Christ at St. Michael's and much beyond. Thank you!

### St. Michael's Episcopal Church Marblehead, Massachusetts

**Our Mission** is to seek transformation in God's grace by worshipping God in prayer, song, and study; loving and serving our neighbor in and outside our parish Community; and being good stewards of God's creation.

### End-of-Year Annual Pledge & Capital Campaign Donations

We appreciate all of your generous pledge and capital campaign contributions. Please be sure to write on the check whether it is for annual pledge, including pledge number or for capital campaign.

For stock donations please be sure to email or call the office to indicate whether the donation is a pledge or capital campaign donation.

You can call the office, email the office at office@stmichaels1714.org or the treasurer at stmichaels1714@gmail.com for wiring information or questions.

- Diane Christian, Treasurer

## Heart of Christmas Fair

**It's time to bring in your crafts, baked goods & other donations.**

**And it's never too late to sign up for a shift!**

Do you have your tickets for the preview party? There will be ham sliders, yummy hors d'oeuvres and desserts, and was-sail and wine for a merrier evening. It's your first opportunity to buy those items you have spotted through the library door—perhaps a painting, china, linen, collectible or antique, artisan fine wares, Reindeer Bars and Snowman Soup from the Church School children and the pick of the best jewelry, table arrangements and crafts.

Parents, don't forget that there will be activities for Church School children in the chapter room to give you a chance to visit, shop and help out. And the Christmas Fair is the perfect place for children to shop with bargains in the Rich Uncle area, the jewelry table and crafts.

Of course on Saturday there will be chili-in-a-bag for parade goers and plus clam chowder, hot dogs & grilled cheese sandwiches inside.

But most of all, remember that every penny spent at the fair helps us fund all our ministries, staff and programs, and helps close our budget gap.



### St. Michael's Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop wishes to thank all for your wonderful donations and the extra helpers that are allowing us to extend hours. And thank you to Karin McCarthy who was elected Treasurer, and got an article on the Thrift Shop in the Reporter with great pictures!

Don't forget to save your clean paper bags of all sizes for the Thrift Shop.

### Tree Lighting on the Lawn during the Christmas Walk Preview

**Thursday, December 1**

6 pm—8 pm Chili-in-a-bag & Cider

**7:00 pm Tree Lighting & Carols**



### St. Michael's Heart of Christmas Fair

**Friday, December 2**

**6:00 pm—8:30 pm**

Wassail! Hors d'oeuvres & Preview Sale

Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

Children ages 2-9 are \$5.

**Saturday, December 3**

**9:00 am—3:00 pm**

Hot beverage & more beginning 9am

Hot chowder, grilled cheese, hot dogs,

beginning 11 am

**Silent Auction ends at 1:30 pm**

Historic Church Open House 11am—2 pm

### St. Catherine's in January

With all the Fair doings, St. Catherine's does not meet in December. The next meeting is Thursday, January 5 with our Yankee Swap! More to come in late December.

## January Preparations for Annual Meeting January 29, 2017

### Nominating Committee Seeks Suggestions

The Nominating Committee is considering candidates for leadership positions in the church. Each year at the Annual Meeting of the parish, St. Michael's elects two wardens, clerk, treasurer, assistant treasurer, 3 Vestry members (3-years), and 2 Diocesan convention delegates. If you know of a good candidate, or if you are interested yourself, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee:

Steve Clay, Karin McCarthy and The Rev. Andrew Stoessel.

### Annual Reports Due January 10th

Committee/Commission Chairs—Please turn in your 2016 annual report to Jane Maihos **by Tuesday, January 10, 2017**. The early date facilitates combining, copying and collation. Please send electronically, preferably single-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font. Thank you.



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*Photo: Ulrike Welsch*



**Tree Lighting & Carols**  
Thursday, December 1, 7 pm  
Chili-in-a-bag, Cider 6-8 pm

**Heart of Christmas Fair**  
Friday, December 2, 6-8:30 pm Party  
Saturday, December 3, 9am—3 pm



**Evensong & Benediction**  
Sunday, December 4, 5 pm

**Schedule for  
Christmas Eve / Day**

**Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24**

5:00 pm Family Eucharist &  
Christmas Pageant  
9:45 pm Organ and Choral Music  
10:00 pm Festal Eucharist, Rite II

**Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25**

10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with music

**St. Michael's Church**

**Officers:** Stephen Clay, Sr. Warden; Karin McCarthy, Jr. Warden; Sue Cool, Clerk; Diane Christian, Treasurer;  
Kristin Carlson, Asst. Treasurer.

**Vestry:** Sarah Bates, Kelley Callahan, Ellie Doyle, Brian Fizer, Rory Gaunt, Justin Hintlian, William Miller, Octavia Moniz,  
Jennifer Oliveira.

**Delegates for Convention:** Brian Fizer, Denise Shea.

**Delegates to the North Shore Deanery:** Brian Fizer, Annette Nicolas, Frances Nilsson, Denise Shea

**Staff:** The Rev. Andrew J. Stoessel, Rector; Dr. Douglas Major, Music Director; Kelley Callahan, Christian Education  
Director; Jane Maihos, Parish Administrator; Jennifer Hill, Sexton.

**Newsletter:** Frances Nilsson, Editor; Marcia Koopman, Mailings.

# December 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	Office Hours Mon. – Fri. 8:30 am - 12:30 am	Thrift Shop Hours Tuesday- Saturday 1pm – 4 pm	9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Church Staff  6:00 pm Fair Setup 8:00 pm AA	4:30 pm Youth Choir 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Chili bags & cider 7:00 pm Tree Lighting & Carols 7:30 Adult Choir	4:00 pm Vendor Setup 6:00pm–8:30pm Heart of Christmas Preview Party	Heart of Christmas Fair 8:00 am Vendor Setup 9:00 am – 3:00 pm 11 am – 2 pm Lunch inside & out
<b>2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Child Care 9:45 am Church School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II 11:15 am Pageant Rehearsal 5:00 pm Choral Evensong	11:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	5:00 pm St. Michael's My Brother's Table 6:00 pm Supper Club	9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Church Staff  8:00 pm AA	4:30 pm Youth Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir	11:00 am Wisdom & Friendship Group	St. Michael's Team at Lifebridge Pam Oppelt & Valerie Wyckoff Co-Captains
<b>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:00 am Thrift Shop Meeting 9:30 am Child Care 9:45 am Church School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II 11:15 am Pageant Rehearsal	11:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	7:00 pm Vestry	9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Church Staff  8:00 pm AA	4:30 pm Youth Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir	<i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	
<b>4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <b>24</b>
8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Child Care 9:45 am Church School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II 11:15 am Pageant Rehearsal	11:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry	<i>Memorial Flowers Deadline for Bulletin</i>	9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Church Staff  8:00 pm AA	4:30 pm Youth Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir		5:00 pm Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist 9:45 pm Choral/Organ Prelude 10:00 pm Festal Eucharist, Rite II
<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> <b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<i>New Year's Eve</i> <b>31</b>
10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with music No child care	<i>Office Closed</i>		9:30 am Holy Eucharist  8:00 pm AA			