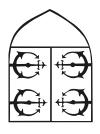


ESSENGER

MAILED MARCH 1, 2024

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"LOOKING FOR THE 'YES'"

Dear Friends,

You may know that I play the piano a little bit. I've never considered myself a serious musician, as I play almost entirely by ear, and I'm more interested in making music improvisationally than by playing anything already written down or recorded somewhere else. In my own style of music-making, I've found a unique relationship with the word "yes," because of the creative energy involved with listening closely, feeling deeply, and playing courageously (even when not knowing exactly where it all will

The Rev. Sam Wells, a theologian, writer, and priest in the Church of England, has said a great deal about the role of improvisation, primarily in theater, as it relates to theology, ethics, and church. Wells says, "The heart of improvisation is the ability to keep the story going." Accepting in this case refers to a particular response to the offer of another— whether that offer be physical or verbal. "Actors have to learn to say 'yes' even when to do so seems impossible, improper, or dangerous" (From a sermon preached by Sam Wells on Oct. 1, 2006, in Duke University Chapel).

I find resonance (no pun intended) between Wells' commentary on saying "yes" in improv theater and my own experience playing the keyboard. It is quite a common thing for me to catch a note I wasn't intending to play; but if I just go with it—incorporate into a new chord (maybe a hairy one!), modify the melody, keep going—then the possibilities are unlimited for where the tune might go. And sometimes the result is particularly beautiful or joyful or fun!

Together with God and one another, people have kept the story going for a long time by saying "yes" to unexpected inputs of all sorts and from all different directions. The "yes" is what keeps us moving forward. Each one brings new opportunities and gifts, even as they also represent a turning away or detour around what used to be or what we hoped would be.

(Please turn to page 6 to continue reading Scott+'s letter.)

R. Scott Painter, Rector SuEllen Pommier, Curate Roberto Arciniega, Associate Rector Gloria Orellana, Office Administrator JT Quanbeck, Website & Livestreaming

Ext. 312 Brian Fairbanks, Choir Director Hannah Brewer, Music Director/Organist (coming soon)

Ext. 316 Leslie Sackett, Associate for Children & Families

Manuel Luna, Facilities Assistant Ext. 317

Ext. 318

Ext. 315

Ext. 315

YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED ...

+ for healing and comfort for Jon Acord, Mark Jones, Caroline Litzenberger, David Pace, Bob & Esther Pyle, Melissa Reeves and Marlana Stoddard Hayes.



+ in thanksgiving for the marriage on February 24 of **Paul Criswell** and Laura Binam.

The following prayers appeared in eblasts after November 9, 2023, when the previous Messenger was published; however, they are repeated here in case they were missed:

+ for the repose of the souls of the Rev. Mark Allen, who died on November 11, and for his wife Nancy and their children and grandchildren; Sandy Yarno, who died on November 13, and for her family; David Scruggs, who died on December 15, and for his family, friends and neighbors; John Mosher, who died on January 5, and for his wife Betty and mother-in-law Lynn Baker; Gabriel Cruz Antonio, who died on January 25, and for his father and stepmother Armando and Kenya Cruz; and Sondra Burns, who died on February 4, and for her sister Kenya Cruz.

In life we are in the midst of death, O God, and in the presence of your beloved child we see that death cannot separate us from your love. Pour out your spirit of love upon all whom we love, especially those whom we cannot be with or see no longer, that we may find comfort and strength in our trust of your goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

JR. WARDEN FOR FACILITIES REPORT

Your Facilities Committee and Jr. Warden for Facilities are trying to find solutions for replacing and modernizing our heating and cooling systems. As St. Michael's has previously committed to Green Energy goals as established by the Diocese, this represents an opportunity to make inroads into our energy and emissions profile.

The current high-pressure, gas-fired boiler which serves most of the church was installed in 1953. Powered originally by fuel oil, it replaced an earlier unknown heating system from 1923. At some point, probably in the 1970s, the fuel source was switched to natural gas. The Parish Hall, Sacristy and Gallery were added to the main building in 1937, and the Nativity Hall wing was added in 1953.

Our 1953 boiler serves the main church as well as the additions of 1937 and 1953. It provides steam to three large fan coil units through a system of insulated pipes. The steam circulates through these units, heating the coils, and the fan

SENIOR WARDEN & VESTRY NEWS

Our Annual Meeting was held on January 28th. This is an important part of our parish governance. We heard from our Rector Scott+. He talked of God's abundance and how this plays out daily through our ministries at St. Michael's. He also introduced us to a model of abundance called "Holy Currencies."



These currencies are named as relationships, gracious leadership, time & place, truth, and wellness. Our vestry will begin to explore Holy Currencies at our retreat on March 2nd.

Dave Reilly presented the budget for 2024. I would like to thank Dave, Scott+, the finance committee, the vestry and Team L.I.F.E. for their hours of work on the budget. I especially want to thank you, the parish, for your generosity.

Another important function of the Annual Meeting is to vote for our new vestry members. Our new members for the next three years are Joe de Luna, Elizabeth Rouffy, Kevin Warren and Ann Wetherell. They all bring many gifts and a breadth of knowledge to our vestry.

We have moved right into February with Souper Bowl Sunday, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday. I enjoyed seeing our youth volunteering to serve at the pancake dinner along with the MOWs and WOWs. Everywhere I go, I see a dedicated congregation living and engaging in God's work.

I'd like to thank Helen Crandell again for her dedication to the parish for over a year. She was a steady and patient leader in our time of transition. I am honored to follow her as your Senior Warden this year.

With Christ,

Thrina Parent

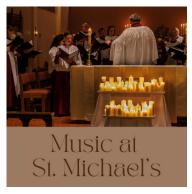
distributes and recirculates warm air through these coils. Maintenance costs for this system have increased in the past few years.

With Vestry approval, we have engaged the services of a consulting mechanical engineer to investigate options for system replacement. All options being considered are electrically powered and provide both heating and air conditioning to our building. As we review these options, we are considering the costs and how the work might be phased in over a period of time, as well as improvements to building insulation.

More information on this will be forthcoming over the next few months, as we work through design and budget issues. If you have any questions, please contact me.

— Carl Braginsky, carl.b.hmb@gmail.com

MUSIC PROGRAM UPDATE



Holden Evening Prayer continues on Wednesdays in Lent at 6:15 pm through March 20. All are welcome to "Soup with Scott+," a simple supper, before the service each week at 5:30 pm. Holden Evening Prayer is a beloved vespers service written by Marty Haugen in the 1980s while he was

living at Holden Village in the North Cascade Mountains of Washington state. This 30-minute service incorporates candlelight, light incense, psalmody, readings and canticles led by a cantor and sung by all. Cantor Beth Ilem, flutist Brian Fairbanks, and keyboardist Hannah Brewer are leading the music each week.



March 10 is Woman Composer Sunday, as recognized by organizations such as the American Guild of Organists and the Society of Women Organists (both of which St. Michael's organist Hannah Brewer is a member). The choir will sing a communion anthem by the Canadian composer Stephanie Martin (b. 1962), and Hannah will offer organ voluntaries by women composers. Thanks to a brand-new publication called *The Oxford Book of Organ Music by Women Composers* and the (re)discovery of other works, it's becoming easier to find and program gems by women that have stayed hidden or forgotten throughout the centuries. One of the ongoing aims of your current music program leaders is to continue to build up our catalogue of choir music by women and other historically underrepresented composers.

Continuing into Lent and Holy Week, the choirs are preparing a magnificent variety of anthems, including works by William L. Dawson, John Rutter, Maurice Duruflé, George Frideric Handel, Colin Mawby, and Stephen Paulus. The St. Michael's Singers will offer anthems in German, Latin, Church Slavonic (Russian) and English, while the Saints & Singers are preparing arrangements of the American folk hymn *The Lone, Wild Bird* as well as a traditional South African tune.

One highlight in particular not to miss will be the 6:30 pm Good Friday service, which will feature an emotional,

dramatic arrangement of the American spiritual *Take my mother home* (Gilbert Martin's *Cross-Cry*) as well as one of the most sublime pieces for Passiontide heard in cathedrals throughout the world, John Sanders' *The Reproaches*, which will be sung during the veneration of the cross. And don't miss the Portland Brass Quintet on Easter Sunday where they will combine with the choir for Handel's glorious and classic *Hallelujah Chorus*.

More upcoming music events at St. Michael's:

Saturday, April 27, at 4:00 pm

Ensemble Boulanger (with Hannah Brewer and Emma Cowell) presents vocal and keyboard music of the German Romantics, including Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Clara Schumann, Franz Schubert and more.

Thursday, May 9, at 7:00 pm

Choral Evensong for the Feast of the Ascension, with choral highlights such as Gerald Finzi's triumphant anthem *God is gone up*.

Sunday, May 19, at 4:00 pm

The Cathedral Trio with Brian Fairbanks on flute, offering their final performance as an ensemble, rescheduled from January.

Friday, May 31, & Saturday, June 1, at 7:00 pm

Broadway Night music program fundraiser, with ensemble numbers such as *Seize the Day* from *Newsies*, *Raise You Up* from *Kinky Boots*, and *Dancing Queen* from *Mamma Mia!* Tickets go on sale in May.

— Hannah Brewer, Music Director & Organist

NAME TAGS AT ST. MICHAEL'S

"You want to go where everyone knows your name."



Sheri O'Brien, Jr.
Warden for the
People and the
creator of our name
badges, recently reorganized the name
badge shelves in the
Gallery. Next time
you're at church,

please look for your button there and replace it in the right alphabetical location when you're ready to leave. Also, please wear your name tag when you are at church so we can call each other by name. If you don't have one, you can sign up to get one made, choosing a pin, clip or magnet back. If you've forgotten yours, you can find temporary name tags on the Welcome Table as you come in the courtyard doors.

— Sheri O'Brien, Gloria Orellana

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER



As many of you are aware, our bookkeeper Jackie Van Anda has retired as of the end of February. She will still be available for occasional consultations going forward; but Treasurer Dave Reilly and Finance Committee member Daryl Cole have taken the reins of the bookkeeping and donations along with a bookkeeping firm that Scott+ has used. They are both very experienced, but please be patient as they work through the intricacies of our finances.

Dave organized a lovely pizza-and-cake retirement party on February 27 for Jackie, and we sent her off with a gift card to Broadway Books (travel books, perhaps??) and all of our best wishes. She will be missed!

Dave also wants to share the following helpful information about your donations:

Many of us who donate to St. Michael's do so through automatic donations either set up through the St. Michael's website or by authorizing St. Michael's to directly withdraw an amount from our bank accounts. When we change our pledge amount we need to also change the amount we are setting up to give either from the website or through our bank, depending on how the automatic donation is set up.

WELCOME/NEWCOMERS COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Welcome/Newcomers Committee is going strong, and we had a gathering on Saturday, February 17, to greet newcomers and welcome back members who have been away for a while. It was a fun time, and we are looking forward to doing it again in a few months.

We are reading a book called *Invite Welcome Connect* by Mary Foster Parmer, who happens to be a friend of Scott+'s, and we are looking at ways to be more welcoming to people who are visiting or looking for a new parish home. The Welcome Table has been moved to the entryway from the courtyard, which is where Manny will sit, and we kept the information table (with signups, etc.) in the Gallery. This

If your donation is set up through the St. Michael's website and you want to change the amount given, go to stmaa.org and click on the *Give Online* button at the very top of the page. Click on the *Login/Create Profile* button. You will then be prompted to enter your email address and password. If you have forgotten your password, click on the *Forgot your Password* selection and you will be led through a procedure to reset the password. Once you have entered the correct email address and password, you will be led to a screen showing your donation schedule. At this point, you can view, edit or delete your donation. You will want to edit the donation by entering the revised amount you want to donate.

If your automatic donation has been set up through your bank by allowing St. Michael's to make a withdrawal from your account, you will have to make the changes through your bank. If this is your case, now would be a good time to move to making your donation through the St. Michael's website. Moving to make your donation through the website involves canceling your current donation set up through your bank and establishing a donation through the website. During the coming year, we will be working to move all automatic donations to the website. We are doing this because most donors already do website donations, donating through the website puts the donor completely in charge of the donation, and it is simpler for us and we are less prone to make errors in administration if we use only one automatic donation system.

All of this can seem pretty daunting – I know my heart sinks when I have to enter a bunch of passwords and navigate through unfamiliar screens. Take heart! We can help you. If you are having trouble doing what you want to do, call Dave Reilly at 503/347-5464 and we can talk you through the process.

— Dave Reilly, Treasurer for the Vestry

arrangement is on a trial basis. We are also looking at our signage both inside and outside the building to see where we can improve. The committee is continuing to look for other ways to help visitors feel welcome and connected; they will eventually coalesce into a program that will involve more people in the parish. Look for forums in the spring on how we "invite, welcome and connect" with our neighbors.

— Sheri O'Brien



REPORT FROM THE JR. WARDEN FOR THE PEOPLE

I am Sheri O'Brien, the Jr Warden for the People. My job is to be available to the people of St. Michael & All Angels when you have questions or problems. If I don't have a ready answer, I will find one or direct you to someone who does. I am active with the Welcoming Committee (see the article on page 4) and many other ministries. Please read on for information on some of them.

The Labyrinth Guild is being revived. I have reached out to Ann Hargraves and Marie Bagwell to be on the Labyrinth Guild. If you are interested in this ministry or just have questions like, "What is a Labyrinth?" reach out to one of us. We are going to have it set up in the Nativity Hall on Good Friday between the services at noon and 6:30 pm.



It's In The Bag and Burrito

Love are our meal ministries that came out of the Community Meals of the past and the need to feed people during the pandemic. (Hjalmer has a nice article elsewhere in this Messenger.) We have added a barista (John Davis) at every meal and are having early coffee and donuts on Burrito Saturday—the last Saturday of each month—from 8:00 to 10:00 am. We offer clothes on

every second Thursday and last Saturday of each month with two faithful volunteers—Beth Ilem and Sallie Harrison—who help people find warm garments and personal items. Parishioners are invited to donate clothing appropriate for outdoor living and travel-size personal items. There is a list of needed items on the information table. We also have half-sheets, which include information about the meals as well as emergency phone numbers and our service times, that you can take and give to people you encounter in the city.

At a meal ministry meeting recently, it was decided that the new name for our meals and giveaway program is *Kitchen & Closet*. It has a nice alliterative ring and covers what we do in this ministry. Thank you for all of your suggestions.

Rummage sale. There are plans in the works for a rummage sale in the spring. We have closets around the church that need to be cleaned out, and I am sure everyone has things that you don't know what to do with. Please reach out to me if you want to help with the planning, collecting, setting up, packing up or in any other way. I have proposed that the proceeds go to the newly renamed Kitchen & Closet Fund to support this important ministry.

— Sheri O'Brien

ST. MICHAEL'S FAMILIES & CHILDREN...

...GROWING IN GOD'S LOVE

One of the primary ways we provide Christian Formation for young children is through worship. Sunday morning worship is foundational for people of all ages in our faith community no matter how many birthdays they've celebrated. One of the most beautiful moments in worship for me is seeing all the generations at St. Michael's come forward to receive the blessing of Holy Communion.

We are invited to bring our whole selves to God, all our days. Jesus invites us to RSVP "Yes!" to the Feast on our very best days and on days we are feeling sad, lost, confused or brokenhearted. We are invited to gather in his name and be fed and strengthened for the holy journey of our lives and for the ministry God calls us to bring to fruition in the world.

FAMILY WORSHIP ON MARCH 16

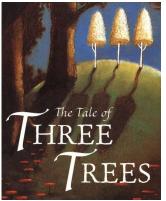
Family Worship is another expression of our liturgy celebrated in the Nativity Hall that is designed with families and young children foremost in mind. We love to worship, pray, sing, dance and learn together! Our theme for the upcoming Family Worship service is *Sharing our Lenten Journey*.

Please join the circle for Family Worship on Saturday, March 16, at 5:00 pm, followed by a potluck dinner in the Parish Hall. After dinner, we wish everyone good-night and Godspeed between 6:30 and 7:00 pm. Grandparents, friends and extended family members always welcome!!

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2024 Souper Bowl of Caring! Our young people did an outstanding job reminding us how important it is to support The Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP) on "Souper Bowl Sunday" a yearly tradition that began at St. Michael's almost 25 years ago. Thanks to our generous congregation we raised \$2,000. As promised, every single penny will go directly to NEFP to support their good work!

CHILDREN'S RADIO PLAY IN APRIL



On Sunday, April 28, during the 9 and 11 o'clock liturgies, The Joyful Players (students 3rd grade and up) will present a "radio theater" style version of *The Tale of Three Trees*. This beautiful folktale tells the story of how our dreams for the future can be transformed by God's dream for us, sometimes creating something more powerful and more wonderful than we could ever

imagine on our own.

— Leslie Sackett, Associate for Ministry with Families & Children

OUTREACH & JUSTICE COUNCIL

The year ended with a bang as we happily gathered gifts from around the Advent Giving Tree. Those gifts went to such needy and deserving places:



Community Transitional School, where students are in uncertain housing and move often. Buses pick them up from wherever they are and ensure they have an unbroken and safe elementary education, which includes two meals, tutoring, after-school programs, summer school and twice-

yearly dental and eye clinic visits.

Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, named for a child who could not get the care this organization now provides, offers medical, mental and dental health care for the under- and uninsured, with emphasis on migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Blanchet House not only dispenses three meals a day and hygiene items, but it offers residential programs, housing, and work on a 62-acre farm where people can recover, learn about and work with animals and beehives and in a woodshop and a garden.



Gift cards were gathered and distributed to refugees and asylum-seekers who often come to the area with nothing and few prospects for meeting their immediate needs.

In the new year, the Council is continuing to give funds to small ministries which it feels are doing God's work in the world. It is planning a forum to further explore houselessness in Portland. Anyone can come to our meetings, held on the third Thursdays of each month at the church at 7:00 pm to discuss options and offer new ministries to consider.

— Lynn Baker and Susan Barnett, Co-conveners

BURRITO LOVE UPDATE

We were recently congratulated by the Central Northeast Neighbors (CNN) Grants Selection Committee and awarded a \$3,000 grant for our community meals, It's In The Bag and Burrito Love (now Kitchen & Closet). The Community & Civic Engagement Small Grants Program is funded by the City of Portland through the Office of Community & Civic Life and administered by CNN. This is the third year that we have received this grant.

We are very thankful to CNN for acknowledging the benefit of nutritious meals and clothing provided to our underserved neighbors. Contact Sheri or Hjalmer if you are interested in volunteering or donating clothing.

Thank you to the volunteers who have warmly welcomed our guests and served the lunches, and to the cookie-bakers who provided "sweets for the streets." Thank you also to Super Torta, at 5640 SE Woodstock, which provides the burritos.

—Hjalmer Lofstrom, lenabl6769@gmail.com; Sheri O'Brien, oregon.dollhouse@gmail.com

RECTOR'S LETTER (CON'T FROM PG. 1)

I'm excited by the idea of "accepting" whatever comes to us as an opportunity or an "offer." I love the idea of working together to become people who accept as much as possible, because "yes" can lead us to more growth, joy, and anticipation for what comes next. A culture of accepting offers will move us forward into the growth and flourishing that lies ahead for St. Michael's in God's future.

As we draw near Easter, we are reminded that an extreme example of acceptance—our Lord Jesus accepting suffering and death in solidarity with human sin and sickness—leads to the brilliant new possibility of abundant and everlasting life for all of creation. The glorious resurrection of Jesus makes a way for God's yes to come to all of us — we are never turned away, never thwarted by the failings and frailty we know in ourselves and our world, never blocked from entering into abundant and eternal life.

I pray that as we move forward from Lent, through the hard road of Holy Week, and into Easter life, God will increase our openness and generosity and our YES. In this, may we become people who are always open to opportunities and offers to serve God, one another, and our neighbors.

With you,

RSAFE+

The Rev. R. Scott Painter, Rector



A LENTEN REFLECTION BY SUELLEN POMMIER

IN THE SEASON OF LENT, WE REFLECT ON OUR GOD-GIVEN STORY

We often view or evaluate our life-story in fragments. We focus on obligations, responsibilities and deadlines. Even the church calendar with its ever-pressing gaze to the next season keeps us continually moving forward without much of a backward glance. There is little time for a moment of pause. As such, it is hard to see the continuity of our spiritual growth or change. Without taking a pause for reflection, it is hard to appreciate, or more importantly, understand the redemption and renewal that is taking place in our life-story. The season of Lent blessedly occurs with regular cadence in the church calendar, giving us the opportunity to join the fragments of our spiritual life-story together into a meaningful and enlightening thread.

In Lent, we are called to see our personal life-story as it is interwoven in God's story. As always, we are reminded that we do not write our story alone. This precious season of Lent is purposely carved out so that we may look at our life-story and observe how and where we have been traveling with God. Lent, while often practiced as a time of restraint or sacrifice, offers us the opportunity to write a redemption story and lay the groundwork for renewal. In quiet reflection we ask, Where along my life-story thread are there broken bits or thin spaces? When I have wandered from God's wisdom, how might I hear God calling me back? In my humility and faith might I seek a deeper journey with God? How might I tether a frayed twine and strengthen my spiritual life thread?

Lent is both a deeply personal experience but also one experienced in community. Our life-story is interwoven into God's story for all of humanity. We are part of that grand divine story. Thus, our personal redemption and renewal ripple the waters of God's grand plan. In seeking to be forgiven, we forgive. In seeking to be just, we bring about justice for others. In seeking to show restraint, we share abundance. This season of Lent is a time to explore the life-story you are writing with God and among God's people. In Lenten reflection, and by faith and grace we grow closer to God and more deeply into our spiritual life-stories.

In peace,

Rev. SuEllen Pommier, Curate

SHROVE TUESDAY PHOTOS











ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1704 NE 43rd Avenue Portland, OR 97213-1402 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm on Mondays 503/284-7141 or office@stmaa.org.

THE MESSENGER

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Mar. 3	Forum: Lifelong Learning
Mar. 10	Forum: Street Ministry
Mar. 16	Family Worship & potluck supper
Mar. 17	Forum: Kitchen & Closet
APR. 7	Cake Auction
APR. 14	Ukrainian eggs – history & creating
Apr. 21	Forum: "How did we get here?"
Apr. 28	Children's Radio Play

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE	
Mar. 24	Sunday of the Passion (9:00), Palm Sunday (11:00)
Mar. 28	Maundy Thursday – Agape meal at 6:00 pm, service at 7:00 pm
Mar. 29	Good Friday – services at 12:00 noon (spoken) and 6:30 pm (bilin- gual, with St. Michael's Singers)
Mar. 30	Easter Vigil, 8:00 pm
Mar. 31	Easter Day – services at 7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 am & 1:00 pm <i>en español</i>

LUNCH BUNCH GATHERING

You're invited! The next Lunch Bunch gathering will be at Pho Korner, located at 6120 NE Sandy Blvd., on Tuesday, March 12, at 11:30 am. All are welcome, but please RSVP to Paula Raines, at psrmelody@comcast.net.

CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRIES

Camp & Retreat Ministries is a partnership between the United Methodist Church of Oregon and Idaho and the Episcopal Church of Western Oregon. They offer camps and retreats for children, youth and adults (and families), from general-interest camps to specialized weekend or week-long camps for music, prayer, quilting and many more. Their goals include drawing all people into a deeper connection with God and offering faith-formation experiences. They believe that, "In the midst of God's creation, our environments of Christian hospitality and learning open people's souls and hearts in unparalleled ways." These camps are based in five beautiful locations in Oregon and one in Idaho. Please see www.gocamping.org for more information.

PLEASE CHECK THE WEEKLY MESSENGER/EBLAST FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS, AND WATCH FOR HOLY WEEK DETAILS IN YOUR UP-COMING EASTER LETTER.