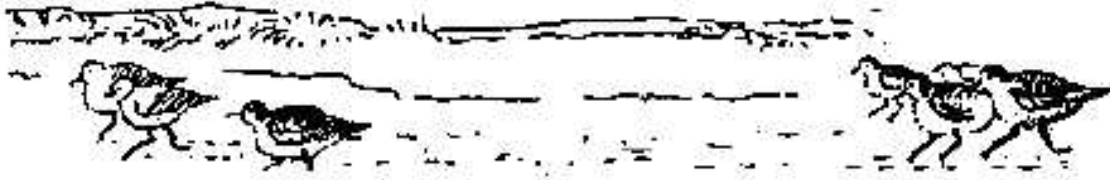


The Sandpiper

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church



Dear People of St. Nicholas,

I am so excited and grateful to be coming to St. Nicholas.

There is much to be done and a bright future to envision – and I trust we will have fun doing it together.

But more importantly, I am looking forward to getting to know you – as a community, as a church, and as individuals. I believe God’s first concern is with relationships. That’s where theology “happens.”

We are setting out together to be changed. Not to my specifications, nor to yours, but to God’s delight. That sounds to me like a marvelous adventure.

I will be praying for you. Please pray for me.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours,

David Matson

The Building with Lumber and Nails Is Almost Complete

Competing a building such as the new St. Nicholas Episcopal Church is a complicated task, but it is all coming together very well.

We expect to be able to process over to the new building mid-way through our service on the 21st of this month. On March 28th we will have our first service entirely in the new building. Two weeks later will be our first Easter.

The task has taken the combined efforts of numerous subcontractors with various specialties. Similarly within our parish, we have all contributed (and will continue to contribute) to the building of our church in many, many different ways. And in the coming months and years we will emphasize building our church in more than just the lumber and nails sense.

Last Saturday another volunteer staining party was wrapping up the last pine boards needed to finish the ceiling of the sanctuary. Tom Gagnon, who has accepted the role of building superintendent for the new building, and I were sharing our appreciation for the way the ceiling was coming together. I think it is a wonderful metaphor for our group and individual contributions made tangible. We saw how the combination of different grain patterns and different individuals spreading out and wiping off the stain led to some variety in the shades of the whitewashed pine. At first, one might think that the goal would be uniformity in tone across the expanse of the arched ceiling. But to see the combination in place, one sees that the combination of the variety is more interesting than uniformity and in completion results in a stronger effect.

So too, I think the variety of people who call themselves members of St. Nicholas Church are a wonderful group of individuals who make our parish a very interesting place - with potential we have only begun to glimpse.

Mark Bennett

Deacon's Musings

CHANGE. A simple word, a scary word, an exciting word, a word we often hope for, a word whose meaning we are in the throes of experiencing. Change can mean affirmation, transformation; it can mean the assorted coins in your pocket or purse. It usually means something different is about to occur or has occurred.

CHANGE is how Christianity got started; without change we would perhaps be Jews. Without change there would be no Episcopal Church, we might still be Roman Catholics. St. Nicholas is about to change as we move from a low ceilinged, leaky, 50-60 year old building to a new one with a soaring ceiling, planned acoustics, and more space for Sunday School although our dream is for an education wing. We will have more room, indeed room for 200 people. What will YOU do to help fill the space? Despite calling David Matson to be our vicar at 4/5 time rather than 1/2 time we will still be hard at work. Indeed, calling our new vicar may cause us to work harder! David will come with new ideas for spiritual growth, pastoral care, adult education, youth group, 'etc., etc., and so forth'. Statistics show that most people come to church because a friend invited them; they do not come because of the pastor. They may stay because they like the pastor or the sermons or the welcome and involvement.

St. Nicholas Church is good at adapting to change. We started with about 12 couples in an abandoned Episcopal Church in Old Orchard Beach where we stayed about a year with no permanent vicar. Then we moved to the Blue Point Church where we were assigned a 1/2 time vicar and we squeezed our service, Sunday school, and coffee time in before our host congregation met. We lingered there about 9 years before picking up our books, table, chalice and paten to move in caravan fashion to

this site at 348, now 350, US Route 1. Here we have been under the ministry of 3 different vicars in our 4 1/2 years.

As a church honoring Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors, let's remember how a sailboat and a weather vane move with the winds. They yield to the changing direction of the wind. The vane points us into the winds, the boats may have to tack to reach their destinations. I think that is what we have been doing, tacking. It is now time to drop our anchor or pick up our mooring and invite others aboard.

We must invite others aboard so they, too, may find the friendships among us, the life of Christ which guides us, and the outreach we have to the friendless, poor, immigrant or neighbor in need of Christ's love in their life. In the Book of the prophet Micah we learn that God asks us 'to serve justice, love kindness, and walk humbly before our God'. Jesus asked us to love our God with heart and soul and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. With these as guides how can we fail to provide a worship home for many in the greater Scarborough area? These aren't a change for us; they are our way of doing things. Our change will be a physical move which should make it easier to affirm our commitment to Jesus' way of life. CHANGE? Let's embrace it and grow!

Dear Lord, let me never be afraid of endings or beginnings.

Teach me to embrace all life with joy.

Amen

From 'Heart Warmers', Medina MN.

With all the anticipated changes and people coming to St. Nicholas' Church, please get in the habit of wearing your name pins. Anyone needing a new one, please write your name on the yellow sheet at the back of the church or let Nancy Agan know. (883-1561)

Warden's Notes

Dear Friends,

Happiness held is the seed...happiness shared is the flower. -Anonymous

This message, which came to me printed on a stack of sticky notes, seems especially appropriate right now. St. Nick's is on the brink of welcoming our new priest, opening our new doors, and sharing all the happiness we've been holding and building for so many months. It's Lent, but Easter's coming, and spring, as I read on a signboard on Rt. 1, is right around the snow bank.

We have been blessed in countless ways; we have worked hard and given much. It's time to celebrate, and along with the celebrating to throw ourselves wholeheartedly into sharing our happiness and growing our congregation. For details, please read our Report to the Trustees of the Diocese, copied in this newsletter. It mentions the weathervane, which for me has become symbolic of our church's life: In faith and full knowledge we have sailed into deep water and there's no going back to our old port...literally, it will be demolished. The tasks ahead are clear and bold: stabilize the craft, bond with our new captain, chart a fresh course, and increase our crew. We all signed on for this great adventure, and we will all have work to do.... Be ready!

There is one thing all of us can do right now to grow St. Nick's: COME! Come to meet David, come to the grand opening, come on Palm Sunday, come on Easter....

Share the happiness! Be present to feel it, and present to share it. Share the expectant hush before the service, the hymns of praise, the messages of hope, the circle of communion, the passing of the peace, the fellowship of coffee hour. A full church is a wonderful thing!

See you in the new St. Nick's!!!

Peace and prayers,

Cynthia

A new schedule for GREETERS will be made soon. Please let Nancy Agan (883-1561) know if you are interested in being included or removed from the list!

Outreach Spotlight

The Essentials Pantry is a weekly event, offered by several churches in the Diocese of Maine, where people can go to collect items not available with food stamps. St. Nicholas participates in several ways: Weekly donations of items, packaging of items, and manning the Tuesday afternoon event every 5 weeks. The regular things are diapers, wet wipes, feminine pads, and laundry detergent; other items which are welcome donations are toothbrushes, toothpaste, dishwashing liquid, bars of soap, and other personal care products.

Our next date to staff the pantry is Tuesday, March 9. Volunteers are needed – call Nancy Nickerson (878-2238) or Nancy Agan (883-1561.)

The Sandpiper Thanks....

Tom Gagnon for coordinating the painting parties and for agreeing to be our Property Needs Supervisor

Don Martin for taking on the new job of Marketing Coordinator and seeing that events at St. Nicholas get publicized

Jeffrey and the WC for keeping us so well-covered during our transition time

Our Sign Committee (Linda Cohen, Katy Janelle, Marcia Kapinos, Vickie Drigotas)

The Nursery Crew (Vicki L. & Katy Janelle)

The Building Committee, who continue to work so faithfully on every detail

Vicki LaQuerre, who gave many years of persistent and excellent service as the Sandpiper editor!

Cynthia Nye for her tireless efforts and administrative ability as Warden on behalf of all of us at St Nick's.

Our Sunday school children & teachers for organizing the Heifer Project effort in Advent, which sent two pigs to help families improve their lives.

Everyone who contributed money to Heifer Project, Root Cellar and Bibles for our Sunday school. Your help is much appreciated!!!

(A thank-you note was received from the Root Cellar and is posted on the bulletin board. They said "Christmas was very special for them this year.")

The Sunday school children & teachers for the beautiful Valentines they made. They were a big hit!

Musical Notes

On Sunday, March 14, Peter Plumb will be our guest organist on Sunday, March 14, while Terry is on a trip to Prague. Please welcome Peter, who is a lawyer in Portland, and an accomplished organist.

On March 31, Terry Foster will present 'Lenten and Easter Music: Somber to Glorious.'

The evening will examine choral and hymn repertoire centered around Lenten and Easter themes.

Through recordings, live musical presentation, and singing, we will seek to enhance our experience of this holy season.

Our organist, Terry Foster, has politely requested that we refrain from talking during the morning prelude. He has a hard time concentrating on the music he is providing if there is chatter around the sanctuary.

Terry promises to keep the preludes brief and shares a true story about two persons who chattered at another church. Here's the story.

The minister in this church wanted folks to meditate and be quiet during the prelude. Two people just wouldn't cooperate until the minister took the following action. He worked out a plan with the organist in which the prelude started very softly. As it progressed the volume was swelled until it reached a very loud pitch. At this point the minister gave a signal to stop abruptly! From the congregation the following was heard "I fry mine in lard." The two were quiet after that.

Sing out in Glory on Easter – The St Nick's Singers are seeking volunteers who are interested in singing on Easter. There will be two practices in the evening – dates and times to be announced. Please see Marcia Kapinos (883-0189) or Terry Foster if you are interested.

**WEDNESDAY ECUMENICAL
NOONDAY SERVICES**

West Scarborough United Methodist Church
US Route 1

Noon: Organ music

12:15: Service of hymn, responsive
reading and meditative message

12:45+/-: Soup and bread lunch provided
by church of the speaker

*St. Nicholas is responsible for March
24th. 'Y'all come, heah?'*

MOVING OUT SALE!

We're moving! We're moving
and there are items in our present
building that are no longer of use to
us; perhaps you or a friend could use
them. Pass the word. They will be
available, with a few exceptions, the
weeks of March 14-27. COB-Cash on
the Barrelhead

- 1 30" Monitor kerosene heater (in church)
- 1 30" Toyostove Laser 72 kerosene heater (in office)
- 2 paned glass doors (under 7')
- 2 speakers (now used for the organ)
- 2 sets of track lights
- 6-8 sets of flourescent lights
- 1 small stainless sink
- 1 porcelain sink
- 1 toilet
- 1 small hot water heater
- 2 exit signs and emergency lights
- 2 double glass doors (If removed before demolition day buyer must provide plywood to seal the openings)
- 1 single glass door (same as above)

Sunday Soup Kitchen

Each month which has a fifth Sunday, St Nick's prepares & serves lunch at the Preble Street Resource Center in Portland.

Thank you to all who helped make the Soup Kitchen on February 29 a success!

The next date for Soup Kitchen is May 30 – Memorial Day Weekend!

**Christkindlesmarkt
will return this year!**

Look for announcements soon looking for volunteers to help organize the event.
Imagine what this will look like in our new church!

Good Friday Habitat for Humanity Walk from 1st Congregational Church, Black Point Rd
Registration from 7 to 9 AM
FMI call Trish Cowie @ 883-6099 or Denis Netto @ 883-5683

St Nick's Book Club

Come One, Come All. Please join the St. Nick's book club that meets every 4-6 weeks to discuss a variety of fiction & non-fiction works. We meet at 7:00 PM on Thursdays at Scarborough Terrace, where the cookies & juice are mighty fine.

Our current selection is the popular "DaVinci Code" by Dan Brown. Our next meeting is Thurs March 11.

Any questions or suggestions for things we can read, talk to Connie Dube or Cathy Bennett.

Report to the Trustees --- February 16, 2004

As a condition of our loan, the trustees require periodic updates on our ongoing construction, fundraising and growth plans among other things.

On the next two pages is Cynthia's report for February. This letter shows the challenges and great spirit of St. Nicholas Episcopal Church as we move into our future.

The newest news at St. Nicholas is that we have a Letter of Agreement with the Rev. David Matson, who will start March 8 as our priest-in-charge. The Bishop's Committee, Worship Committee, and former Search Committee representatives met with David, and he and we agree this is a promising match. David, being in his early forties and having a 9-year-old daughter, needs close to fulltime work, and we know there is plenty for a priest to do here, so he will be at the church four days a week. This is a huge leap of faith for us financially, and we will be supplementing our operating budget by--for the first time ever--scooping (it won't be dipping) into our rainy day fund, currently about \$56,000. The Bishop and Linton have endorsed this decision. Clearly, we are gambling on growth, but we fully expect that the new building, our eager congregation, and a talented, accessible priest will inevitably attract newcomers; we are committed to putting a priority on inviting and encouraging visitors to become members. We cannot picture success without having a priest at St. Nicholas.

On the building front, these are the figures: Capital Campaign pledges stand at \$520K and continue to be paid faithfully. The overall cost of the building will be \$806K. This is not the decrease the Trustees are looking for, but our builder and Building Chair and committee have done a phenomenal job in controlling costs while creating dynamic space for worship, education, fellowship, outreach and growth. We cannot cut more and yet provide the services expected of an Episcopal church in Scarborough. We are too close to halt now, and we have reason to believe things will work out if we go on. Until summer 2005 we pay interest only, giving us time to focus on bringing down the principal.

Here is an overview of our progress....

At Christmastime, relatives of parishioners donated the wood for the ceiling. This tremendous gift is not a savings per se because the wood ceiling had been cut to reduce building costs; however, using wood will greatly enhance the appearance and acoustics of the sanctuary, where drywall would have been a distant second choice.

Dozens of members pitched in on several frosty Saturday mornings to paint the boards (there are hundreds). These really were painting "parties", building ownership and excitement as well as saving dollars and time over having the construction crew do it. Our teenagers and kids worked right along with the adults, and the crew was organized and directed by a member (a relatively new member) who has also agreed to be our general property maintenance supervisor. That is a big help to St. Nick's! Now we know that other sweat-equity jobs are within our scope; we already know we can do some of the landscaping required by the town. We counted on sweat-equity savings, so it's not an increased savings in the budget, but we will realize the expected savings.

A family in the business provided a superb sound system. Again, this gift does not bring down our costs, as a system of this quality was never in the budget, but it will help us market the space for recitals, seminars, and so on, as well as greatly enhancing our worship services.

Another member donated professional interior and exterior design services. We have a committee designing a sign; we have artists to paint murals in the nursery, and a partnership of a new family, a returning family, and a BC member will outfit the nursery space.

We have joined Ruth's Reusable Resources, a local program that receives donations of office furniture and supplies from businesses and gives them free (after the \$350 joining fee) to nonprofit organizations. It may take a few months to find the right items, but most of what we need for furniture and office supplies will eventually come to us through Ruth's, allowing us to save potentially thousands of dollars.

One item on the chopping block was our weathervane, until it appeared in the parking lot one Sunday morning. The artist had it well underway! A rendition of St. Nicholas's sailing ship, it draws the eye of passersby on Route One. We are halfway to raising the "mile of pennies" needed to pay for it.

There is a lot of community interest in the building progress, and our Building Committee and Marketing Coordinator (another new position) have capitalized on it by contacting the media. Our steeple raising was on the TV news, and there have been numerous articles in the newspaper.

In-house ministries and outreach have continued and increased during the building period. We have been well served by supply clergy, in-house clergy, and lay preachers; we have good attendance at services and meetings. In Advent our Sunday school raised \$240 to send two pigs to impoverished families through Heifer International. Through the Root Cellar inner-city ministry in Portland, we provided Christmas gifts for 31 women. We continue to take our turns running the Soup Kitchen and Essentials Pantry. New children's Bibles (we never had a set before) were donated to the Sunday school. Many things are happening as the building rises.

To get back to the building report, there are two bad news items. One primarily affected our builder: Thieves broke into the new building and stole some expensive tools. The other bad news has to do with the sprinkler system. What was approved on the plans turned out to be insufficient when a town representative inspected the building. The changes added \$13K to costs. There was no choice but to pay this.

We decided to take the old building down immediately, as the crew can do it cheaper now than if they come back, and they know the lay of the lot. This time of year is cheapest for demolition. Demolition represents another hit of about \$9K, but is requested by the town, Trustees, Standing Committee, and bank as necessary for increasing the visibility and marketability of the new building. The Building Committee is checking into the feasibility of salvaging and selling parts of the old building.

Our Capital Campaign Fundraising Committee continues, but they need fresh ideas and support, which I think will come when David arrives and we concentrate on incorporating more people to work on stewardship and fundraising. We had a brown bag lunch at which we brainstormed fundraising ideas; we have suggestions from Demont, our fundraising consultants; and we are pursuing several ideas. I expect fundraising will be a key topic at our Bishop's Committee retreat in early spring.

Our Annual Appeal this fall was hampered by our clergy situation. When it was resolved, more pledges came in. Then we received two generous year-end gifts that helped us balance our budget and in fact carry over money. Those funds have enabled us to pay painfully high heating bills and will continue to cover increases as we move into our new space, get to know David, and shift into full gear on growth and stewardship. David Matson and Vicki LaQuerre will attend the Stewardship Conference in MA in March.

David will celebrate his first service with us on March 14th in the old building. On March 15th, we can move into the new building. On March 21st, we will hold our first service in the new sanctuary. Through God's grace and human faith, this dream is coming true, and new goals will come into focus.

**St. Nicholas
Episcopal
Church**

348 U.S. Route 1
P. O. Box 342
Scarborough, ME
04070-0342

Sunday Service &
Church School
9:00 a.m.

Priest-in-Charge
Rev. David Matson

Office Phone:
(207) 883-9347

Deacon
Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson
(207) 282-3514
misjef@awi.net

Warden
Cynthia Nye
(207) 934-1413

LENTEN STUDIES

Wednesday nights at the church from 7:00-8:30

3/3- 'A Treasure Hunt through the Prayer Book' - the Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson

3/10- 'Questions of Theology' - the Rev. Bill Baxter

3/17- 'Why Sacrifice?' - the Rev. David Matson

3/24- 'From Kiss to Cross, artists' views of the Passion' - Jean Baxter

3/31- 'Lenten and Easter Music: Somber to Glorious' - Terry Foster

Holy Week Services

(Tentative Schedule)

April 4, Palm Sunday, with Palm procession. Service starts at 9:00 AM

April 8, Maundy Thursday, Agape Chowder Supper at 6:00 p.m.
followed by communion

April 9, Good Friday service at 7:00 PM

April 10, Easter Vigil service at 7:00 PM

April 11, Easter Sunday. Service at 9:00 AM

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church
PO Box 342
Scarborough, ME 04074-0342