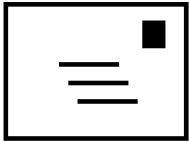


THE EPISTLE

A PUBLICATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2007

From the Rector



Inviting a stranger?

A few weeks ago, while Charity (the dog) and I were in the office on a Monday morning the parish doorbell rang. Thinking it was a member of the parish or the mail carrier Charity bolted out of my office with the joy of the second coming on her face. At the door I met a lady who lived in Brighton years ago, who had moved out of the area for over 20 years. She came to visit St. Paul's because many years ago as a young lady in High School, a boy from St. Paul's had invited her to go out with him and had asked that she come to church. She hadn't taken him up on his invitation back then, but she had kept it in the back of her mind all those years. She had come to see if the invitation was still valid. She has since married, had kids and is now a grandmother, but that invitation from her childhood had stayed with her.

We often think of evangelism & outreach as something involving asking people "Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior," or as simply feeding the hungry and giving hand outs to the poor. As well intentioned as these forms of outreach may be they are not the only way in which we can reach out to people in need. Needs go well beyond the physical lack of food or limited material resources and it is our call to reach out to people whatever their need.

Continued on page 4

Top 10 reasons to be Episcopalian:

By Robin Williams

- No snake handling.
- You can believe in Dinosaurs.
- Priests wear dresses.
- You don't have to check your brain at the door.
- Pew aerobics.
- Church year is color coded.
- Free wine on Sunday.
- All of the pageantry, none of the guilt.
- You don't have to know how to swim to get baptized.
- No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other Episcopalian who agrees with you.

Inside this Issue:

- Parish Quilt
- Lenten Program
- Education update
- Annual Parish Meeting
- explorefaith.org
- Which Star are you following?
- New Vestry Members



February 21, 2007
ASH WEDNESDAY

12:00PM & 7:00PM

The Holy Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes

WHAT IS LENT?

Early Christians observed "a season of penitence and fasting" in preparation for the Paschal feast, or Pascha (BCP, pp. 264-265). The season now known as Lent (from an Old English word meaning "spring," the time of lengthening days) has a long history. Originally, in places where Pascha was celebrated on a Sunday, the Paschal feast followed a fast of up to two days. In the third century this fast was lengthened to six days. Eventually this fast became attached to, or overlapped, another fast of forty days, in imitation of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. The forty-day fast was especially important for converts to the faith who were preparing for baptism, and for those guilty of notorious sins who were being restored to the Christian assembly. In the western church the forty days of Lent extend from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, omitting Sundays. The last three days of Lent are the sacred Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Today Lent has reacquired its significance as the final preparation of adult candidates for baptism. Joining with them, all Christians are invited "to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word" (BCP, p. 265).

LENTEN MID-WEEK PROGRAM

LENTEN POTLUCK SUPPERS WEDNESDAYS DURING LENT

6:30PM Dinner

7:00PM "Ground Work" Program

7:45 Evening Devotion

Main Dishes to be brought listed by last name.
Please bring enough for yourself and four (4) others.

LAST NAME A – M

Brings a main dish on February 28, March 14 & March 28

LAST NAME N – Z

Brings a main dish on March 7, & March 21

Please bring a side dish or salad on the days you do not bring a main dish.
Bread will be provided.

Inviting...

Continued from Page 1

I have found that there is a spiritual hunger in our society; those who are poor in spirit. Go to any bookstore and you will find that the biggest selections of books are in the category of spirituality. There is a spiritual thirst all around us, and I would daresay among us.

So I invite you to get involved in the many forms of outreach. Feed the hungry, give to the poor but also look beyond the traditional needs to see where we can be a beacon of hope to those who need it most. We have the possibility of being a place where all are fed; physically, spiritually and emotionally. All we have to do look within and without our walls and extend the invitation.

Fr. Deon+



Shrove Tuesday

The 4th-12th graders will be serving a Pancake Supper complete with pancakes and sausages on Tues., Feb. 20. Everyone is welcome. We will serve from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Dinner is free, but as usual, we will happily accept any donations either ahead of time (sausages) or at the door.

Sunday School

by Phil Smith

Your child should have recently brought home a letter and envelopes regarding their opportunity to begin thinking about their own stewardship within their church. The idea is for each child to consciously think about their church each week, and what the church means to them. The amount of money they decide to place in the envelopes is not as important as the thought that goes behind the action. Our God is a generous God, and we need to begin instilling the idea in our young people that a generous God makes for a generous life for each of us.

In the book Growing Up Generous, the authors mention that by "helping young people become more competent and thoughtful in their money-management practices, including their giving, congregations not only help them avoid some of the all-too-common dangers of high debt and irresponsible spending, but also address many skills, values, and priorities. ...The commitments to giving and serving are integrally connected to fundamental choices young people make about how they will use the time and money at their disposal".

During the next few months I will focus some of my energy in discussing generosity with the young people in our parish. Please feel free to contact me if you have any thoughts about how we can all think of ourselves as being more generous.

GITM/CIA Youth Group

by Phil Smith

NEW MEETING TIME: Sundays at 9:30 AM

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation is slated for April 12th in Ann Arbor. Father Deon would like to start Confirmation classes for those who are 16 or turning 16 this year. This will require 6 weekly meetings of one hour each. These will take place on a weeknight. We need to know by early February who will be attending these classes. Adults who have never been confirmed in the Episcopal Church are also welcome.

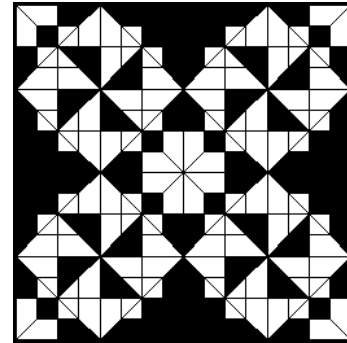


Have You ever considered tithing?

The Stewardship Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan challenges you to tithe for three months during Lent as a spiritual growth exercise.

Here's the deal! Commit to tithing for three months beginning Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2007. When you have been successful, you will be invited to attend a celebration dinner on Sept. 15, 2007 with Bishop Gibbs and the Stewardship Committee.

The committee would encourage those who participate in the tithing challenge to share their experiences. Note: Participants must register with the Diocesan Stewardship Committee. For more information, please contact Kristine Miller, Director of Stewardship and Planned Giving at 313-833-4414 or kmiller@edomi.org.



All Saints Quilt

Each family unit is invited to submit a piece of fabric with special meaning that measures 7 ½ x 12 ¾. All of the individual pieces will be incorporated into a parish quilt. You may contact Bev Field for further information.

Thank You for the Calendars

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey sent us a nice thank you post card. We were able to send them over 20 pounds of 2007 calendars. The post card is on the bulletin board near the office door.

SATURDAY NIGHT EUCHARIST



Beginning on Saturday evening, February 3rd at 5:30 PM, there will be a new contemplative Eucharist offered. This promises to be an exciting addition to our worship life.

Episcopal Diocese of Michigan

Ministry Fair 2007

Saturday, May 5, 2007
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Christ Episcopal Church, 61 Grosse Pointe Blvd.
Grosse Pointe, MI 48236



The whole church watched with nervous anticipation as the visitors sat where the Martins have sat for 42 years.

COMMUNITY CONTINUED



We have rented the Hartland community Pool again! The big day is March 10th from 6-7:30. We had lots of fun last year floating around the lazy river, bouncing off the diving board, and getting water dunked on us. The big "kids" favorite was heading down the large twisting water slide, while the younger ones squirted their parents with water guns.

Many of the adults also enjoyed relaxing in the hot tub. Make sure you don't miss out this year. We are asking for a donation of \$3 a person or \$10 a family towards the rental. You need to sign up ahead of time so we can have the appropriate number of lifeguards available, so watch for us on Sundays in February. All participants will also need to have a liability form filled out ahead of time. Hope to see you there.



The Dorothy Chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King is planning many activities for the upcoming year. We are considering having another Rummage Sale, a Church Kitchen "Shower" and a family fun carnival in the spring.

Every woman in the parish is invited to attend our meetings on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 9:30 AM. We would love to have new members!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Shari Spencer | 2/2 |
| Thomas Wuench | 2/9 |
| Jenny Ritter | 2/13 |
| Diane Brown | 2/19 |
| Carlie Smiley | 2/19 |
| Isaiah Smith | 2/19 |
| Kate Bensmiller | 2/20 |
| Janet Thurston | 2/22 |
| Con Robinson | 2/23 |

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| David & Gail Zorn | 2/4 |
|-------------------|-----|



What is the Holy Eucharist and why is it significant?

You are asking about one of the Church's major sacraments, the Holy Eucharist. Just as our bodies require food and drink for physical nurture and growth, so for nurture and growth our souls need "soul" food. Sensing this deep need of the human soul, and aware of his approaching death on a cross, Jesus shared a farewell meal with his beloved companions. **This meal, called the Last Supper, becomes the First Supper for the Christian Church.** In this sacred meal, Jesus takes ordinary table bread and wine, gives God thanks (*Eucharist* is a Greek word for thanksgiving), beseeches God to bless it, and distributes it with these astounding and eternal words: "This bread is my body. This wine is my blood. Every time you eat this bread and drink this wine in my name, I will be present with you."



And, so it is for people of faith. Ordinary bread and the wine become, by the grace of God, the body and blood of the Christ. In this timeless, eternal food, the Christ of faith is present with us. It is his spiritual "Real Presence." How does that happen, exactly? I don't know. It is Holy Mystery. But this I can say. For 2000 years, since that First Supper, Christ has touched and fed and revealed himself in the breaking of bread. By grace that is amazing, souls are fed and nurtured and changed by this sacrament of his Holy and Risen Presence.

A quick, closing story. Several years ago, a couple with several young children were visiting the church where I was rector and seeking to become familiar with the Eucharist. In the Liturgy of that Sunday, when it was time for the congregation to come forward to the altar rail to receive the sacrament, their five-year-old son, sitting at the edge of the aisle, stage-whispered to his parents, "Hurry Mom and Dad, lets go get some Christ!" Out of the mouths of babes.

--The Rev. Dr. Douglass M. Bailey



Which Star Are You Following?

As we explore our response to being tithers during this season of Epiphany, here is a true story for your consideration. This is the gist of the children's sermon based on the parable of the rich ruler.

(Luke 18:18-23)

Priest: "Who was the Gospel story today about?"

Child: "A VERY, VERY rich man."

Priest: "Well if he was rich what was his problem?"

Child: "He asked Jesus what he had to do to inherit eternal life."

Priest: "What did Jesus say?"

Child: "Go sell all your stuff and follow me."

Priest: "Well, what was the problem?"

Child: "He had a LOT of stuff."

Priest: "Why was that a problem?"

Child: "Well, God wanted to play with him, but he had TOO much stuff to take care of, so he couldn't play with God."

This version of the story may never get into any of the great commentaries on this passage of scripture, but it does present a surprisingly accurate picture for us. *God wants us to go play with God.*

But we fail to respond with child-like joy because we are so caught up in taking care of our stuff! We do not have time to play with God. The priest concluded the sermon by inviting people to decide which character they were in the story—the rich ruler or Jesus. Many were reminded of their relative wealth, particularly on a global basis. We are the rich ruler. God invites us today to play with God in God's kingdom. What will our response be: The joyful response of the trusting child, or the sorrowful turning away of the rich young man whose "stuff" enslaved him and prevented him from responding to God's invitation?

"Which Star are you Following?"

Participant Sign-Up

Yes! I will prayerfully endeavor to tithe (give 10% of my income) for the next three months (February 21, 2007 through May 21, 2007).

Name _____

Parish/Mission _____

E-mail address _____

(We will be offering prayer and other supports via e-mail over the three months trial tithe period. If you do not have e-mail, please let us know if there is a fax or snail mail address you would like us to use.)

Please use this form to sign up to participate in the "Which Star are you Following?" program. Please e-mail or snail mail to: kmiller@edomi.org or Kristine Miller, The Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI 48201.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

200 W. St. Paul Street

Brighton, MI 48116

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