

The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church | 123 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602
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THOUGHTS ON THE BEGINNING OF LENT

The liturgical season of Lent begins this year on March 1 with the observance of Ash Wednesday. But it's not too soon to begin thinking about how we, as followers of Jesus in the 21st Century, can approach this holy time. It's fair to ask the question: what are we supposed to be doing during Lent in the first place? Let's kick around this question.

We are told the word "lent" is related to the word "spring". Thus, the Lenten season has some parallels to what's happening with the weather. Lent is a time of transition. Just as spring is that time of transition between winter and summer, Lent (when we approach it properly) can move us from the dark, cold moments of life into the warmth and brightness that God offers humanity in Jesus the Christ. We could call Lent a spiritual, spring cleaning.

The first liturgies of Lent will be on Ash Wednesday (March 1). Our



services at St. John's will be at noon and 6pm. But there is a fabulous, time-honored tradition on the evening before. At 6pm on February 28, we will host a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. What in the world is that?

The word "shrove" comes from the word "shrive", which basically means to "scrape". The concept of shriving is to scrape away our sins, the things that separate us from God, so that we can become the people God is calling us to be. This practice can be aided by the sacramental rite of Reconciliation of a Penitent (see page 447 of **The Book of Common Prayer**), also known as Confession or Penance. The clergy of St. John's are available for Reconciliation.

But wait just one second, Fr. Curt, what does this have to do with pancakes? That's a great question.

According to multiple sources, the Christian Church during the Middle Ages, as part of the shriving process, placed restrictions in Lent on followers' diets, foods like meats, fats, eggs, dairy, and fish. So, before Ash Wednesday, folks would hold parties to get rid of (feast on) all these foods, which is why Shrove Tuesday is also known as Fat

Tuesday, or ... wait for it ... Mardi Gras! That's French for Fat Tuesday! Just ask Rev. Pam!!!

As I've mentioned on Sundays, during Lent I will be holding a forum on The Lord's Prayer. This will take place in the Guild Room from 9:15am to 10am each Sunday.

During the 8am and 10:30am liturgies on the First Sunday in Lent, we will begin with The Great Litany (see page 148 of the BCP).

From the Second Sunday in Lent through the Fifth Sunday in Lent, we will begin each service by using A Penitential Order (see page 351 of the BCP), including the recitation of The Decalogue, also known as the Ten Commandments (see page 350). By using the liturgical tools available to us in the gift we know as **The Book of Common Prayer**, we position ourselves to know God better, and grow more deeply into the full stature of Christ.

My prayer for all of you this Lent is that you embrace and engage the spiritual resources available to us at St. John's Episcopal Church, so that we can be nourished and transformed, as well as empowered to better serve Saginaw and beyond.

RECTOR'S FORUM

Fr. Curt will be hosting a Rector's Forum in the Guild Room each Sunday at 9:15 beginning March 5th. These forums will be casual discussions for adults who want to learn, refresh, or more deeply explore elements of our faith in the context of our community. The first discussion topic will be The Lord's Prayer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pancake Supper

Feb. 28 @ 6:00pm

What's for dinner? Pancakes. We're going to clear the fat out of the larder and cook up some delicious pancakes, applesauce and sausage during a great night of fellowship before the austerity of Lent begins! Tickets (at the door) are \$5/adult, \$2.50/child.

Ash Wednesday Services

Mar. 1 @ noon & 6:00pm

Why ashes? Ashes are a physical reminder that confronts us with the radical change in living which is the way of Christ. We are faced with sin and salvation as alternative directions for our lives—sin as separation from God, from others, from ourselves and from the natural world; salvation as reconciliation with God, others, the natural world and ourselves. The liturgy on Ash Wednesday is reduced to its primary elements of Word and Sacrament. We are called to consider our mortality and, in that context, our sin and our absolute dependence on God for salvation and for life. On this day, the phrase, "Remember, you are dust and to dust, you shall return," is turned around into, "you shall have life and you shall have it abundantly."

Salmon Supper

Mar. 24 @ 6:00pm

Delicious baked salmon, red-skin potatoes, carrots, salad, desserts and more make this the best fish dinner in town. Yes, a chicken option will be available for those non-fish-enthusiast among us. Tickets will be on sale for \$10.00/adult, \$5.00/child following Sunday services beginning March 5, or by calling the church office. Seating is limited so large parties who would like to reserve a table please don't wait to call the office.

Youth Movie Night

April 7 @ 5:30pm

On Friday, April 7th, from 5:30 to 8:00pm, St. John's is planning a movie night for students grades K-6. And parents? They get a night out! While parents are enjoying a few calm hours, students will enjoy pizza, a movie and other activities. The focus of this Youth Movie Night is Holy Week and Easter. Lower elementary students will use fun supplements from our Spark Sunday School Program to better understand the Easter story. While upper elementary students will more deeply explore this special moment in our faith with Fr. Curt. Friends are always welcome. Registration is \$5/student.

NEWS

OPENTABLE UPDATE

The participation of St. John's in the Open Table Ministry is entering a new stage. For the past few months four members (Melanie Hollman, Ellen Redfield, Sue Smith, and the Rev. Pam) have been meeting and training with four members of Hopevale Church to form a team of eight mentor. We have a variety of skill sets on this team: a veterinarian, a Dow executive, healthcare professionals, members with a social work background,

PLEASE KEEP OUR ALL OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE OPEN TABLE MINISTRY IN YOUR PRAYERS.

people used to working with a variety of diverse groups, educators and clergy. We have completed our training and have been assigned a brother with whom we will

form a relationship during weekly meetings this coming year. To our brother, the benefit of the Open Table Ministry is that the combination of these diverse skills, life experiences and contacts will help him to realize his own life goals. It is our hope that this community of support will help our brother to work toward positive, life-long, changes.

Training has consisted of three meetings with an Open Table Instructor during which we have heard lectures about the Open Table Model, discussed how to best serve our brother, participated in group activities and role playing situations. There was also a training session on complex trauma to help us understand some of the difficult situations that our brother may have encountered. In the course of our training the eight of us have already bonded and are firmly committed to our goal of helping our new brother in his new life plan.

Our next step is to meet our brother, to share a meal with him and to begin the process of forming relationships. We

will share with him our life stories and our reasons for wanting to serve. He will in turn share with us his own story along with his hopes and dreams for a better life. Then the work begins. We will meet with him for a period of one year for an hour each week to build our mutual bonds, determine his goals, stumbling blocks, strengths and weaknesses. All with the mutual end goal of helping him move from poverty to community, providing social support and a secure unconditional relationship that is based on trust and promotes healing and growth for us all.

This Open Table Model is widespread with Tables in place throughout the United States. In Saginaw alone there are nine Tables in action with members from eight different local congregations. This model has been so successful in helping people who have lived an intense traumatic situation that new Tables are forming continually. We at St. John's are so glad to be a part of this effort to make a difference in the life of one person and to grow ourselves in the process. 4

Birthdays

Mar. 1 - Tara Gerhardt
Mar. 2 - Janet Finn
Mar. 7 - Evelyn Williams
Mar. 8 - Janet Cosenza
Mar. 9 - Keith Birdsall
Mar. 12 - Bill Scharffe
Mar. 12 - Jerry Young
Mar. 13 - Jim Magyar
Mar. 14 - Greyson Peters
Mar. 15 - Janet Botz
Mar. 20 - Xavier Magyar
Mar. 22 - Bill Vlassis
Mar. 22 - Cyndy Lange
Mar. 28 - Matt Hoffman
Mar. 28 - Valerie Harrell
Mar. 29 - Huges Coman

Apr. 2 - Bev DeHaan
Apr. 2 - Ted Grigg
Apr. 3 - Isadora Innman
Apr. 5 - Cheryl Heath
Apr. 7 - Jimmy Harrell
Apr. 8 - Kathie Humpert

Apr. 8 - Lauren Gerhardt
Apr. 10 - Jack Mott
Apr. 11 - Aimee Torok
Apr. 14 - Kenzlie Byron
Apr. 17 - Jackie Blackney
Apr. 19 - Bill Millar
Apr. 19 - Marilyn Wells
Apr. 20 - Kathy Coman
Apr. 21 - Rebecca Curell
Apr. 24 - Ruth Joswiak
Apr. 25 Benjamin Keen
Apr. 27 - Tiffany Mack
Apr. 30 - Thorin Magyar

Anniversaries

Mar. 23 - Tom Lippert
& Janet Botz

Apr. 4 - Bob & Tammy Treib
Apr. 22 - Dan & Nancy Cramer
Apr. 25 - Tom & Sherry Grobaski



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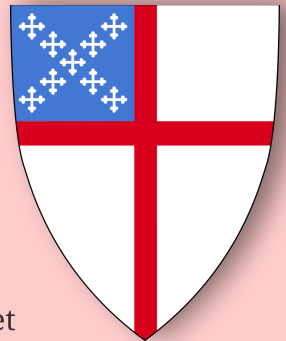


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EASTER FLOWERS and MUSIC FUND



Donations to St. John's Easter Flower & Music Fund provide the flower arrangements, decorations, and guest musicians that we enjoy

during the Easter Season. Gifts of \$100.00 or more will be given special designation in the Easter bulletins.

DEADLINE: Sunday, April 9th

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 the parish office.



Name: _____

This contribution is given: (check one)

- In grateful thanksgiving for (e.g. blessings received, an anniversary, or birthday)
- In loving memory of:

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