

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

Faith, Community and Hope ~ 50 Years and Growing

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2014/JANUARY 2015

from the Rector

One of my favorite genres in literature is “stunt non-fiction.” The genre, as the name suggests, is characterized by an author taking on a change in their life-style (thus stunt) and journaling about the process, the hardships, the triumphs and the results. The stunt usually lasts from a month or up to a year. Among a few of my favorite books are

The Year of Living Biblically, One Man's Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible, by A.J. Jacobs.

Not Buying It, My Year without Shopping, by Judith Levine

The Happiness Project, Or Why I Spent a Year Trying to Sing in the Morning, Clean My Closets, Fight Right, Read Aristotle, and Generally Have More Fun, by Gretchen Rubin

Animal, Vegetable and Miracle: A Year of Food Life, by Barbara Kingsolver (on only eating and buying locally produced food).

I like Stunt Non-Fiction because it seems to me at its very heart is a religious and/or spiritual quest – the quest to live by a particular discipline in order to find deeper meaning, understanding and contentment in life. The books above have motivated me, entertained me, and changed me and the way I lead my life.

One of the things that I particularly like about the New Year is that it is an invitation to take on a new meaningful “stunt”. I know for myself, no matter how wonderful the holiday season has been, I am always thinking of what I might prefer or tweak for the following year. And in the same way, as the New Year approaches, it is a perfect invitation to think about the year gone by and what has been meaningful and what might need to change with the ever-changing circumstances of our own lives.

I invite you to think about what stunt you might like to pull off in the New Year. If you like the idea, but you are not sure what you would like to do – here are a few of ideas for you think about:

- * read the Bible
- * meditate for 10 minutes a day
- * take 10,000 steps a day
- * write a book (writing 1667 words a day to get to 50,000 by the end of the month)

(cont'd on next page)

Sunday, December 21

Eucharist at 8
Advent Pageant at 10

Christmas Eve, December 24

5 PM Festival Eucharist with
Blessing of the Crèche and
children's story
10 PM Festival Eucharist with
special music

Sunday, December 28

Eucharist and Hymn Sing at 10
(no Eucharist at 8)

Sunday January 4

Eucharist at 8
All Ages Eucharist at 10
Children's offering of Heifer
boxes at 10

Sunday, January 11

Eucharist at 8 & 10



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FROM THE RECTOR (*cont'd from previous page*)

- * read for 30 minutes instead of watching TV
- * write a letter to a different person every day
- * pray

For further stimulation watch Matt Cutts TED Talk on trying something new for 30 days (http://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days).

The good news is that your stunt only needs to last 30 days and then you can change your stunt. Also, Lent is just around the corner in case you need to start again!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Sarah Robbins-Cole

GREENING OF THE CHURCH

During Advent, members of the Altar Guild "progressively green" St. Michael's. More decorations are added each Sunday, as we progress towards Christmas. The Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21, we welcome any parishioners who would like to help in the final transformation of the sanctuary. Please contact Camilla King (508-429-0784 or camillaking@verizon.net) with any questions.

JOINING RITE 13

Is your child of Rite 13 age, but not yet part of our group? We invite your child to join us anytime. There will be hands-on projects this year including having our group make or build something for our annual auction. If you have any questions, please email Ken Rice (krice89@hotmail.com), Pam Pracher (pam.pracher@verizon.net), Michelle Tate (michellefrancis.tate@yahoo.com), or Sarah Robbins-Cole (sarahrobinscole@yahoo.com).

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

On Sunday December 21, at 5 PM YAC, J2A and Rite 13 will carol our community. Please join us and send your Rite 13, J2A and YAC youth appropriately dressed in warm, dressy, festive apparel. We will meet in the church parking lot at 5 PM. Button down shirts, ties, and dress coats are encouraged if available. We will provide festive Santa hats, but bring your own if you wish. Do you have jingle bells or hand shakers and sticks? Please bring them along to make our singing even more festive!

TWO CHRISTMAS COFFEE HOURS

Providing treats for Coffee Hour for December 21 and 28 in a sort of "pot luck" sharing makes sense for all of us during this busy time. As you are baking and buying, think of providing one treat for one of the coffee hours.



While there are several lines for names on the Coffee Hour signup sheet, we will be happy to receive any last minute goodies. For more information, please contact Nan Malone at 508-429-2135.

HYMN SING DECEMBER 28 AT 10 AM – ONE SERVICE ONLY

Do you have a favorite hymn that is seldom sung at St. Michael's? Or is there a hymn with special meaning for you that you'd like to tell us about? On Sunday, December 28, at our *one service only* at 10 AM that morning, we will have a hymn sing in place of the sermon. Everyone is invited to come and say a word or two about a favorite hymn – we'll sing a verse or two of each hymn.

CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

On Sunday December 21, all children are invited to take part in the annual Advent Pageant. There will be no atrium lessons on that day, nor on Sunday, December 28, when children are invited to sit with their families in church. Church School atrium lessons will resume on Sunday, January 4.

NURSERY SCHEDULE

The nursery will be staffed on Sunday, December 21 but will not be staffed on Christmas Eve, December 24 because past experience has shown that there is no demand for nursery care on those days.

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND MUSIC DONATIONS**

If you would like to make a contribution towards the cost of Christmas poinsettias or special music, please fill out the form on the back page and mail it to the church or place it with your donation in the offering plate on Sunday. Poinsettias may be collected after the Ten O'Clock Service on Sunday December 28.

*Wishing you a blessed Christmas
and New Year.*

The Rector, The Wardens and Vestry of St. Michael's



Christmas at St. Michael's Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21

8 AM Eucharist

10 AM Christmas Pageant with Eucharist

Christmas Eve, December 24

5 PM Festival Christmas Eucharist

with Blessing of the Crèche and children's story

10 PM Festival Christmas Eucharist

with cello, organ and choir

The First Sunday after Christmas, December 28

10 AM Eucharist and Hymn Sing (one service only)

The Epiphany, January 4

8 AM Eucharist

10 AM All Ages Eucharist

Children's offering of Heifer boxes



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PLEDGE!

Dana Frye, Stewardship Committee
Chairperson

As of Sunday, December 7, we have received 56 pledges totaling \$114,350. We are well on our way towards the goal of \$135,000, but we still need your help. We ask you to please consider making a pledge of financial support for 2015 so that we can fully support the mission and ministry of St. Michael's.

ORGANIST SEARCH COMMITTEE

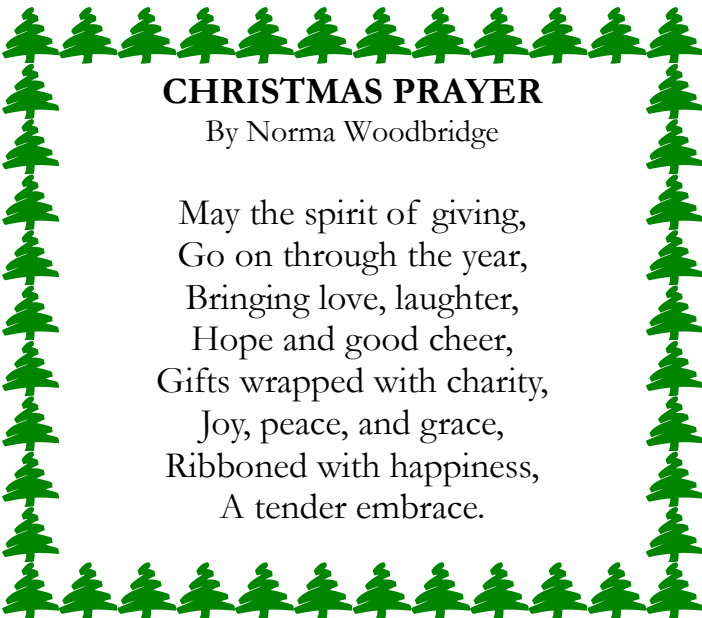
The Search Committee has met with a well qualified candidate and conducted a formal interview and audition.

The Committee members are: Bill Shaw, Chair, Kathy Longee, Secretary, Helen Daly, Frankie Gartner, Rev. Sarah Robbins-Cole, Joan Clark, Phil Munroe, Anke Guertsen, and Carl Twomey.

If you have questions or input you would like to share, please feel free to contact any of the committee members. More updates will be coming soon!

AN INVITATION TO NEW ACOLYTES

We invite young parishioners who would like to be part of our Sunday services to consider serving as acolytes. Children are eligible to serve as acolytes beginning in the third grade. If your child is interested, or if you would like more information, please speak to Sarah Robbins-Cole (508-429-4248 or stmicholl@aol.com).



CHRISTMAS PRAYER

By Norma Woodbridge

May the spirit of giving,
Go on through the year,
Bringing love, laughter,
Hope and good cheer,
Gifts wrapped with charity,
Joy, peace, and grace,
Ribbioned with happiness,
A tender embrace.

SARAH'S INSTALLATION—SAVE THE DATE!

Bishop Alan Gates will officiate at the Installation Service for our new rector, The Reverend Sarah Robbins-Cole, which will take place Tuesday, January 20 at 7 PM. Be sure to save the date on your calendar and make plans to attend this important occasion!

HAVE YOU PICKED UP YOUR HEIFER BOX?

Have you picked up your Heifer Box and Advent Calendar yet? It's never too late! Boxes and calendars are available in the narthex every Sunday in December. After your box is filled, bring it back to St. Michael's on Sunday, January 4, the Feast of the Epiphany, for our annual donation to Heifer International. Every box bringer gets to vote on which kind of animal we will purchase. These calendars and boxes are great activities for whole families to do together - try it! For more information, please contact me at: 508-893-0945 or michellefrancistate@yahoo.com.

APPALACHIA PROJECT NEEDS CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Our Appalachia Project is in need of books for children in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Books in good condition should be placed in the bin in the Narthex. For more information, please speak to Anke or Frits Geurtsen at 508-429-1132.

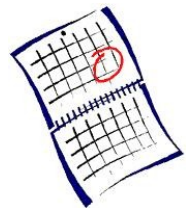
BAPTISMS

The sacrament of baptism will be celebrated at the Ten O'Clock Eucharist on Sunday, January 11, the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. If you are interested in baptism for yourself or your child, please speak to Sarah Robbins-Cole.

ANNUAL MEETING— ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 10 AM

Save the date for Sunday, January 25, when the Annual Meeting offers a chance for the entire parish to get together. We will hold the majority of the meeting during the 10 AM service and following the Eucharist, there will be a potluck brunch. *There will be no 8 AM service that morning.*

It's an informal affair and we hope that you will be there. There will be activities for children during the brunch.





THE ABC'S OF OUTREACH

In this season of giving, generosity and concern for others, it's a good time to reflect on how our parish helps others less fortunate.

Outlined briefly here are three of our major outreach programs that provide food, fellowship, clothes, and entertainment to neighbors both far and near. Thankfully, many of you are involved in helping with one or more of these activities. Some of you perhaps are just thinking about what you might be able to do to help so we hope the brief descriptions below will assist you and cement your New Year's resolutions to volunteer. The Vestry outreach committee consists of Joan Clark, Barbara Gardner and Frankie Gartner. Next month we will profile some of the grants we give and how they help the organizations we assist.

Food Outreach – Panera Pick-up and Delivery, Ministry to Local Food Pantries and Shelter Home-Cooked and Served Meals, Clothing/Donations Outreach - Stockings for Hope and Food, Fun and Fellowship Outreach with B-Safe

Every Friday morning (or late Thursday evening) a St. Michael's volunteer picks up Panera's Milford donations for that day that include boxed pastries and baked goods that remain unused. The amount varies from a few bags to filling up an entire SUV. We then deliver them to the women's shelter in Hopkinton who have a walk-in freezer and can freeze bread or rolls to be used at a later time. Currently there are 9 volunteers which means each person is responsible for a shift every 8 weeks or so. Contact Joan Clark, joan.clark.mail@comcast.com if you want to help in this way.

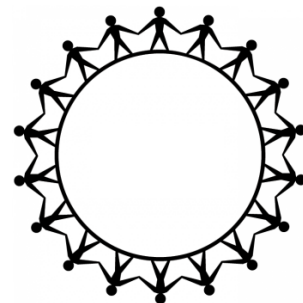
Each month we collect food for a different local town's Food Pantry. Parishioners bring the food to church during the month and on the last Sunday of each month, parishioners from the town receiving the food take two baskets to the front of the sanctuary to be blessed. When it's time for your town to receive the food, let Joan know if you'd like to help with the blessing of the baskets at joan.clark.mail@comcast.com.

Each month October through June, men and women from St. Michael's prepare and serve home cooked meals for two shelters, Serenity House in Hopkinton the second Monday of the month (about 30 women) and Shadows in Ashland (about 20-24 women) the first Wednesday of the month. Reminders are sent out by Amy, our church secretary. Volunteers sign up for either an entrée for 10-15 people, a salad or a dessert and the schedule is set for the year in advance. Usually one or two of the people cooking also stay for fellowship and to help serve.

Many volunteers commit to more than one month and sometimes emergencies happen so we always need additional cooks to fill in. It's a win-win for everyone – the volunteers enjoy cooking and/or serving and the women at the shelters love the home-cooked food and the chance to gather together for friendship and community building. Contact Barbara Gardner at bggedu@aol.com if you want to help in this way.

Our Stockings for Hope is in full swing, with donations due at the church by December 14. This is our annual Christmas-oriented outreach where requested donations are assembled and brought by bag to the two shelters we serve, Serenity House and Shadows. It's another way to underscore our connection with the women at the shelters we serve in other ways, spread a little Christmas cheer and provide them with items they need but might not otherwise receive. Pamela Pinterparsons and Paula Colburn head up this great program if you'd like to join in next year at newpamela@comcast.net and pcolburn1@verizon.net.

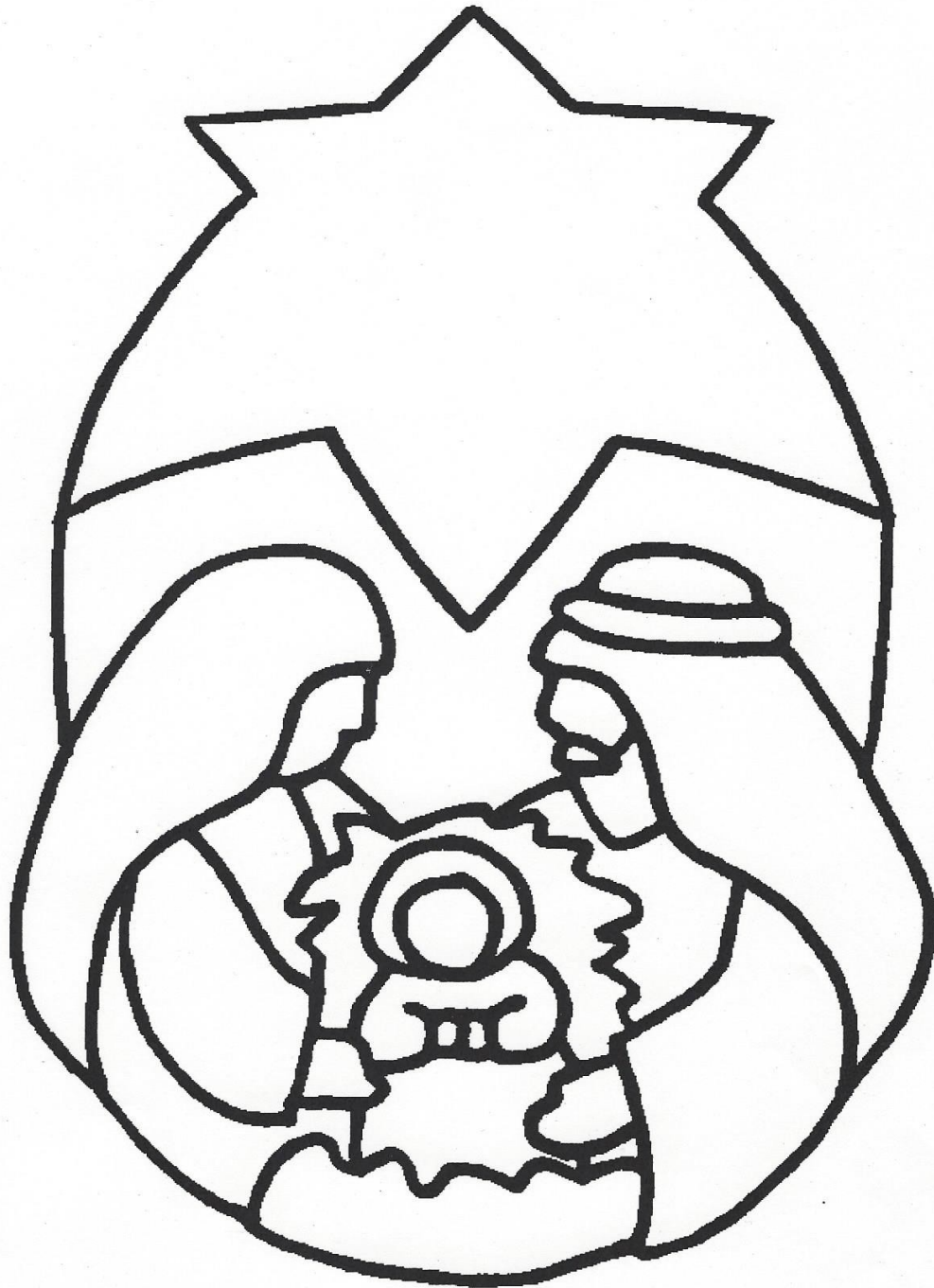
B-Safe is a multi-faceted outreach activity that brings together St. Michael's and children from the city in a safe, fun and enriching program that is sponsored and supported by St. Stephen's Youth Programs and runs during the summer in several locations throughout the state by individual parishes or combinations of parishes. 55 parishes in Massachusetts provide volunteers, lunches and field trips to elementary and middle school students from Boston and Chelsea and we are proud to be one of the 55. Usually held in late July, snacks and lunches are made, transportation is arranged and activities are planned for our field trip with the students to Hopkinton State Park. Many of our families attend and volunteer and everyone comes away from the two day experience with a smile on their faces. Plans are already in the works for the 2015 summer B-Safe experience. On Sunday, March 1 from 1-3 PM, there will be a planning meeting for B-Safe Partner Leaders at The Church of the Redeemer in Chestnut Hill. The 2015 summer B-Safe program will be discussed along with some preliminary planning. If you're interested in attending and/or taking a leadership role this coming year, please join Frankie Gartner who ran the program last year for the first time. She will be driving to the March 1 meeting and would love to have some company. She can be contacted at fgartner5583@comcast.net.

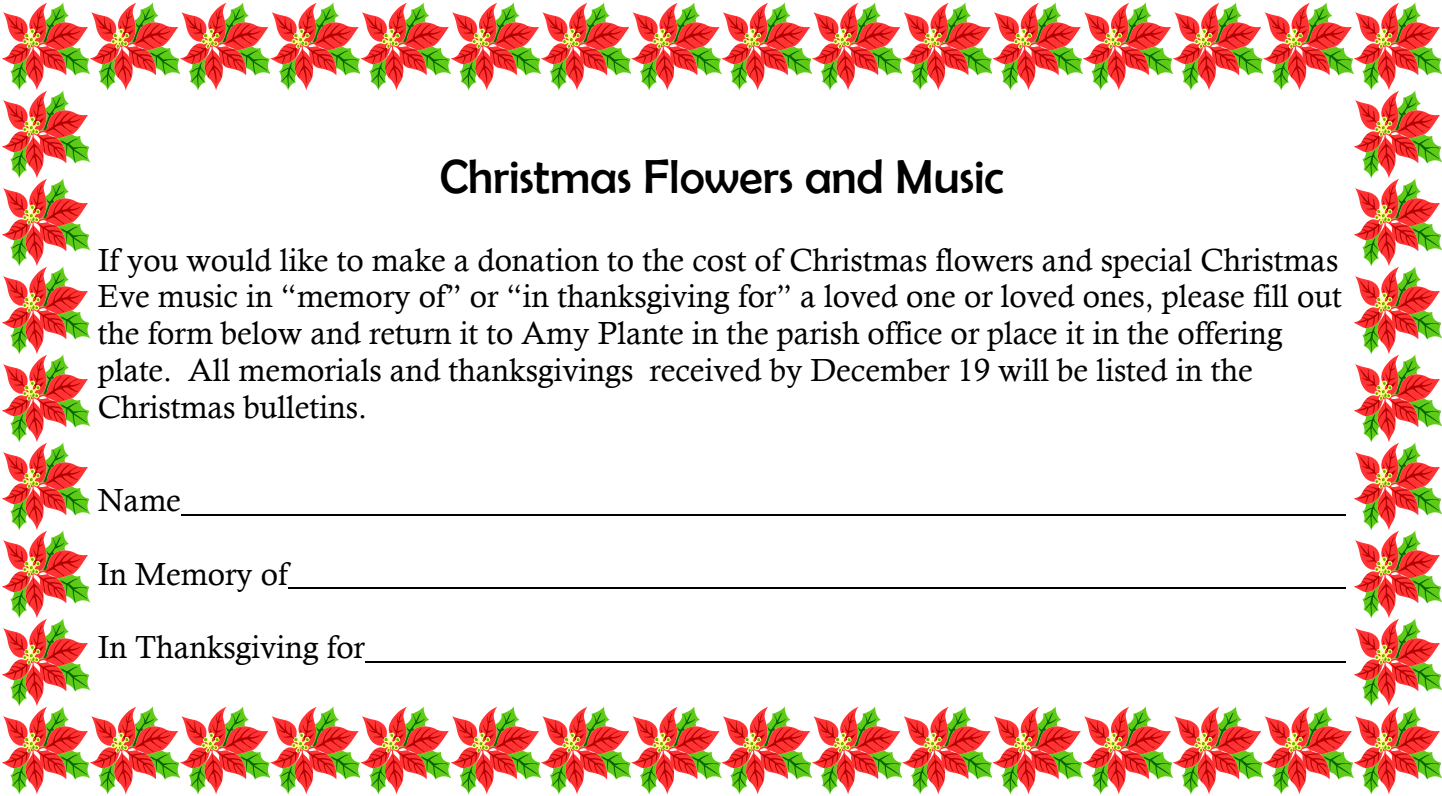


JANUARY AT ST. MICHAEL'S

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Eucharist at 8 & 10 AM Sunday Forum at 9:15 AM Church School at 9:30 AM J2A at 6:30 PM	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Eucharist at 8 & 10 AM Sunday Forum at 9:15 AM Church School at 9:30 AM J2A at 6:30 PM	12	13 Girl Scouts 4:30 to 6 PM Vestry 7 PM	14	15	16	17
18 Eucharist at 8 & 10 AM Sunday Forum at 9:15 AM Church School at 9:30 AM J2A at 6:30 PM	19	20 Sarah's Installation Service 7 PM	21	22	23	24
25 No 8 AM Service Eucharist at 10 AM Only Church School at 9:30 AM Annual Meeting at 11:15 AM J2A at 6:30 PM	26 Girl Scouts 3:30 to 5:15 PM	27	28	29	30	31

St. Michael's Kids Page





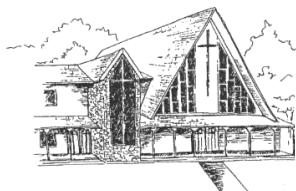
Christmas Flowers and Music

If you would like to make a donation to the cost of Christmas flowers and special Christmas Eve music in “memory of” or “in thanksgiving for” a loved one or loved ones, please fill out the form below and return it to Amy Plante in the parish office or place it in the offering plate. All memorials and thanksgivings received by December 19 will be listed in the Christmas bulletins.

Name _____

In Memory of _____

In Thanksgiving for _____



**St. Michael's Episcopal Church
1162 Highland St.
Holliston, MA 01746**