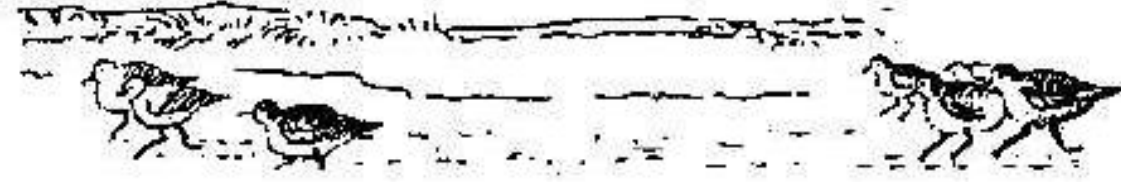


May 2004

The Sandpiper

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church



HOW BLESSED WE ARE!

Blessing of our new building and ordination of Nicole Janelle to the transitional deaconate will take place at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 13. We have worked hard for the building and Nicole has studied hard for ordination. The Rt. Rev. Chilton R. Knudsen, Bishop of Maine, will be with us to dedicate and bless the building, ordain Nicole, and 'introduce' David Matson.

It will be a gala affair; put it on your calendar now. All our past vicars and deacon and all the churches of the diocese will be invited. Nicole will add her family and friends from seminary, school, and college.

For St. Nicholas this is our 4th place of worship. From St. John's in Old Orchard Beach, to rental and shared space at Blue Point UCC in Scarborough, to the Spa and Tub Shop in front of this building we have moved as pilgrims since 1989. Although we plan to put down roots here we must be always on the move to meet the hopes and dreams of those looking for a church home and those in need in our community and the wider world, such as Haiti, companion diocese of Maine.

For Nicole it has been a change of denomination, graduation from college, a stint as an intern and inner city worker for the Episcopal Church in Los Angeles, before 3 years at Union Theological Seminary in New York. From there she took a semester and more at a seminary in Costa Rico in order to improve her Spanish and knowledge of another culture.

Other blessings include Bill Baxter, retired Episcopal priest; Don Clark, a former Methodist missionary to the Far East; Terry Foster, minister of music for us, but ordained in the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ; and John Balicki, former Roman Catholic priest, a candidate for ordination as an Episcopal priest; Cynthia and John Nye, former teachers in Yugoslavia. More blessings are found in those who serve us in various 'in house' ministries, in Sunday school, St. Nick's Singers, committees, cleaning, coffee, chalice, and especially in those who come faithfully to worship, pray and sing each Sunday.

Come celebrate our blessings on June 13.

Prayer Chain

It has been some time since we have explained and updated the Prayer Chain at St. Nicholas. The chain is composed of members of the congregation who feel comfortable praying for others whose needs are made known to them. You may contact any member of the chain to make your prayer request known. That person will e-mail the rest of the folks in the chain; one member has volunteered to call any member of the chain without e-mail service. The requests are varied; it may be for recovery in illness or accident, for safety, for peace in someone's life, for a family who has lost someone in death, for teens in danger or anything for which you are praying.. Generally, we pray daily for a week, but you can ask us for more time. So we may offer prayers of thanksgiving, we also appreciate knowing if someone has recovered.

We invite you to be a member of the praying group and/or to call or e-mail one of us if you have a prayer request. All requests are confidential in the group unless we are asked to offer them at the Prayers of the People on Sunday.

Current members are: Betsey and Jack Buckley, Hazel Davis, Connie Dube, Vickie Drigotas, Jeffrey Ferguson, Katy Janelle, Lucy LaCasse, Darcie Libby, Betsy Marsh, David Matson, Nancy Nickerson. Their phone numbers and e-mail addresses are posted in the meeting hall.

Youth Events

For those of you who aren't familiar with the Youth Events of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, I'm just going to say a little something about them. Youth Events are a way for middle schoolers and high schoolers from all over to get together. It is a way to make friends, learn about the Episcopal faith, and talk about your beliefs. A lot of teens don't get that experience in everyday life. At school or work or activities, most people don't talk about their religion or what they think about Jesus. A lot of times it's "not cool" to even acknowledge that you have a spiritual life. Youth Events give us a chance to open up and make friends that we can talk to and learn from.

In the past I've attended and staffed at middle school events, and gone to high school events. The most recent high school event I went to was TEC (Teens Encounter Christ). The weekend is really fun but it can also be very emotional. We have a healing service. During this time, there are adults at different places in the room, and if you want you can go talk to one of them about whatever you want; then people come put their hands on you and pray for you. There are also a lot of other cool things that happen over the weekend. I would encourage anybody in middle school or high school to think about going to an event, even if you don't know anyone else who's going. Everyone there is very nice and welcoming and it's easy to make close friends. These Youth Events take place in churches that volunteer their space. When our church expands a little more, I think it would be a great idea to volunteer our building for a weekend-long event. Overall I think it's a great idea to get our youth involved with the Diocese. Currently we don't have a very strong youth program and the Youth Events really offer a lot.

Rory Nickerson

Dear Friends,

I am delighted that you have developed a tradition of beginning worship in silence. I believe that all that we know – indeed, the whole created world – proceeds out of Silence.

One of my favorite verses in scripture is Revelation 8:1 – “There was silence in heaven for about half an hour.” Doesn’t that intrigue? How long is half an hour in heaven? In the next few verses, we see prayers ascend to God as the smoke of incense, perhaps corresponding to an ancient Jewish tradition that the angels of heaven observe a daily silence to listen to our prayers and laments. Or perhaps this heavenly silence is the same Silence that God knew before speaking the first words of creation.

So we begin our worship in silence. This is an opportunity to appreciate the light that fills our sanctuary, to hear the voices of children, the voices of birds, the sound of our own breathing.

It is an opportunity to release anxieties, to request God’s help with specific concerns, to give thanks, to pray for whomever we may be sitting next to.

But it is also an opportunity simply to be silent. To wait. To not be busy doing anything. Sometimes silence needs to be filled. Often, it prefers to remain empty.

I feel silence when I sit with you on Sunday mornings. I am so glad you are here. It is a blessing to be among you.

God’s Peace,

David

This little (green) light of mine...

Maine Interfaith Power and Light (MeIPL) continues to offer consumers an option for using "green energy." For less than \$0.02 more per KWH you can support Maine Renewable Energy and use power generated by biomass and hydroelectric sources rather than by standard offer resources (nuclear, natural gas, oil, coal, etc.). This results in less air pollution, and conservation of our fossil fuels.

Our bishop supports this effort. St. Nicholas uses green power, as does Loring House, St. Luke's Cathedral in Portland and several other congregations. Your bill will still come from CMP, but the origination of the electricity will change. The application to change your supplier is quick and user-friendly, and actually offers two options for supporting green power. FMI contact Nancy Nickerson (878-2238), or visit www.MeIPL.org, or e-mail info@energymaine.com.

Warden's Message

Dear Friends,

After two busy & trying years as warden, the past two months have been a breeze! Maybe a bit too breezy-- my email inbox reminds me there is a LOT going on at St. Nick's that I have not been directly involved in. But that is an excellent thing; it means that we are functioning as a healthy church, with lots of people pitching in & lots of heads making sure things get done. From my perspective, David's presence at St. Nicholas is a true blessing, for he has taken the helm with enthusiasm and competence, assuming many responsibilities that formerly had to be managed by laity standing in for a priest.

Best of all, I can come to our Sunday service free to worship, to count more blessings than trials in my prayers, to hear many more praises than frustrations in my conversations at coffee hour. During the week, I have something to draw on from the service & sermon. One week in early spring, on my daily walk with my dogs, I stopped and lay down on the path; I felt the ground, the moss, the warm rock beneath me, and was reminded of David's point that the physical earth, beneath our feet every moment, reminds us of God's constant presence and power. This week I have closed my eyes and lifted my face to the sun, literally, to feel myself filled with light, and figuratively to picture other people lit by God's light; it works! I've lifted my face to the sun before, but never thought about it quite the way I do since David's sermon. I appreciate things like that, and my husband and kids appreciate the jokes and stories.

St. Nicholas is once again a place my family is happy to be. I can hang my warden hat at the door, and we can be a family at church again... we can sit together because there is space even for latecomers, sing together because the hymns are happier, talk about Sunday school on the way home instead of processing problems. For the first time in two years, I feel safe to be absent from the service; my son Daniel and I took a turn in the nursery and had the pleasure of getting better acquainted with some of our youngest new members. What a delight it is to read and play in the nursery again!

We're welcoming visitors & newcomers, we're growing, we're putting the finishing touches on Phase 1, we're having a potluck, we're offering evening programs & discussions, we're serving soup and helping supply essentials to neighbors up the street; we're reinstating Christkindlesmarkt and the golf tournament and planning new events; we have a web site and we're in the local news on regular basis, letting the community know we're here & hoping to meet them.

Taking stock of all that, I'd say we're in a pretty good place right now! I am enjoying this time, putting my family & paid projects first again for a while :-), and looking forward to a bright future.

Blessings and thank you to everyone in our growing St. Nicholas family,

With love,
Cynthia

Building Committee Update

The job of the Building Committee is, as I write this, drawing swiftly to an end. We will meet once more - anxious to be sure the place looks its best for Bishop Chilton Knudsen's visit on June 13th.

Though the church is built (and the old tub shop is but a fading memory), Deacon Jeffrey Ferguson reminds us all that the building is not the real church. We, the people, are the church.

And St. Nicholas Church is growing. We have already seen over 200 seated for Easter. It would not surprise me to see that number again for the 4 o'clock service with the Bishop.

It is so wonderful to see us grow..., to welcome new members almost every Sunday. Our new priest, Rev. David Matson, reminds us he is new here too. But in a very real sense (whether we have been St. Nickers for 15 days or 15 years), we are all new to this place and this time..., getting to know one another, searching together.

And, yes we can already foresee the need to expand physically; to build more classroom space, a larger nursery, perhaps more office space and complete the terracing of the balcony (to seat another 40 or so up there when needed). The building process was conceived as a two-stage process to break it down into manageable chunks. We chose to squeeze Sunday School into the new building rather than maintain the decrepit old tub shop and treat our youth like second class citizens, segregated in the annex. Until it is time for another building committee to form, we will make our youthful students welcome in less than ideal conditions. We are already discussing plans to improve the sound insulation over the summer so classes and sermons do not interfere with one another.

We will display the plans for Phase Two, the Education Wing, so we can all see that we are planning to fulfill the needs of all our members. As we grow so will the energy, the will and the resources. There are so many ways for us to help. You have all helped already, whether you know it or not. Yes, our church needs monetary help. It also needs volunteer help, and the help we all give mostly without realizing - building community.

One way is through committee work. There will be numerous committees forming to see that we take care of our resources. These will be committees with titles such as building maintenance, landscaping and gardening, cleaning and supplies, kitchen upgrade, pastoral care, etc., etc. You will see information and sign-up requests over the next few weeks. Feel free to suggest other areas if you feel moved to help in an area not yet designated for a committee. Talk to David, Jeffrey, Cynthia Nye, our Warden, myself as a member of the Bishop's Committee, or any member of the Bishop's Committee (listed on the bulletin board). This committee is basically what would be called the Vestry in another Episcopal church, but as we are still considered a mission church, we are in a real sense governing ourselves directly under the purview of Chilton, our Bishop.

As the building committee dissolves, I have many wonderful things in my family life to assure I won't be lost for things to do. I have to admit (because you may think I am crazy if you hear it elsewhere) I am overseeing the construction of a family vacation/rental camp on Kimball Lake in Fryeburg and ground has already been broken there. Even as I put away my cap as chair of the St. Nicholas Church Building Committee, I know I will stay very involved in the building of the Church that is the community of spiritual seekers at St. Nicholas.

Thank you all for your help,
Mark Bennett

INTRODUCING A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER COLUMN

During “Prayers of the People” you might hear me request prayer for “Paul in prison.” Paul is my friend who, due to a set of bad choices, law breaking, and unfortunate circumstances, now finds himself imprisoned in Virginia. Except for seeing Paul at a church reunion in 1989, I’d had no contact with him for 30 years until last year when he wrote and told me of his situation. I met Paul in 1970 when I became Minister of Education at the church in Virginia where his family worshipped. Paul was a teenager and very active in the church. He was a model young person. He was from a devout, middle-income family very active in the church and the community.

At some point in his life, Paul took a wrong turn. After being charged with a serious drug-related offense, he “ran” to Mexico. When he came to his senses, he returned to the United States and is now “paying his debt to society.”

As a teenager, Paul considered going into the ministry. That did not happen. A few months ago he again felt a “stirring” and commitment to God that has changed his life. He wrote me asking for compassion and guidance. I have been writing to him each week, praying for him, and doing what I can to help him move his life into a good path. His letters have been a blessing to me, and I appreciate an opportunity to help someone in real need. Paul is now consulting with officials in his denomination, seeking to become a licensed minister. He is currently studying theology and is an inspiration to many inside prison and increasingly to those outside those walls.

Christ admonishes us to visit those in prison. Paul will write a brief column for our newsletter each month, sharing with us the challenges of being behind bars. He especially wants young people to know about the dangers of taking wrong paths. He will share his faith and aspirations with our parish. We will be able to “visit” with him through the newsletter, and some might wish to write him or help him in some other way. For now, I would ask that all of you put this man, now 50 years of age, on your prayer list. He has decided that when he is released he will be involved in some kind of specialized ministry. He is sincere and committed to sharing God’s message with others. Look for his first column in the next Sandpiper.

Terry Foster

St Nick's Book Club

Please join us for the book club's meeting on Thursday June 3 at 7:00 PM at Scarborough Terrace, the assisted living facility just down the street from St Nick's. We meet upstairs in the library. This time we are reading a non-fiction book called *The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Blackwell. We would love to see new faces. Please contact Connie Dube for more info, 839-3712.

www.stnicholas-me.org

The space for our new website and David Matson's e-mail address (snec@gwi.net) is donated by Great Works Internet (www.gwi.net.) GWI is a Biddeford company that donates space to many non-profit and charitable organizations, including the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. Please use the link on our website to find out more (especially if you are looking for a new internet provider.)

DEACON'S MUSINGS

"...Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving you neighbor as yourself?" Book of Common Prayer p. 305

"...Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and fed you, or thirsty and gave you drink, a stranger and took you home, or naked and clothed you? When did we see you in prison, and come to visit you?' And the king will answer, 'I tell you this: anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me'." Matthew 25:37-40

The first comes from the service of Holy Baptism which we affirm several times a year. The latter is one of the pegs on which I hang my diaconal service. Part of that service is to inspire and prod members of the congregation to see these as their responsibilities also. I am also called to interpret to the church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world. Here are some of the needs of our local area and how St. Nicholas is meeting them.

For many years, under Cathy Bennett's leadership, we have brought items for **the Scarborough Food Pantry** which may be left in the front entry. Nancy Nickerson has provided us **a Souper Bowl** on Super Bowl Sunday. Proceeds provide assistance in the local area. We have provided Christmas gifts for the women at The Root Cellar, a non-denominational service center in Portland. More recently, Nancy Agan and Nancy Nickerson have guided us in gathering and assembling items, and serving at the **Essentials Pantry**. This 'pantry' is open to many in Portland and the need has been growing steadily. The pantry is an outgrowth of St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church which operated near the Preble Street Resource Center until it lost its lease. The pantry, which provides items not available with food stamps, was an 'essential' to the immigrants and others in the Bayside and Munjoy Hill areas. Each Tuesday between 100 and 150 people come for diapers, toilet tissue and paper towels, toothpaste and shampoo, laundry detergent and baby wipes. The **need is great** for money to buy these items to stock the pantry and/or for us to bring some to church each week that will be used when 'our turn' comes, about every 7th week. Peter Bowen, the executive of the pantry, told me that we need to **double our volunteers**; speak to one of the Nancys if you can help. You may bring an item to church and leave it in the designated box; you may make monetary contributions by cash or check to: Diocese of Maine-Essentials Pantry and place in the offering; we will see that Peter gets it.

Most of this musing has been on service requiring cash. Time is an important gift, too. Time at the Essentials Pantry is one. Time as tutor or mentor at The Root Cellar is another. **Time for prayer** for the needy and especially for the people of our Companion Diocese-Haiti is gift beyond measure. Yes, God knows the needs even before we do, but our petitions let God know we care, also. I have posted in the meeting room some articles about Haiti. As a former prison chaplain I ask your prayers for the youth and staff at Long Creek Youth Center in So. Portland and Mountain View in Charleston and for all prisoners and staff wherever they may be in this world.

'The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.' BCP p. 856
May the peace of God fill your hearts and minds and souls.

**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) 883-9437

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

Warden
Cynthia Nye
(207) 934-1413

www.stnicholas-me.org

Calendar of Events

- May 30 **Soup Kitchen** at the Preble Street Resource Center
Cooks @ 10, Servers @ 11:30, Cleaners @ 12:45
Packaging for **Essentials Pantry** (after coffee hour)
- June 13 Special service with Bishop Knudson Presiding;
(4:00 PM) Building Dedication, Ordination of Nicole Janelle,
Installation of David Matson, and Special Music.
Come see old friends and make some new ones!

See more events and schedules on our website
www.StNicholas-ME.org

The Sandpiper Thanks... Darcie Libby for coordinating and arranging the Easter flowers... The St Nick's Singers for their wonderful music on Easter... The Worship Committee for the original take on the Holy Week services... The Bennetts and all those who "moved walls" and other objects for all our extra guests at Easter... Larry Gurnee and all the volunteers who made great progress on seeding the grounds... Barbara Martin, Vickie Drigotas, and the others who bake & deliver goodies to our guests and new members!

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church
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