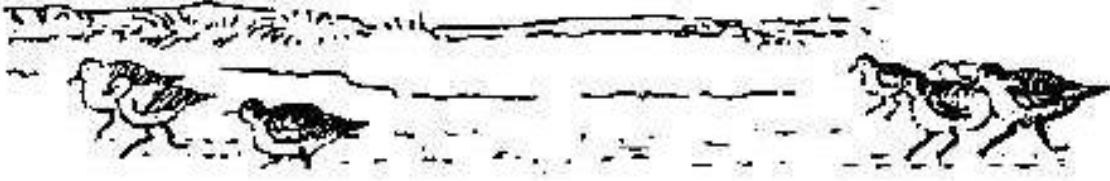


January 2005

The Sandpiper

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church



Changes

This edition of the Sandpiper brings news of many changes at St Nicholas Church. First and foremost is the passing of our Deacon, The Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson on November 23. The center four pages of this edition are dedicated to Jeffrey. We have a new Warden, Don Martin, who has already been challenged by some of these changes. There are new members in the Bishop's Committee. The organizers for Greeters and the Nursery are new, though not new to St Nick's. In Advent, we again used the New Zealand Prayer Book for our Sunday services. December saw the return of Christkindlsmarkt, the start of a new Christmas Pageant, lights in the expanded parking lot and a new sign! And in another change for clergy related to St Nicholas Church, the Ordination of Nicole Simonne Janelle to the Sacred Order of Priests was held Saturday, December 18, 2004 at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Los Angeles. See the website for more items and more details, as there simply was not room for everything that was submitted!

Warden's Notes

Dear Friends:

It is with pleasure and a deep sense of honor that I look forward to serving you as Warden in the upcoming year.

On Tuesday, November 23, our beloved Deacon The Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson passed away. It is ironic that this was the night that St. Nicholas Church was hosting the Scarborough Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service. Jeffrey was forever giving thanks to her God and always assured everyone, regardless of their stature, that they were one of God's children, and that he would take care of them.

Jeffrey's passing has been a blow to her family and friends, to our Church, and to the Diocese. I'm sure that none of us will ever begin to appreciate the many lives that were touched by her love and kindness. Many people have described Jeffrey as St. Nick's anchor. I personally have thought of her more as our navigator who has guided St. Nicholas to where it is today. Let's always think of her when we look up at the weathervane on our steeple, knowing that she will continue to guide us in the right direction.

On behalf of the Congregation, I would like to thank Fr. David for the many hours that he spent ministering to Jeffrey and her family. The prayer service that he led on Tuesday afternoon at Maine Medical Center and Worship on the following Sunday was done with thoughtfulness and afforded everyone who attended an opportunity to share their thoughts on Jeffrey's life. I would also like to reassure David that even though he has lost his "right hand helper," he is not alone. All of us are there for him in the "collaborative ministry" that is St. Nicholas.

In that spirit, individuals have already come forward and taken responsibility for organizing chalice bearers, greeters, and coffee. Many people are also arriving earlier on Sunday to make sure that the Bulletins are folded, the candles are lit, and the table is ready for the Service.

Her service has ended, let our service begin.

Don Martin

Annual Meeting was held at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church on November 7, 2004. Highlights of the meeting notes are listed below. Some have been updated to reflect what has happened, such as the use of the New Zealand Prayer Book during Advent.

Some of the changes, activities, and events of 2004 were:

- David Matson was hired.
- A Newcomers Program is being developed. A 'Newcomer's Brunch' has been held twice since moving into the new building.
- Attendance has gone from an average of 42 to 100 every Sunday.
- Nicole Janelle's Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate was held at the Church in July.
- The completion of our new Education Wing was made possible due to an anonymous gift.
- Our Golf Tournament and Chriskindlsmarkt both returned in 2004.
- Church School classes are slowly but surely growing.
- Our 2005 goal is to improve teacher staffing.
- Bible 101 has been a lot of fun with about 20 people attending the sessions.
- Preacher's Aid had been brought back.
- David has created a calendar to help map out future Sundays so the Worship Committee can start planning services well in advance.
- The New Zealand Prayer Book was used during Advent.
- Supply shortages were encountered in January and February but we finally moved into our new space in March of 2004. Soon thereafter the Tub Shop was torn down. In June we received an anonymous \$300K gift to build our Education Wing. We were able to use the original contractor and architect to get this job done, and a certificate of occupancy for the new wing was obtained in October. In December, just in time for Christkindlsmarkt, the outdoor lighting was completed. The Education wing came in under budget, which will allow us to install a folding accordion door in the last classroom to divide the space.
- More trees and landscaping will be accomplished in the spring to add to the work lead this past summer by Larry Gurnee and the many who watered and cared for our fledgling lawn.
- Jeffrey Ferguson reported on In House Ministries. We are all ministers and we all have our ministries. In many churches the lay ministers just serve at the altar. Not so at St. Nicholas – we are all lay ministers. St. Nick has a history of hospitality and so many who do so much in interior ministries. We have greeters, chalice bearers, church school teachers, nursery help, all the various committees, music makers, fund raising, grounds keepers and house keepers. Out of all of the jobs listed only two people in the church are paid- David and Terry. Mark Bennett, Cynthia Nye, and the Abbotts have probably put in 20-30 weeks for St. Nicholas. Everyone has done a wonderful job.
- Some of the outreach projects we have been involved in for 2004 are: Preble Street Soup Kitchen, St. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry, Project Grace, Scarborough Food Pantry, Souper Bowl Sunday, UTO, Root Cellar in Portland, Heifer Project, Peace Project, our Church School children have written letters to our soldiers in Iraq, and the Dominican Republic Trip. In indirect ways we help our community by buying our electric from Green Energy of Maine and our coffee comes from farms where labor is not exploited.
- David's priority has been to get to know us. He wants to meet more of us and will be making a greater effort to do so. Questioning seems to be a St. Nicholas tradition and he would like to encourage that and work to keep it ongoing. Some highlights for him have been experimenting with the Liturgy, beach Baptism, Diocesan New Clergy meetings once a month, and he has been asked to be on the Clergy Day Committee. For a future focus David would like to work more with the youth and teens of our church, start a prayer group, has ideas for the grounds.

On Tuesday, November 23, our beloved Deacon The Rev. Jeffrey Ferguson passed away. On the next four pages are some thoughts and pictures from members of the congregation of St Nicholas Church, and our Bishop.

The Rev. Harriet Jeffrey Ferguson, 81, died at Maine Medical Center late yesterday afternoon, November 23, in the wake of quadruple by-pass surgery. Ordained in the Diocese of Maine in June 1985, Jeff embodied the essence of the Diaconate. I first met Jeff when she was a member of the Nominating Committee for a Bishop in 1997. Quite honestly, she was one of the reasons why I fell in love with Maine. A diocese that would affirm and support the ministry of a Jeff Ferguson was a place I wanted to be. From prison ministry, to parochial ministry, to community net-working in the cause of peace and justice, to building up a new cluster ministry in the County, to her mentoring of new deacons, to her many diocesan roles, Jeff was always a strong voice in our diocesan conversations about the baptismal ministry of all the members of Christ's Body.

Our diocesan community will gather to thank God for her life and ministry on Saturday, December 4th, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral Church of St. Luke, 143 State Street in Portland. But she will be most especially remembered as we reach out to those around us who have been ignored or rejected. She taught us to regard all people as our neighbors. May we do so, in her honor. Thanks be to God for this incredible Deacon, a woman of quiet power and a huge heart. How blessed we are to have had her companionship in our journeys.

The Rt. Rev. Chilton R. Knudsen
Bishop of Maine



Thanksgiving Day 2004

Dear Jeff,

You wise and wonderful woman! You are gone from our sight, but never from our hearts! We all know how little you liked to say goodbyes, and many of us share that with you. But this departure of yours wins the prize! So now you have to listen to me and so many others tell you how much we love you and miss you, and look forward to being with you again in The Glory.

On this Thanksgiving Day I am especially grateful for your compassionate life of service and your generous spirit as a Deacon. Your insight into human nature and common sense around the workings of institutions (especially the church, from committee to mission to national levels) made you a wonderful colleague to clergy and lay folks alike. And your ready smile and quick humor reflected a soul, which took God seriously enough to take yourself with a little levity. The sparkle in your eye invited us all to share the depth of your life of faith and the lovely lightness of your being. That invitation made friends of us all.

In that friendship I rejoice that the ponderings are over for you as you move ever deeper into the exquisite beauty of The Answer, and the Laughter at The Heart of Things. Thank you for service to so many, your patient commitment to the church, for your faith so freely shared, and your friendship, cherished by us all.

You have gone in peace; your memory sends us into the world, rejoicing in the power of The Spirit.

God bless you and us all,
Gil



Her chuckle and her smile. She never seemed to get ruffled and took everything as it came. She had that wonderful quality of just rolling with the punches and taking things with graciousness. I admired her ministry. She had done so many things - always for other people. I miss her physical presence but her spiritual presence is always there.

Thanks.

Barbara

There has been a consensus with everyone that I have spoken to today, that Jeffrey has taken this Congregation to where she thought we should be, and has left for her reward (not a minute sooner.) I find it symbolic that Jeffrey passed away from a heart condition. It was the organ that she used the most in spreading her faith, her joy, her wisdom, and her love, with all who knew her.

Peace,

Don Martin

Dear Friends,

Our Deacon Jeffrey Ferguson passed away on the evening of Tuesday, November 23rd. She had bypass surgery on the day before and never recovered. She was 81 years old.

I say that in part in case you have not yet heard the news – I know some who read this newsletter may not even be in Maine this time of year.

And I say it also in part just to see how it sounds. I guess I am still a bit stunned.

I was not entirely shocked by Jeffrey's death. She had known for a while that she was not 100%. On one of our visits the weekend before, she told me to tell the rest of you that she was not worried. When she said that, she gave me a quick, sharp look in the eye. She seemed to say that she was not promising to live – only that she was not worried.

What stuns me is simply her sudden absence. I so much appreciated Jeffrey's presence in this place. Just as she had for so many of you so many times, she provided me with guidance and stability in a time of transition. And she did this without seeming to "do" anything. We enjoyed a lot of laughter together.

One could say her spirit lives on in this place – or more accurately, our fond memories and the fruits of her work. But mostly I am reminded that everything is always changing. In some ways, transition never ends.

We live and change, we die and change, we rise again: changed. Jeffrey is woven into our lives and we into the lives of others. Beautiful and sad at the same time. Maybe it is only love that does not change – except to become richer and more lustrous, polished by time.

May God bless you for who you are and for the gifts you bring and for the gifts you receive. And as Jeffrey has touched your life, may she be blessed through you as well.

Peace,
David



I remember that the diocese of Haiti, and the companion relationship between the Haitian diocese and ours, was near and dear to Jeff's heart. I am hoping people will remember during prayers of the people to mention praying for the bishop and the people of Haiti, as she did on a weekly basis.

Nancy Nickerson

I spent many hours with Jeff over a period of years after she joined us as deacon back in ? I don't remember when...it was at the end of Jim King's tenure as minister. Jeff & I were on the Diocesan committee for Vocational Discernment at the time. She & I would ride up in her Volvo wagon with the heated seats to wherever the meetings were taking place - Christ Church, Gardner, St.Paul's Brunswick or a day long retreat at Greenfire in Tenant's Harbor or an old farmhouse in Liberty, ME. She didn't like to drive home in the dark so I got to drive the "luxury" car.

During those hours she didn't talk much about herself or her feelings about things. She was a private person, & stoic in the face of pain or hardship, & I think she expected the same in others. She didn't like whining or feeling sorry for yourself. Sure, I heard her factual history of growing up with a big family, where she went to school, her job, her calling to be a deacon. We talked mostly about what was going on at St Nick's at the time, or what was going on with people, or we'd talk about philosophy. She would sprinkle the conversation with anecdotes about funny things that had happened to her. She didn't mind laughing about embarrassing things that she had done. She was always giggling. If she objected to something it would be with a twinkle in her eye. She did feel strongly about certain things & would make statements, but she would listen & could change her mind. I never saw her depressed. I never saw her lose her temper. But, she could be short with people when she was irritated. And, I bet she swore at home when no one was around!

She would invite me & my girls & their friends in the summer to her house to go swimming. When the girls were little, we went at least twice a summer, bringing our picnic lunches & eating in her dining room over-looking the beautiful ocean & rocks. We'd all walk to the little beach, or climb on the rocks (which she couldn't do anymore, & any rocks we picked up & brought back she made sure did NOT stay at her house). We would swim in her lap pool, where she would demonstrate that she could still do a handstand in the water! she loved to swim. She loved watching the birds at her feeder & had lots of stories about wild animals about the house, & her cats, Prudence & Tuppence. (I think that was their names).

Speaking of swimming, she & I were the only ones of the grown-ups who would wear their bathing suits to St Nick's beach baptism on Labor Day, & go in swimming after the service. We would check before the service - "did you wear your suit?" I remember the water feeling darn cold one day, I would've chickened out, but Jeffrey was going in so I HAD to. It took our breath away, but we did it. She was one tough lady. But that's what she did, she inspired you. If Jeff can do it, you can too.

A couple of weeks before she died, we had a long conversation. She said she missed talking to me & wanted to have lunch sometime. We never got around to doing that, but in my mind I imagine us having many picnics in the house overlooking the rocks.

Connie



Deacons Musings

11/20/04

Sit down take a deep breath and think. Advent is the season of preparation for the coming of the Christ Child. Are you preparing for that event or for the family gathering, too many gifts and over eating? Mercy, justice, friendships, healing, forgiving, loving are among the gifts to share. Gifts of your time, service, and love for those alone or in need are there as gifts for your children and other family members to give away. Make peace with family and friends- forgive. As you sit and breathe and think give thanks for the gifts you receive each day. "Advent tells us Christ is near, Christmas tells us Christ is here."

Annual Meeting Report – continued from page 2

- The monies raised for the Building Campaign has now climbed to \$535K. We are two years into our 5 year loan, and pledges are coming in right on time. We have paid off our Weathervane with monies collected for seven months, and the new front sign has also been paid for using \$1700 collected in donations, as well as the proceeds from the golf tournament.
- The annual appeal was mailed in early October. The response to date is at 90%. Last year we had 43 pledges totaling \$68K. This year we have 49 pledges totaling \$71K. Twelve of those are new pledging units.
- The budget for 2005 is a wake-up call. In August 2005, we will begin making mortgage payments on our building. Diocesan required increases for priest compensation and assessments, in addition to heating costs, combine to boost expenses 25% over those in 2004. As predicted a year ago, we will use virtually all of our money market funds in 2005 to meet expenses, if not sooner. The projected shortfall for 2005 is approximately \$40K.
- Several options for additional income will be explored in the coming months. Fundraising events to be considered are a yard sale and, of course, our annual golf tournament. Another income option is rental of our space, either for special events or on a term lease. The building was designed for use beyond just Sunday mornings. If anyone has experience or interest in marketing our space or pursuing rental opportunities, please contact The Rev. David Matson or Don Martin.
- Our overriding goal for next year is to continue to grow the congregation. Another of our goals should also be full time ministry. We also need to grow into our Education Wing.
- Cynthia Nye retired as Warden, and Pat Beidleman and Vickie Drigotas retired from the Bishop's Committee. Linda Cohen will take over as clerk, and Gregg Frame, Rory Nickerson, and Renee Thresher were elected to three-year terms.
- Barbara MacDougall and Hazel Davis retired from their jobs as Convention Delegates. Jim Atkinson and Don Martin will become delegates, with Paula Atkinson and possibly Sharon Hanley as alternates.

The meeting was closed with a prayer and the traditional pot-luck dinner.

A complete copy of the report can be found on our website.

St. Nick's has a great little nursery for any children under 3 years of age. It is staffed by both parents and others who are kind enough to donate their time. A new sign up sheet for the next month is posted on the nursery door. Please sign up for any date that might be good for you. We all really appreciate help with the little ones. They sure aren't little for long.....

On behalf of all the people who have left our little ones in the nursery, I would like to say a big "Thank You" to Vicki LaQuerre for all that she has done setting up and staffing the nursery. You made it possible for my husband and me to actually listen to what David has to say! "Thank you, Thank you, Thank you"!

Finally, my name is Linda Elliott and I will be taking over Vicki's role in regard to the nursery. I can be reached at my home number, 883-1226 or by email, LindaE1136@aol.com. Please call me with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Sharon Hanley has taken over the responsibility of the Greeters Schedule from Nancy Agan. A big thank you to Nancy for being in charge of the Greeters for five years - a job well done! If there are any questions about the schedule or the duties, please feel free to call Sharon at home: 396-5687 or e-mail her at: hanley72@maine.rr.com.

**St. Nicholas
Episcopal
Church**

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Scarborough, ME
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Sunday Service &
Church School
9:00 a.m.

Priest-in-Charge
Rev. David Matson

Office Phone:
(207) 883-9437

Warden
Don Martin
(207) 885-0261

www.stnicholas-me.org

Diocesan Youth Mission Trip

A youth Mission Team has formed over the past several months, and will be traveling to the village of Jalonga in southeastern Dominican Republic on July 1 2005. Rory and Nancy Nickerson are part of the group, which will be helping to build a bakery---specifically helping put in a foundation---in a town with very high unemployment and little in the way of amenities/necessities. Most homes do not have running water or electricity, and there is no school in the village. For one week they will be sleeping in San Mateo Episcopal Church, doing physical labor in the mornings, and leading a Vacation Bible School in the afternoons for about 100 children under age twelve. A trifold with photos of Jalonga, and more information about the trip, is in the coffee hour room. We invite you to be part of this endeavor, through your prayers and financial contributions. Donations can be put in the "money jar" at church. Your interest and support, financial and otherwise, is much appreciated.

Building Use Information

Currently, our building is used by non-profit groups such as the Girl Scouts, Maine Crafters Association, and Episcopal Diocese of Maine. The Bishop's Committee has approved for-profit use of the facilities for organizations and events in accordance with our Building Use Application and Building Use Agreements. These forms are available to view and download on our website www.stnicholas-me.org or in the church office. The Rev. David Matson is available to answer any questions regarding the use of St. Nicholas's facilities.

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