

# THE MESSENGER

Parish News of St. John's Episcopal Church, Saginaw, Michigan

Volume 28, Issue 3

March 2010

The Messenger is published monthly by St. John's Episcopal Church, 123 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602. This publication is mailed to our parishioners at no cost to them.

## The Gift of Lent

Christians are called in Lent to a special period of time in which life is different. Let's face it, we do our best in the Church to make sure we are **not** trying to live into these forty days in the same way, because despite

# 40 Days of purpose

Rick Warren's best efforts to co-opt the phrase, Lent is the original "40 days of purpose" and not just for your life, but the life we share as the community of faith. Lent is a time for reminding us that the Lord calls us to be more – to accept the most challenging aspect of giving, to invite us to

the best form of a relationship with

God, to accept the highest form of discipleship. As such, Lent is the opportunity for each of us to take stock – reflect, think, read, worship and pray a little differently. While this can at first feel a little unsettling, it actually provides a tremendous opportunity to hear afresh the Good News of what God continues to do in our life by making "all things new." We ponder the mighty work accomplished in Jesus Christ and begin to rediscover the implications for our life here and now.

What does it mean this year, just as you are that God so loved you that he gave his only begotten Son so that you may have eternal life. (Cf. John 3:16) and that by our faith in Christ we are a new creation" (Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17)? Lent is the deliberate time set aside to prayerfully consider and explore how this and other truths of our faith can help to shape our lives and guide our path, the very definition of the spiritual practice of 'discernment.' This time of discernment also includes rethinking what it really means to be a disciple, a steward of the riches of God's GRACE that we have been entrusted with – whether on a small

level or a larger one. To consider ourselves stewards of God's gifts, such as we are – both our talents and limitedness – means we discern our priorities. This may mean resetting our priorities.

As one writer has said, "Lent is a spiritual season which calls for greater openness to the Word of

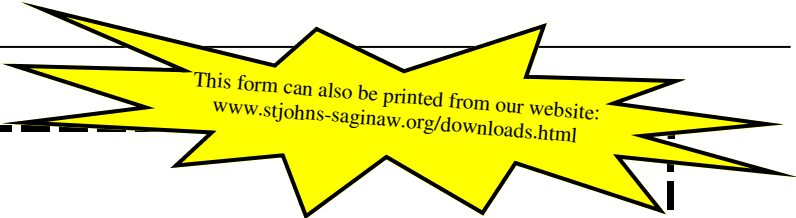
**Name our fears as much as our hopes and release our worries**

God and a conversion in every area of our lives. It is a time to face the darkness within and expose it to the light; to confront our demons and expel them." Lent is also a time we set apart in order to name our fears as much as our hopes and release the hold our worries have on our lives. Without this incredibly important, even fundamental work of our inner lives, we can all too easily become obsessed by those fears, the various demons in our lives, the darkness that can feel overwhelming, our estrangement from God and even each other, seemingly paralyzing us in our spiritual growth and maturity as disciples. I wonder what you might discover about yourself, about how God is moving in your life and beckons for an even deeper relationship with you. What can this all mean for your life now?

However you choose to explore and discern how God is moving in your life, I pray that this holy season may be for you a time to contemplate anew the many blessings of God and to respond to God by a generous giving of our very selves – our whole selves – setting God as our deepest priority, God's love to be our greatest gift – the source of all that we are and all that we can become by the grace of God!

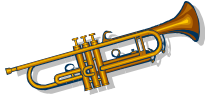
*Susan Clinton*

ST. JOHN'S IS CALLED TO CARE, SHARE, WORSHIP, CELEBRATE, AND LOVE.



Dashed border containing the main content of the form, including the title, instructions, and donation fields.

### EASTER FLOWERS & MUSIC FUND



Donations to St. John’s Easter Flower & Music Fund provide the flower arrangements, decorations, and guest musicians that we enjoy during the Easter Season. Although contributions of any size are welcome, please consider a minimum gift of \$20.00. (Gifts of \$100.00 or more will be given special designation.)

**DEADLINE:** Sunday, March 14th.

I would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the St. John’s Easter Flower Fund.

I would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the St. John’s Music Fund.

Please make checks payable to **St. John’s Episcopal Church**. Indicate on the check “Easter Flowers” or “Music Fund.” Please seal your check and a copy of this form in an envelope and place it in the offering plate or return it to the parish office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

This contribution is given: (check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ In grateful thanksgiving for (e.g. blessings received, an important person in your life, an anniversary, or birthday)

\_\_\_\_\_ In loving memory of:

Three horizontal lines for providing names for the memorial contribution.



## Happy Birthday!

- 1 Sharon Reardon
- 6 Joel Butterfield
- 7 Nicholas Jacqmain
- 8 Janet Cosenza
- 8 Beth Garza
- 9 Keith Birdsall
- 11 Erin Reardon
- 12 Elizabeth Braun
- 12 Bill Scharffe
- 12 Jerry Young
- 13 Emily Morris
- 14 Sue Dikeman
- 14 Jim Shannon
- 16 Sage Morley
- 18 Vanessa Daugherty
- 19 Marcella Marcet
- 19 Ashley Strahm
- 20 Jordan Hernandez
- 22 Cynthia Lange
- 22 William Vlassis Jr.
- 24 Vera Hoganson
- 24 Ron Swarthout
- 24 Brett Yeager
- 26 Nancy Bovill
- 28 Valerie Harrell
- 28 Matthew Hoffman

## Thank You

Thank you to **Marcia & Sarah Hoffman** for organizing the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.

Thanks to **The Rev. David VanBrackel** from Michigan Avenue Baptist for co-officiating our Ash Wednesday service.

A BIG thank you to **Rebecca Curell** for keeping our newly formed Facebook & Twitter pages updated and relevant!

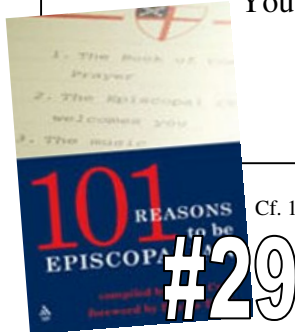
Thank you to **Bill Frederick, John Roberts, Barb Roberts, Pat Lynes, and Sue Brigham** for continuing to donate your time and effort to fold the Messenger each month.

*Is there someone in our parish who has gone above and beyond? If you would like to offer thanks, please call the office at 793-9575.*

Good Samaritans:		
Feb. 21 - Mar. 6	Susan Daugherty	249-1989
Mar. 7 - Mar. 20	Janis Rump	792-7127
Mar. 21 - Apr. 3	Jim & Marsha Braun	793-5015

The signs that say “The Episcopal Church Welcomes You” mean it.

*Nick Humes  
Diocese of Newark*



Cf. 101 Reasons to be Episcopalian, compiled by Louie Crew. © 2003 by Louie Crew/Morehouse ISDN 0-8192-1925-8 ePublishing.

### ***With Your Help we CAN Live into Our Vision!***

Thank you! The response is wonderful. We are pleased to announce that we have already received over \$90,000 in pledges so far towards our goal of \$150,000! This is an incredible start. Now is the time to hear from you! We know you want to join your fellow parishioners in making our vision of full accessibility for those in our community and even beyond. Now is the time!

Since the \$150,000 project cost estimate is about ¾ of the total of our annual pledges, it can be expected that it will take an average total gift of approximately ¾ of each household's current pledge amount in order to make this project a reality. Grace and generosity abound at St. John's. Herb Spence III was able to share that by the Annual Meeting and before these plans were officially announced, St. John's had received gifts for over half of the projected costs of the accessibility project. Additional pledges were received that day, as well and now we are over 60% of the way towards making this vision a reality! As you are probably well aware, each member of our Vestry, has already made their own personal commitment and we would like to encourage you to do the same.

*How can you help?* Please, prayerfully consider a gift in that range, which would amount to about ¼ of your household's pledge per year, if paid over 3 years. We understand this may not be possible for everyone and we will continue to encourage those who can make larger gifts to do so. Look for your commitment letter to arrive shortly. In the meantime, should you wish to pledge your commitment to be a part of this important and exciting project now, you can go to our website at [www.stjohns-saginaw.org](http://www.stjohns-saginaw.org) where you can pledge and even fulfill your pledge all on-line.

Thank you for all you do to help St. John's really make a difference in the lives of our parishioners and our community. Together, we **can** make this happen! Now is the time!

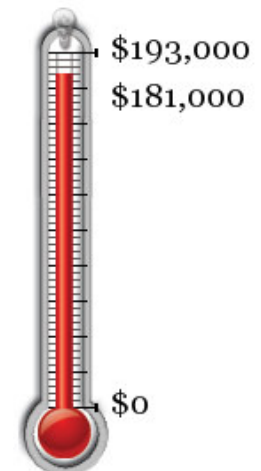
*St John's Vestry and Accessibility Campaign Team*



### ***Thanks to You, We Can Close the Gap With Our Annual Giving!***

As we enter 2010 the goal of eliminating our recurring deficit is in sight! It has certainly been true, but now it is clear to see that every commitment is needed – perhaps now more than ever before! Let's face facts: we are doing more than paying bills at St. Johns. **We are supporting God's ministry and you can help!** At year's end we have received pledges totaling more than **\$181,000** and with regular giving, we can project that amount to grow to at least **\$193,000**. As great as this response is, we still have not heard from everyone. *How about you?* Let us celebrate what God is doing in our midst and continue to turn St. John's around! Closing the gap between income and expenses and realizing the priorities and goals of the parish will take your commitment! Thank you.

*Additional Annual Giving Brochures (with a pledge card) are available in the Community Room, or simply contact our parish office by calling 793-9575. This year making and even fulfilling your pledge is even more convenient, as you can now pledge and even pay to fulfill your pledge directly and securely on-line on our website at [www.stjohns-saginaw.org](http://www.stjohns-saginaw.org) (click on the "support us" link).*



## ***Our Faith In Action: Make a Difference this Holy Week***

Just in time for Lent, we have two different outreach projects for you. We are again participating in the Hope Tote program for the Saginaw Rescue Mission. Last year we filled and delivered 40 bags of personal items for homeless people. This year, the director of the Hope Tote project personally brought over the bags and information sheets, so we really want to help them out. You can find the bags and suggestion sheets on one of the outreach tables in the Community Room. They are due back here by Holy Sunday, March 28, 2010.

### ***11th Annual Operation Hope Totes***

Each year the City Rescue Mission has been spreading the hopeful message of Easter through a project called Operation Hope Tote. With your help, we can make this 11<sup>th</sup> year the most successful it has ever been by providing our neighbors with basic personal essentials like a toothbrush, bar of soap, or clean socks.

Here's how it works:

1. Pick up a Hope Tote and yellow Contents Slip from the community room
2. During the season of Lent, fill the Hope Tote with a variety personal care items
3. Return the Hope Tote to St. John's by Palm Sunday (March 28th).



The Saginaw Rescue Mission will pass the bags out to some of our city's neediest men, women and children. What a great way to spread the message of HOPE in our community!

### ***ERD & Haitian Relief***

Also, please remember the work of Episcopal Relief and Development. Perhaps it can be as simple as utilizing one of the hope chests for your pocket change and remembering their work in your prayers, perhaps it's more. In addition to their mission being tied into the Millennium Development Goals, ERD is well at work in the recovery and relief work in Haiti. The Hope Chests are in the Community Room as well, along with an abundance of information on the ERD, with more ways to help. The Hope Chests are also due back on March 28, 2010. Thanks for your participation!



***Still need a Lenten discipline? It's not too late!***

*Come explore The Return of the Prodigal Son each Tuesday night in Lent!*

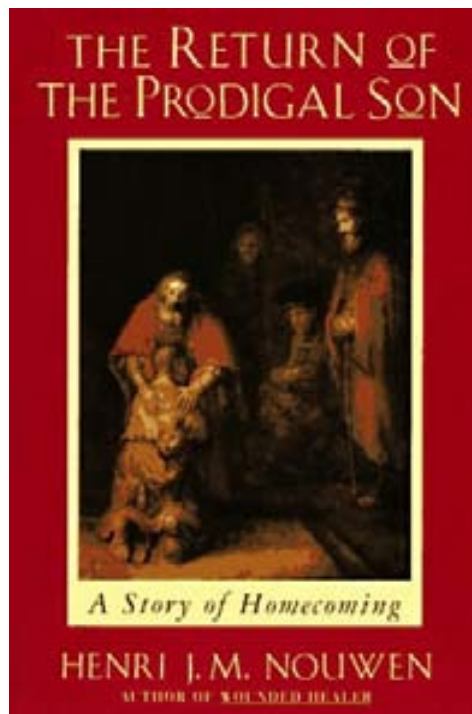
Simply pick up a copy of *The Return of the Prodigal Son* at your favorite book retailer and join us each Tuesday in Lent to feed your body, mind and soul!

- 6:00pm Shared Soup Supper
- 6:30pm Simplified Holy Eucharist
- 7:00—7:30 Discussion: *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

*Can't make it on Tuesdays? Not a problem!*

You can still read along and participate in online discussions (facilitated by Darren+) by becoming our Fan on Facebook!

Visit [www.stjohn-saginaw.org](http://www.stjohn-saginaw.org) for more details!



**Innovo**

Contemplative Meditative Innovative

**Sunday, March 21st at 7:30pm**

Back by popular demand as a special Lenten service, Innovo provides a calm and meditative outlet for the season. Please join us for a time of rest and balance and see for yourself how a simple and open invitation to worship can powerfully renew our relationship with God and fellowship with each other.

***Fan us on Facebook!  
Follow us on Twitter!***

What makes this outlet different from our e-mail, website, and other announcements? When you participate on Facebook and Twitter you can post your own thoughts and comments along side those of our staff and clergy!

Our first opportunity to use these terrific networking tools is with our Lenten Series. As we gather each Tuesday in Lent it is now possible to include those who are out of town, ill, without transportation, or are interested in the topic but unable to meet at the scheduled time.



Engage in a conversation with those we may not "see" on Sunday and explore new ways to build community at St. John's!

***Bishop's Blog:***



***On the Way to Jerusalem: A Lenten Journey***, invites an exploration of the Christian life through reflection on the appointed Gospel readings for the Sundays in Lent in the Revised Common Lectionary.

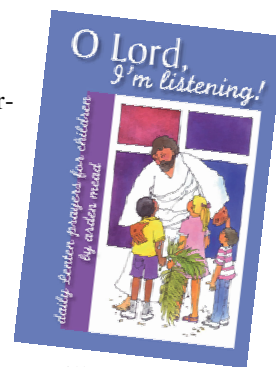
Follow the Bishop's Blog at:  
<http://easternmichigan.typepad.com/easternmichiganbishop/>

***Devotionals Available as a Resource for your Lenten Journey!***

This year, we have made available several different devotionals, intended to speak to different ages and interests. Beginning with our children, there is a small devotional booklet called *O Lord, I'm Listening* which is intended to be shared by families together with an accompanying mobile that can be put together much like and Advent calendar.

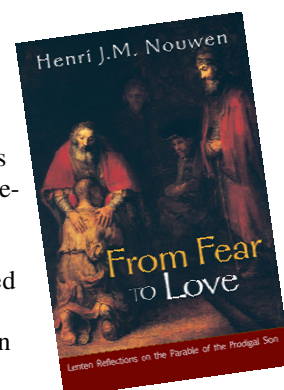


This year we also have devotional booklets developed by Episcopal Relief and Development. This is a series of meditations for each day of Lent developed this year by Sister Claire Joy of the Community of the Holy Spirit in New York City. The theme of this year's meditations is "Healing ourselves and a hurting world." These daily meditations will encourage, challenge and inspire members of your congregation to reflect on their lives and on what steps they might take to help those who live in need.



*From Fear to Love* is the title of our other Lenten Devotional. The daily reflections in this booklet are taken from recorded conferences Henri Nouwen gave on the parable and famous Rembrandt portrait, "The Return of the Prodigal Son." Either as a daily companion to the book by the same title, which is the basis of this year's Lenten Series or by themselves, these brief reflections are sure to inspire and enlighten not only your prayer life but how you regard grace, forgiveness, acceptance and love.

And don't forget our standard resource, *Forward Day by Day!* These meditations are based around the readings from the Daily office, our two-year cycle of readings for daily prayer. All of these and additional resources are available in the Community Room and at the Main Entrance tract rack.



***Festive Sunday for Lent – March 7<sup>th</sup> – Come be part of the fun!***



Yes, that's right fun and formation in Lent! Come and enjoy the fun, food and fellowship on Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup> as we explore some of the meaning Lent can be for our lives. In addition to worship, the day will be marked with a parish potluck, fellowship and an intergenerational activity for the season with fun for all ages! St. John's will supply the main dish and we invite you / your family to bring either a side item (members with last names beginning with A-L), or a dessert item dish to pass (last names beginning with M-Z). Fun for all, it would not be the same without you!

***Lenten Fish Supper - March 19th @ 6:00pm***

Mark your calendars for this wonderful Lenten tradition! March 19th at 6:00pm treat your friends and family to a Salmon Bake as only St. John's can do it! The Rev. Darren Elin will be serving up some of his famous Salmon along with delicious sides and desserts.

Tickets will be on sale after each Sunday service or by calling the parish office at 793-9575 at a cost of **\$10.00/adult and \$5.00/child.**





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***Parishioners in the News***

**Jill Wetmore** has been appointed the dean of the College of Business and Management at Saginaw Valley State University. A faithful member of the parish, Jill and her husband Ned regularly attend the Wednesday noon Eucharist in the Chapel. At SVSU, Jill was formerly a professor of finance and assistant dean of the College. She is honored to have been appointed to the position and looks forward to working on the future developments of the College. Congratulations Jill and may God continue to bless you, your family and the ministry you share!



**Andy Coulouris** has accepted an offer to become Public Affairs Manager for Dow Corning. As a result, Andy will be leaving his office at the State Legislature some time this spring before beginning work for Dow Corning in Washington D.C. While we are saddened to see Andy, Natasha and the girls move on, we certainly wish them congratulations and Godspeed!



**Dr. William Scharffe** was appointed by the City Council to fill the term left vacant by the resignation of former Saginaw Mayor, Joyce Seals. This will be Dr. Scharffe's second time to serve on the Council. With this new position and his position on the Vestry, retirement is anything but dull! Congratulations Bill!



***A Labor of Love***

Perhaps you can recall the St. John's Story that appeared a couple of years ago about Bill Frederick and the chair that sponsored in honor of his beloved late wife, Jean. Bill was one of our first 'patrons' as he has always had a big place in his heart for the chapel and our midweek services held there. It was with the intimate setting of our midweek service that Jean and Bill worshiped at St. John's in the later years of Jean's life. Two years later, that same fondness for the chapel and our midweek services compelled Bill to offer his gifts in a truly remarkable way.



After being in the Garden Room Chapel for three years, Bill kept thinking of how nice it would be to have a credence that would better complement the room. Not being one to simply talk, Bill approached Darren+ one day and shared his ideas to improve the room. "Go look and see if there's a shelf or cabinet that would work better for you." Never finding one that would work gracefully, Bill set out to design one he would build himself! Encountering Bill and his enthusiasm for a good idea, one would never know that he is now 90 years young! Bill was not satisfied with simply designing the credence, however. When visiting his daughter and her husband in Arizona this past Christmas, Bill and his son-in-law Don Caverly brought his design to life. Yes, while he was in Arizona! After tacking the project together, they disassembled the pieces and had them shipped to Bill's home (all 93 lbs.) where he finished the work on his sun porch. After a little help moving the credence to church, Bill applied the finishing work of stain and varnish before it was placed in its new home in the chapel. One last part caught his eyes – the sun! Bill also found and purchased the beautiful new blinds that grace the Garden Room Chapel! This was all done in loving memory of his wife, Jean C. Frederick.

I believe all would agree that not only is his labor of love functional, but handsome and blends naturally into our chapel. Thank you Bill!

### ***Now Accepting All Major Credit Cards!***

You use them to pay your bills online. You use them to keep track of what you're spending. You use them to collect airline miles and now you can use them to donate via our website.



There is really no need to express how important it is that we all remain consistent and generous with our gifts to St. John's. What we *do* want to express is that ***this new feature is here for you!***

From now on, when we forget our checkbooks, miss a Sunday while on vacation, or want to donate to a special cause, your gift to St. John's is only a few clicks away.

St. John's is PayPal verified. What does this mean? This means that any credit card transaction you process via our website is safe and secure. By clicking on a "Donate" button from the *Support Us* page you will be taken to PayPal where you can enter your account information, gift amount, and a memo regarding the purpose of your gift. ***Yes, it is that easy.*** As we learn about how to better use this technology you may see some changes on our website but you can rest assured that your personal information is safe and you have indeed lent your support.



### ***Palm Sunday – March 28<sup>th</sup>***

Holy Week begins with the remembrance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the Liturgy of the Palms, but then we dramatically transition from jubilant celebration to the intensity of our Lord's Passion.

Start your Holy Week with this powerful service as well as breakfast! Join us at 10am for a parish breakfast in the Community Room and then enter into the story itself, carrying palms and the singing of "All Glory, Laud and Honor!"



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## *Different Opportunities for Prayer and Worship in Lent*

This Lenten season, in addition to our regular celebrations of the Holy Eucharist on Sundays, why not take-on a practice of extra devotion in the form of prayer and worship.

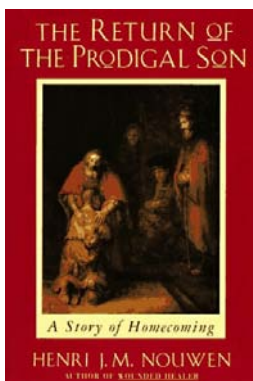


**Centering Prayer** – meets every Wednesday afternoon at 4pm in the Guild Room. Each week we share the Gospel reading for the upcoming Sunday and then silently reflect for about 15 minutes. This is a great way to lay the burdens of the day down, to find peace and renewal, as well as to be in God's presence in prayer.

**Innovo** – Join us on Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 for a truly transcending and refreshing service of prayer, meditation and contemplative music, borrowing from the traditions of Taizé, Iona and other intentional communities.



**Tuesday Lenten Series** – Join us each Tuesday throughout Lent beginning at 6pm for fellowship, Communion and enriching conversation. We will first gather for a soup supper, then a simplified Eucharist and then finally discuss what we are discovering with this year's Lenten book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Henri Nouwen.



**Wednesdays at Noon** – Our midweek celebration of the Holy Eucharist takes place in the Garden Room Chapel. This intimate service looks at specific readings for the day and responding with prayer and Communion. A great way to renew during the week!

**Noonday in Holy Week** – Expanding our tradition of the Wednesday service, join as we celebrate the Eucharist each day in Holy Week at Noon with specific readings for each day around the Passion of Our Lord. This brief intimate service, which takes place in the Garden Room Chapel is sure to complement your lunch hour and is 30 minutes.

# Someplace Else

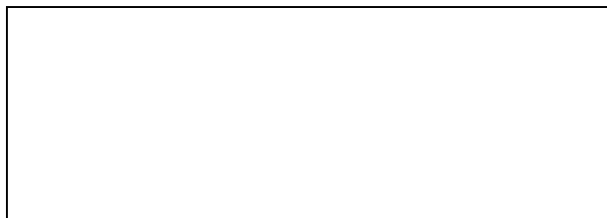
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## *How will you observe the season of Lent?*

<i>Attend an Event or Special Service?</i>	March 7	Festive Sunday Potluck
	March 19	Lenten Fish Supper
	March 21	Innovo Service
	March 28	Palm Sunday Breakfast
	April 1	Maundy Thursday Service & Agape Meal
	April 2	Good Friday Service
	April 3	The Great Vigil of Easter
<i>Participate in a Special Project?</i>	Saginaw Rescue Mission – Hope Totes Episcopal Relief & Development Boxes	
<i>Participate in a Group Study?</i>	Lenten Series: <i>The Return of the Prodigal Son</i>	