



The Anchor

A Newsletter of St. Michael Parish

November 2017

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Did you know?

Did you know that the bells of St. Michael's are ringing once again? Their special tones mark the time: Angelus at 7:00 am, 12:00 noon, and 6:00 pm; on the hour from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm; and the slow, solemn, and measured De Profundis bell at 9:00 pm to mark day's end. Thank you, everyone, for your prayers and support of the reconstruction! May the bells of St. Michael's ring for many, many years to come!

Receptions to Celebrate Phase I

Saturdays and Sundays at 1:00 pm at the St. Michael Rectory:

- Nov. 11 Nov. 25
- Nov. 12 Nov. 26
- Nov. 18 Dec. 2
- Nov. 19 Dec. 10

A Celebration of Phase I

This summer has seen an amazing amount of work completed on the church, and as we end Phase I the parish has much to celebrate!

Along with the basic structure of the church, recent months brought the installation of the new steeple and building of the façade on the front of the church.

The stained glass windows were re-installed, including the unique installations of the windows that feature the Blessed Mother and St. Michael on the sides of the sanctuary. The windows are no longer on outside walls in the new layout, so they were installed with light boxes behind them which are on timers connected to a world clock, enabling them to brighten or dim with the hour of day.

HardiePlank lap siding was installed, chosen for its durability and low maintenance, along with its resemblance to the cedar clapboard that was originally on the church.



The painting of the exterior is complete, the siding and trim were painted based on the historic original colors of the church.

The shingling of the roof was completed with shingles that were chosen for both durability and resemblance to slate.

The results restore the details and beauty of the church as it appeared in the early 1900s but will have the materials and technology to last for many generations to come!

It is time to celebrate what we have accomplished in Phase I! The church will host several receptions inviting parishioners and friends in the community to gather and see how much we have accomplished! Look for more info in this newsletter and in the Holy Cross bulletin.

Gallery of Recent Progress on the Site



As we celebrate the end of Phase I, we can look back and see the beautiful craftsmanship that has been completed on the exterior of the church over the recent months!

Clockwise from above: 1. the new steeple with details based on the design of the original St. Michael steeple was installed in July; 2. carpenters carefully constructed the front façade of the church to match its early-1900s beauty (doors will be installed at a later date in order to protect them from damage); 3. the last stained glass window, the Ladies Catholic Benevolent Association window, was restored and installed in the sacristy in October (at right in photo), it is pictured with The Last Supper window which graces the back wall of the church above the altar; 4. Vermont Timber Works crafted a canopy over the entrance to the new addition that will house the stairs and elevator to the church and hall; 5. roofers installed shingles which resemble slate, and the detailed AZEK trim and HardiePlank siding were chosen for their durability, then painted to match the original historic colors of the church.



Historic Chalice Has Been Restored

A beautiful and historic chalice has been restored and will once again be part of the celebrations of Mass at St. Michael Church.

The chalice was used by Rev. Patrick Sherry, the second pastor of St. Michael Church, who served the parish from 1863-1870.

The chalice was given to Pawcatuck-native Paul Loverde when he was ordained a bishop. When he retired recently from serving as Bishop of Arlington, Virginia, he returned the chalice to St. Michael's to once again be used in its home parish.

Thanks to the generosity of several parishioners, the relic was recently re-gilded and restored. It is adorned with an emerald and three diamonds, with the emerald being a wonderful symbol of the chalice's original owner, a priest from the "Emerald Isle."

This chalice will be used to celebrate special occasions, but perhaps none more special than the first Mass celebrated in the reconstructed St. Michael Church!



The inscription on the bottom of the chalice reads: Rev. Patrick Sherry, Pastor of St. Michael Church, 1863-1870 / Most Rev. Paul S. Loverde, Bishop of Arlington, 1999-2016

Your Support Has Never Been so Important!

Now that Phase I is completed, it is more important than ever to support the capital campaign and the reconstruction of St. Michael's!

When we began the project, it was approached in two phases: Phase I included the exterior and shell of the church, and Phase II will encompass the interior. These phases were designed so that we could get underway with the project. The campaign for Phase I has had amazing results thanks to the generosity of St. Michael parishioners as well as friends from St. Mary, St. Thomas More, and the local community. Now that Phase I has been completed, we will need to do more fundraising before we can begin Phase II.

If you have donated to the campaign—thank you, thank you, thank you! If you haven't had a chance to join the campaign yet, your support would be most welcome! All gifts, from the smallest to the largest, are very much appreciated!

Some parishioners may find it advantageous to contribute securities. When donating stock, donors can take a charitable deduction for the full face amount of the appreciated stock without having to pay capital gains on the appreciation.

In order to transfer stock to the capital campaign, contact June Strunk at Janney Montgomery Scott at 860-245-2085. In addition, retirees required to receive an annual minimum distribution from a retirement account at age 70 1/2 are permitted to have the distribution go to a charity and avoid taxation.

If you need a pledge form or more information about donating stock, please contact the Rectory at 860-599-5580. There are also some sponsorship opportunities still available for pews, stained glass windows, and Stations of the Cross. With all of us working together we can finish this wonderful renovation!

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Michael's

A series of inserts has been included recently in the bulletin and is bringing the church's history to life. Entitled *The Windows of St. Michael's*, the weekly inserts feature the history of the church's beautiful stained glass windows.

Special thanks to one of St. Michael's dedicated historians, Larry O'Keefe, who has researched and given us a glimpse into the lives of the parishioners who donated the windows or had windows dedicated to them.

Some of our ancestors-in-faith we have met through the series include Ellen O'Donnell Condon, born in 1828 in County Cork, Ireland, and destined to become a member of what may be the first Catholic family in Pawcatuck; local blacksmith James Purtil; Frances Roche Driscoll, also known as Fanny, who with her husband built the very first home on Stillman Avenue; and Michael Higgins, whose descendants include members of the Kelleher family of Vermont Timber Works who built the new trusses for St. Michael Church.

We have also met past clergy of St. Michael Church, including Rev. John Neale who was responsible for the installation of The Last Supper window during his pastorate, sometime between 1910 and 1913. There is a very interesting fact about this window—apparently Father Neale had himself painted into the window as an apostle! We also met Rev. Ambrose Briscoe, an early pastor of St. Michael's, who was responsible for the installation of most of the stained glass windows in the church. Father Briscoe has two windows in the church dedicated to him: the 14-foot stained glass window which is installed in the front in the church

(pictured at right) and a smaller one in the church's transept.

The liturgical symbols which grace the top of the windows are explained in each of the inserts, also.

The entire series is being linked on the parish website at www.stmichaelpawcatuck.com/the-stained-glass-of-st-michaels.

The historic windows have been re-installed after being carefully cleaned and assessed for any possible structural deficiencies by stained glass window experts Bovard Studio. Any damaged or missing pieces were repaired or created before the windows were set in new aluminum thermal-barrier frames and paired with energy-efficient insulated glass.

There are still window sponsorship opportunities available! Sponsors will be recognized with a plaque naming the donor or memorial. Several members of a family may consider joining together to create a special family memorial.

For more info, visit www.stmichaelpawcatuck.com/sponsorship-opportunities, or call the Rectory at 860-599-5580.

(At right) The 14-foot stained glass window in the front of the church which features the alpha symbol was restored and dedicated to Father Briscoe. The window had been removed approximately 80 years ago. In the process of restoring and re-leading the window, Bovard left in place a repair made over 80 years ago with glass from a similar window in order to preserve its history (note the difference between the lower right and left corners). The other 14-foot window is clear glass for now, but we look forward to one day having a matching window featuring the omega symbol at the top!



St. Michael School Welcomes New Catholic Classical Curriculum and Pre-Kindergarten Program

St. Michael's welcomed two exciting changes to the school this fall: a new Catholic Classical Curriculum and a new pre-kindergarten program.

Catholic Classical Curriculum

The Catholic Classical Curriculum is an enhancement to the school's existing rigorous program and will be phased in over the next several years beginning this fall.

Students will study the great ideas of Western Civilization. Democracy, science, art, and literature provide understanding of how the past influences and unifies our culture. Great classical literature and primary sources are utilized. Memorization and recitation is used to help students not just acquire knowledge, but train their minds to learn and remember.

The curriculum has a strong emphasis on language to develop a student's ability to think well, write well, and speak well, therefore reading, writing, phonics, and vocabulary are emphasized. The study of Latin now begins in the early grades and continues through grade eight. As the basis of all Romance Languages, Latin study is beneficial not just to the acquisition of these languages but also to the teaching of logic, grammar, and vocabulary.

Classical education is based on the stages of human development. In the early grades, children are ready and able to memorize and be taught large amounts of information. This stage is referred to as the "grammar" stage. Students learn through song, movement, and recitation. The "logic" stage begins as students approach the middle school years. As students' ability to reason develops, logic and reasoning skills are taught. Students learn to debate and think critically, evolving reasoning skills to aid them not only in math and science, but to excel in life as they encounter problems and decisions beyond school.

Christian faith is not only being taught in the classroom but animates the culture of the school, the interaction between students and teachers, and motivates the pursuit of what is right, true, and good.

The classical model of education was the model of Catholic education until the first half of the twentieth century. It is proven

to produce some of the highest SAT scores of any curriculum. It prepares students not just for high school, college or a career, but to become lifelong learners who are informed, engaged, and faith-filled members of society.

St. Michael School is the first school in the Diocese of Norwich and in this vicinity to become a Catholic Classical School.

New Pre-Kindergarten Program

St. Michael School opened the doors to its new Pre-Kindergarten Early Childhood Learning Center in September.

Operating under the philosophy that creative play and discovery are great ways to instill exploration, curiosity, and love of learning, three- and four-year olds focus on positive self-expression, social skills, self-help and self-awareness, fine and gross motor skills, and ways to explore Catholic beliefs.

Pre-Kindergarten students are introduced to basic routines in the classroom such as listening, sharing, and taking turns. Children will develop basic skills in problem solving and decision making in structured and free-play opportunities.

To learn more about the new enhanced curriculum or the Pre-Kindergarten program, contact the school at 860-599-1084.



The Pre-Kindergarten room located in the Convent on the St. Michael School campus.



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97th Maria Assunta Festa

We were blessed with beautiful weather for the 97th annual Maria Assunta Festa on the weekend of August 11-13. It is amazing to think that this wonderful parish tradition began in 1920!

On Friday night there was a Rosary and procession which started from St. Michael School, then participants returned to the school for refreshments. On Sunday Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's in Stonington by Bishop Loverde. Following Mass, there was a traditional procession of the Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the streets of Pawcatuck, followed by a meal and fellowship.

Many thanks to the Maria Assunta Society for hosting the festival and providing the delicious meal. Thanks also to St. Michael Boy Scout Troop 9 for acting as color guard and clean up crew, the Silver Cornet Band for providing music, and to all of the volunteers that made this tradition special once again. May God bless St. Michael Parish.

