



# THE MESSENGER



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

Volume 30, Issue 3

March 2012

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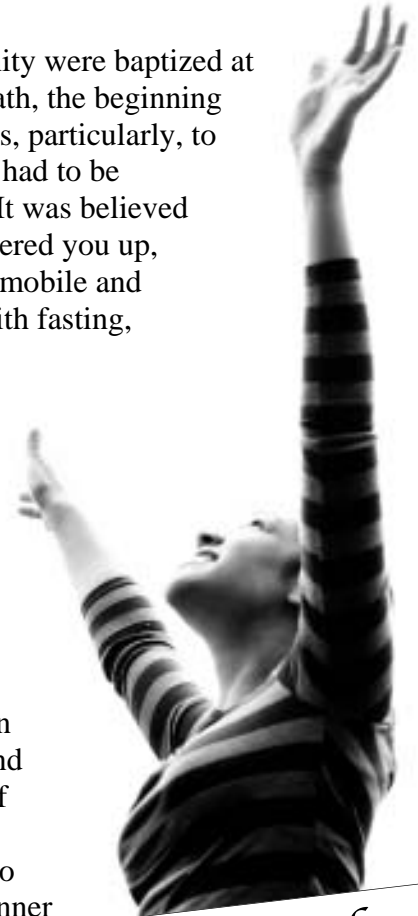
## The Archbishop of Canterbury Explains what Lent is REALLY About...

"In the earliest centuries of the Church, newcomers to the Christian community were baptized at Easter. It seemed to be the obvious time to do it – Easter, the conquest of death, the beginning of new life – and so it was that it came to be the common practice for bishops, particularly, to baptize and anoint new believers at that great feast. But of course, believers had to be prepared for this event, prepared by instruction, and prayer, and self-denial. It was believed that self-denial; fasting and extra prayer was something that, as it were, limbered you up, rather like doing exercises for some great race. It made you more spiritually mobile and agile. And so that period of preparation for baptism came to be associated with fasting, with prayer and with self-denial.

That's how Lent began. A period where people were thinking about baptism, about the beginning of new life, whether literally as new converts to Christianity or – for the rest of the church – people wanting to renew that sense of commitment. And still, on Easter Eve, at this day people will renew their baptismal promises in a solemn service in church.

But that also became associated very early on with the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, fasting and praying and discovering what God was asking of him. In the Gospels we're told that Jesus goes straight from his own baptism into the desert to confront the Devil and to overcome temptation. And that forty days in the desert became a great image that controlled the sense of the pre-Easter fast, that pre-Easter preparation. During this period, it became more and more common for churches to strip away some of the decoration, to make themselves look a bit simpler, a kind of outward manifestation of the inner stripping and the inner austerity that was going on. ...

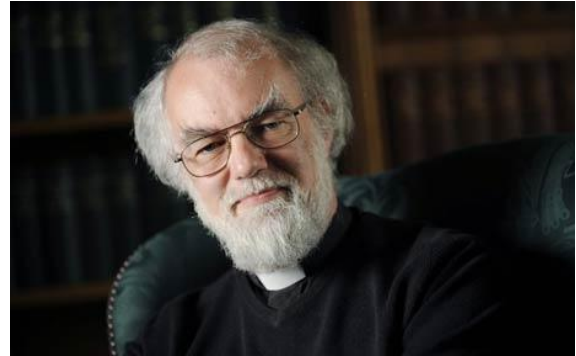
[continued on page 2]



*The Archbishop says "It's not about feeling gloomy for forty days; it's not about making yourself miserable for forty days; it's not even about giving things up for forty days. Lent is springtime. It's preparing for that great climax of springtime which is Easter - new life bursting through death."*

***The Purpose of Lent Continued...*** In the middle ages, in many English churches, the hangings and the decorations in church were replaced with hangings of very coarse cloth – sack cloth. People would sometimes wear sack cloth and the beginning of Lent was marked by a ceremony where ash was placed on people's heads in memory of their mortality – Ash Wednesday. In general, the color used during Lent for vestments and hangings - if it wasn't the use of old and shabby cloth – the color would be purple, a somber color associated with judgment.

But it's important to remember that the word 'Lent' itself comes from the old English word for 'spring'. **It's not about feeling gloomy for forty days; it's not about making yourself miserable for forty days; it's not even about giving things up for forty days. Lent is springtime. It's preparing for that great climax of springtime which is Easter – new life bursting through death.** And as we prepare ourselves for Easter during these days, by prayer and by self-denial, what motivates us and what fills the horizon is not self-denial as an end in itself but trying to sweep and clean the room of our own minds and hearts so that the new life really may have room to come in and take over and transform us at Easter.”



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## Lenten Word Search

Q E O H S J C O S G P L S S R  
 Z R M M O S P K B R Y Y C G M  
 L E L I F L W K E G A O M A T  
 W A Z S T S Y P Y D U T S B X  
 P D G O Y G A W Y H C H F H H  
 W A R U W R N T E K S I X C U  
 O V E P E E R I Q E S L E N T  
 R V R S E O N D R H K B Z U O  
 S L U U F W O E S P O L K L Y  
 H P T P F R L U R Q S P M E A  
 I S Y P D G P E V E N S O N G  
 P E X E G P N O W X E Z Q V D  
 B H X R E K O O B R E Y A R P  
 W S W R W R D P J L C T S B P  
 V A C H A J N I B B F Y K P X

### Wordlist

Ashes  
 Evensong  
 Fish Supper  
 Forty Days  
 Holy Week  
 Lent  
 Lunch Bags  
 Palms  
 Prayer Book  
 Prepare  
 Renew  
 Soup Supper  
 Spring Time  
 Study  
 Worship

## Happy Birthday!

- 1 Sharon Reardon
- 2 T.J. Luxton
- 7 Nicholas Jacqmain
- 7 Evelyn Williams
- 8 Janet Cosenza
- 8 Beth Garza
- 8 Marriana Renza
- 9 Keith Birdsall
- 11 Erin Reardon
- 12 Elizabeth Braun
- 12 Bill Scharffe
- 12 Jerry Young
- 13 Jim Magyar
- 14 Jim Shannon
- 14 Greyson Peters
- 16 Sage Morley
- 18 Vanessa Daugherty
- 19 Marcella Marcet
- 19 Ashley Strahm
- 20 Jordan Hernandez
- 20 Xavier Magyar
- 22 Cynthia Lange
- 22 Lilly Oliver
- 22 William Vlassis Jr.
- 24 Vera Hoganson
- 24 Ron Swarthout
- 24 Brett Yeager
- 26 Nancy Bovill
- 28 Valerie Harrell
- 28 Matthew Hoffman

# Thank You

A BIG thank you to **Sue Luxton** and everyone who helped with breakfast at the Annual Meeting including: **Jane & Al Vondrasek, Sharon Kaylor, Barb & Berney Jones, Ida Smith, Fr. Don Tepe, Nancy Birdsall, Dave Humpert, Tom Donaghy and Jack Luxton.**

Thanks to **Keith Birdsall, Barb & John Roberts, Bill Frederick** and **Sue Brigham** for your help editing and producing "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. 19 - Mar. 3	Susan Daugherty	249-1989
Mar. 4 - Mar. 17	Diane Grigg	793-1669
Mar 18 - Mar. 31	Jim & Marsha Braun	793-5015

### Vestry Members:

Keith Birdsall	652-6768	quilter37@charter.net
Drew Christiansen	392-0109	drewchristiansen78@gmail.com
Jane Girdham	790-8712	jpgirdham@svsu.edu
Connie Grantham	695-2088	grantham@hotmail.com
Marcia Hoffman	793-8354	hoffman1982@sbcglobal.net
Mark Mahlberg	793-0801	n/a
Sue Marquardt	790-0656	r-s-keyofc@sbcglobal.net
Duncan Redfield	799-7893	redsailor7@yahoo.com
Dennis Thom	793-9562	dennisthom@sbcglobal.net

## Guide to Lent @ St. John's

As the Archbishop of Canterbury mentions in his article, Lent is a special sort of Spring time in the church year where we begin to shake off the greyness of winter and prepare ourselves for the new life of Easter! We use this season to simplify our worship and reflect on our Christian lives so that we may fully embrace the joy of our resurrected savior. Consider joining us for any of the following special services or events so that we may walk together on our Lenten journey this year.

### Morning Prayer - Wednesday's @ Noon

Looking for a short, day-time discipline? Each Wednesday at noon we will be using the beautiful "Old English" language from the historic **1928 Book of Common Prayer** for a service of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. *(For those of you attending on your lunch break, relax! The service will be less than an hour.)*

### Evensong & Soup Supper

Each Wednesday evening in Lent we will be hosting a **Soup Supper (6:00pm)** as a time of fellowship and conversation.

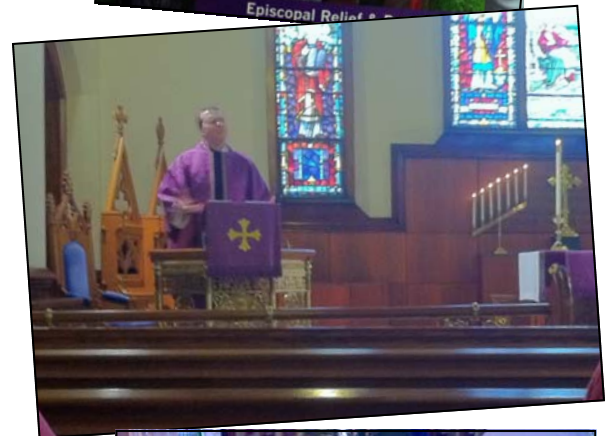
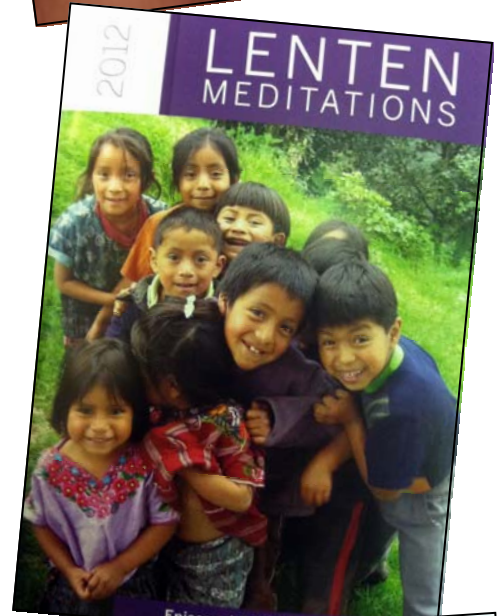
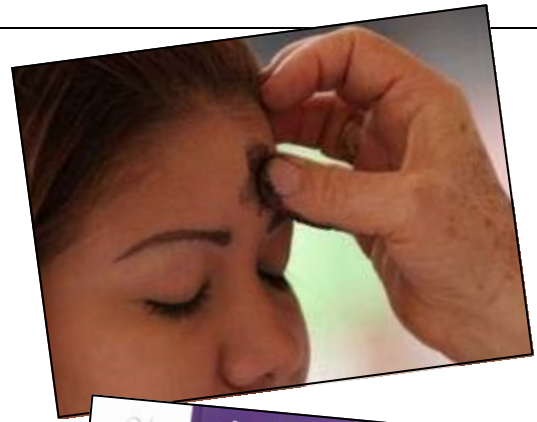
Following the Soup Supper will be a **Lenten Evensong (7:00pm)**. Here, we will sing and chant our way through the service of Evening Prayer. You don't need to be a great singer to participate. This short and simple service is an excellent opportunity to better understand our heritage of Anglican worship.

### Lenten Fish Dinner - March 30 @ 6:00

Mark your calendar for our Lenten Fish Dinner. Tickets will soon be on sale for one of St. John's tastiest meals of the year. Grilled salmon (and chicken) with all the sides you might expect will be served. Invite your friends!

### Personal Devotion

For those looking for a personal devotion, a booklet of daily Lenten Meditations is available in the Community Room.





## EASTER FLOWERS & MUSIC FUNDS

Donations to St. John's Easter Flower & Music Funds 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 25, 2012

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.

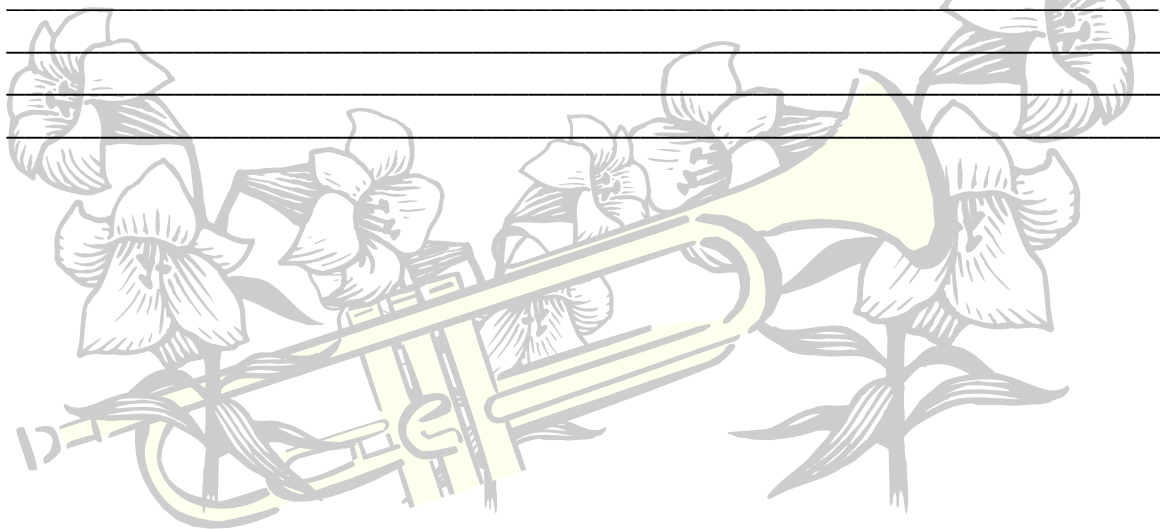
Please make checks payable to **St. John's Episcopal Church**. Indicate on the check "Easter Flowers" or "Music Fund." Please seal your check and a copy of this form in an envelope and place it in the offering plate or return it to the parish office.

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:



## Feeding the Hungry

Is there any other way that has a more direct impact on a life and a greater tie to Christian outreach than feeding the hungry? St. John's acknowledges this need in the Saginaw community and the role it plays in our ministry with our Lunch Bag Outreach Program and with a newly forming Old Town Christian Outreach group. **Since Lent is a time of discarding excess and focusing on what remains**, we encourage you to ask "What can I do to help?" one of these special programs during the season.

### Lunch Bag Outreach

Each morning, Monday through Thursday, St. John's offers an satisfying sack lunch to anyone who needs it. Volunteers staff the kitchen preparing the lunches and passing them out, but there are many more ways to be involved. Consider:

- Becoming a substitute volunteer
- Shopping for lunch bag items
- Grant writing for the program

Contact Amy Simons in the parish office (989-793-9575) for ways to be involved with Lunch Bag Outreach.

### Old Town Christian Outreach

St. John's is a church that definitely lives out its mission to care, share, worship, celebrate and love. While not wishing to overburden our wonderful volunteers, I would like to acquaint our congregation with an opportunity to help the less fortunate outside our church walls with a donation of time, but not money.



As part of my seminary training for the past two months, I have been volunteering at the **Old Town Christian Outreach Center**, working in their soup kitchen and with their grocery give-away program. The grocery give-away program (what I refer to as an open pantry) distributes groceries, outdoors, every Saturday morning to people who wait in line, sometimes for hours, even in bad weather. In fourteen years of service, the pantry has never missed a Saturday!

**Fr. Daniel, Pam and I wish to form a group from St. John's that will participate in the pantry program on a regular basis—perhaps once a month.** I encourage you to consider giving some of your time to this very worthwhile effort. Not only will you help those who are in great need, but you will also come away with a deep appreciation for the blessings God has given to us. Fr. Daniel and I will be happy to talk with anyone who is interested in helping with this ministry.

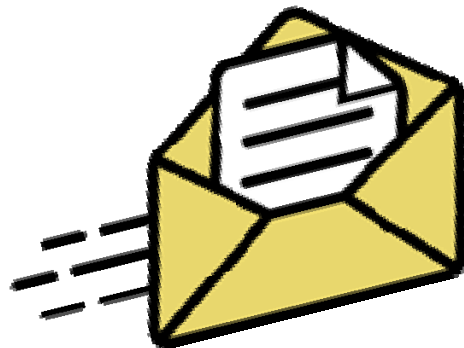
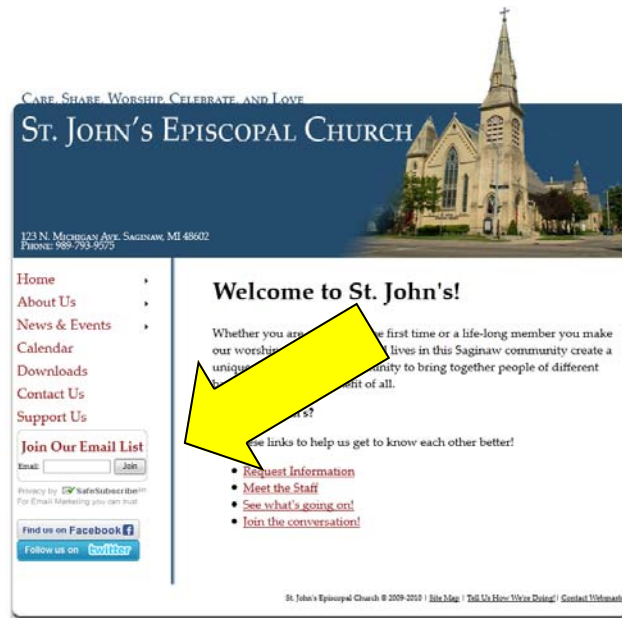
Peace and love,  
*Sharon Voelker*

## The Messenger is Going Electronic!

Just like in our homes, St. John's strives to be good stewards of our time, finances and resources. It is in this effort that St. John's will be transitioning into an electronic newsletter! Each month, a PDF version of "The Messenger" will be emailed to all those who have signed up for our E-News emails.

If you do not already receive our E-News, it's fast and easy to sign up! Simply follow these steps:

1. Visit the St. John's website by typing *www.stjohns-saginaw.org* into the address bar of your internet browser.
2. Locate the heading "Join Our Email List" on the left hand side of the page and fill in your email address.
3. Click the grey "Join" button.
4. You will then be asked to confirm your email address. Choose which lists interest you.
5. Select the "HTML" option
6. Click the grey "join" button once again.
7. You're done!!!



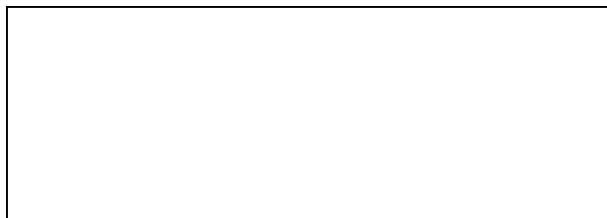
If you already receive emails from St. John's, you don't need to do anything more. You will automatically receive "The Messenger." For those of us not so electronically inclined printed copies will be available each month in the Community Room.

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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***How will you prepare for the new life of Easter?***

<i>Attend an Event or Special Service?</i>	March 30	Lenten Fish Dinner
	April 1	Palm Sunday Breakfast
	April 5	Maundy Thursday Service
	April 6	Good Friday Service
	April 7	The Great Vigil of Easter
<i>Participate in a Special Project?</i>	Lunch Bag Outreach Program	
<i>Participate in a Group Discussion?</i>	Soup Supper Wednesday's @ 6:00pm & Evensong (7:00pm)	

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