

**WORSHIP SPOTLIGHT:  
ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, YARMOUTH**

**ADDRESS:** 396 Gilman Road in Yarmouth, about a mile from Cousins Island.

**DENOMINATION/AFFILIATION:** The Episcopal Diocese of Maine, the Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane, bishop, [www.episcopalmaine.org](http://www.episcopalmaine.org). The Episcopal Church, USA, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, presiding bishop, [www.episcopalchurch.org/index.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/index.htm).

**HISTORY:** Founded in 1973, St. Bartholomew's began as a group of worshippers under the guidance of the Rev. Harold Hopkins. Our vision was of a church where members were involved in all aspects of church governance and worship, where children were an integral part of activities, and where the clergy person served as the provider of sacraments and trained the laity for pastoral care.

For the first two years, St. Bart's borrowed space in other local churches and schools. By 1976, we had our first permanent home in a converted building on U.S. Route 1 in Yarmouth. Some wonderful stories of those early days are now part of St. Bart's lore – such as the processional cross made of a hoe handle and cross-piece.

From the beginning St. Bart's cultivated a hands-on, everyone-involved parish family, and after the Rev. Hopkins left to become bishop of North Dakota, we found ourselves ready for a full-time vicar in 1983, calling the Rev. Gil Birney. Under Gil's leadership, St. Bart's flourished, eventually gaining parish status. In 1988, we built the timber-framed building – complete with a vaulted sanctuary ceiling and clear glass windows – that remains our home in a wooded setting along Gilman Road in Yarmouth.

In 1989 St. Bart's called a married clergy couple, the Rev. David Heald and the Rev. Sukie Curtis, who came with their young family and grew with us over the next 16 years. With David and Sukie, we organized concerts on our new pipe organ, initiated a Creation Season, fed our spirits with lay-led study groups, sent our teens on pilgrimages, and worshiped in silence, in circles, and occasionally in the full glory of our Episcopal tradition.

In 2007, following interim leadership by the Rev. Stephen Foote, St. Bart's welcomed our current rector: the Rev. Nina Pooley, previously the associate chaplain of St. Paul's School in Brooklandville, Md. Nina received her divinity degree from the University of the South (Sewanee) in Tennessee, and continues her education through Sewanee's Doctorate of Ministry program, with a focus on Emerging Church and Liturgy.

With her experience in youth and families ministry, and her own family in tow, Nina continues to nurture our focus on youth and children, the worship experience of families, and incorporating all generations into both worship and service. Collaborative, pastoral, energized and enthusiastic, the congregation of St. Bart's continues to thrive and grow, as we look to the future of what we can do and become together.

**WORSHIP:** St. Bartholomew's is an inviting, inclusive, service-oriented community that values thoughtful, challenging sermons, education for all ages, and vibrant music. Our post-and-beam building and our windows of clear glass honor and foster our love of God's creation.

St. Bart's members bring with them a diverse understanding of the Christian life. We are a multi-generational group, drawing from Yarmouth, Cumberland, North Yarmouth, Freeport, Brunswick, Falmouth, Portland, Pownal, Durham, Raymond, and beyond. Worship at St. Bart's, primarily the Eucharist, is informal yet ordered. We offer services at 8 and 10 a.m. each Sunday, with the latter service supported by a full choir, our glorious Andover pipe organ and the skills of Jonathan Pelletier, our music director and organist. Nursery care is available. We also provide Christian education appropriate for each age group, including a program for early teenagers, and the Journey to Adulthood program for older teens.

This Christmas Eve at 4 p.m., we will hold our Christmas Pageant and Eucharist, and at 9 p.m. we will offer our Service of Lessons and Carols with Eucharist. Visitors always are welcome.

**OUTREACH:** St. Bartholomew's is committed to community service. As a parish, we provide groceries each week to families in local communities through our food pantry. We also are a member parish of the St. Elizabeth's Essentials Pantry, which distributes nonperishable goods to those in need in the Portland area.

St. Bart's additionally supports outreach through Mabel I. Wilson School in Cumberland, Opportunity Farm in New Gloucester and the Tri-Community Interfaith Council. Farther from home, we are one of three Maine parishes funding a daily school meal program for the children of Duny, Haiti.

St. Bart's also gives back by providing meeting space to several worthy organizations, including AA, support groups for persons impacted by breast cancer or Alzheimer's, the Savvy Caregiver Program, Yarmouth Day Care and the American Red Cross, as well as the Environmental Health Strategy Center and the Maine Green Energy Alliance.

Moreover, St. Bart's sponsors two major outreach fundraisers: our annual Christmas Fair – which recently marked its 20<sup>th</sup> year – and the Yarmouth Art Festival, a juried show and sale each October featuring the work of Maine artists. For more information about the festival, visit [www.yarmouthartfestival.com](http://www.yarmouthartfestival.com).

Finally, St. Bart's supports the work of our individual parishioners through Habitat for Humanity, the Tanzanian Children's Fund Orphanage, Maine Handicapped Skiing, Preble Street's ministries, the Casco Bay YMCA and cancer research through LiveStrong and Maine Cancer Foundation's Tri for a Cure, as well as AIDS research through Charitytreks.

**FUTURE:** After 37 years, St. Bartholomew's remains true to the vision of our founders, yet open to new ideas: creating new worship experiences, engaging new forms of service for the wider world, exploring the rich diversity of spiritual gifts of this community and offering opportunities for individual growth as well as nurture. In response to the growing needs of those we serve, we are in the midst of discerning renovations to our building and memorial garden and are excited about what comes next.

**CONTACT:** For more information about St. Bart's, please contact the office at 846-9244, or visit [www.stbartsyarmouth.org](http://www.stbartsyarmouth.org).

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