

# The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church | 123 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602

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## PLUG INTO HOLY WEEK...

## IN THIS EDITION

### Events

- Holy Week
- Diocesan Confirmation / Receptions

### Lenten Outreach

### Meet Intern Mary-Jo

### The Stained Glass Window Team

The forty days of Lent are almost gone and the celebration of Easter is very near. Now is good time to look back on why Easter is such an important holy day on the Church Calendar. The Jewish Passover ceremony, celebrated by Jesus and his apostles on the Thursday before he died, was a commemoration of Israel's God-given freedom from bondage in Egypt. To celebrate it, the Jews gathered with their families and ate a ritual meal including the passover lamb. After Jesus' death and resurrection from the dead his followers saw new meaning in that ancient rite. Our Christian paschal celebration (i.e. Easter) is a remembrance of Jesus' passing over from death into the eternal life of heaven. Because he has risen from the dead, we now have sure hope that we too will be raised... not even death can keep us from the love of God!

As we journey together through Holy Week, we meditate on the events that led up to the first Easter Sunday when Jesus walked out of the tomb alive. On Maundy Thursday we remember the Last Supper, when Jesus instituted the Eucharist and gave the new commandment; to love one another as he loves us. On Friday we remember Jesus' journey to the cross. On Holy Saturday at noon we will remember Christ's soul's descent to the dead, as mentioned in the Apostles' Creed. On Saturday night we will celebrate the Great Vigil of Easter remembering God's saving work for Israel and for the world (Note - in this ancient service, incense is used). All of our Holy Week celebrations culminate with Easter Day and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Join us as we journey through the life of Christ during this holy season... and celebrate with us in the joy of the Lord's passover.

Christ's Peace, Fr. Daniel

# WHAT IS THE POINT OF HOLY WEEK?

Palm Sunday. Let's be honest, it's a weird day to be sitting in the pew. At the beginning of the service, we are administered a palm branch and are asked to joyfully wave it around while singing about Jesus' honored entrance into Jerusalem. Then before the service is over, Christ's honored entrance ends in death and we sulk home (or to coffee hour) still holding our palm, of course.

As if to add insult to injury, we are expected to show up on Easter Day and feel happy that Jesus isn't dead any more.

No transition. No explanation. Just an "alleluia."

If you find the week before Easter a little jarring you're not alone. But there is an explanation and lucky for us, it's simple. The reason that it's such a startling jump from Palm Sunday to Easter Day is because there is a lot that happens in between! Jesus does enter joyfully into Jerusalem but quickly disappoints his followers when they begin to understand He is not an earthly king, the priest stir up some trouble because they feel their power is threatened and then, you guessed it, Jesus is betrayed (Maundy Thursday), killed (Good Friday), raised from the dead (Easter Vigil), then the empty tomb is revealed (Easter Day).

*"But, this is what reminds us that our savior is fully God and fully human, that he shared our struggles and that we will share in his victory."*

Holy Week services challenge our expectations of what we should see and hear at church. The mood can be scary. The altar looks different. The music is different. People in the readings are lying, fighting, and crying. We hear about all the doubt the disciples struggled with and are asked to acknowledge our own doubts as well. But, this is what reminds us that our savior is fully God and fully human, that he shared our struggles and that we will share in his victory. *This is the point of Holy Week.* It's also the great joy of Easter.

It might not be practical for everyone to attend all five services in seven days. (If you do, it will be an experience not soon forgotten.) But if you ever had a moment where you felt like a part of the story was missing, I encourage you to investigate it and attend an extra Holy Week service this year. Because when we see Holy Week for all that it is, shouting "Alleluia!" on Easter Day seems like exactly the right thing to do.



# SERVICE TIMES & DESCRIPTIONS

## Palm Sunday

March 29 @ 8:00am & 10:30am

Palm Sunday commemorates the entrance of the Messiah into Jerusalem. The service begins in the Community Room with the Blessing of the Palms and the reading of the Gospel's account of how Jesus humbly rode on a donkey and His people honored Him by laying the palms under His feet. Then the congregation processes together into the church for mass to begin.

## Maundy Thursday

April 2 @ 7:00pm

Maundy Thursday begins the detailed story of Holy Week where we walk with Jesus on "the night He was betrayed." In this special service we share the gift of Holy Communion and remember Jesus humbly washing the feet of his disciples. These deeply moving actions give us a real experience of how powerful servant ministry can be. The service concludes with the stripping of the altar and all the decorative furnishings of the church as a symbolic representation of that final night.

## Good Friday

April 3 @ Noon

On Good Friday, the church mourns Christ's death and marvels at His life for His obedience until death. The altar remains completely bare and it's customary to empty the holy water from the font in preparation of the blessing of the water at the Easter Vigil. It is a solemn reminder of exactly why Easter is such a joyful occasion.

## The Great Vigil of Easter

April 4 @ 8:00pm

The Great Vigil of Easter is the link between the grief of Good Friday and the joy of Easter Day. The service begins in darkness at sundown and slowly moves into the light of the resurrection. Through this powerful liturgy, we recover the ancient practice of keeping the Easter feast. The Vigil is where all our Lenten preparation leads us. The congregation gathers in darkness, with the new fire, which represents the light of salvation and lights the Paschal candle. The Paschal candle is used throughout the Easter season and at baptisms and funerals through the year. We then process into the church to be among the first to sing our "Alleluias" with organ and brass sounding salvation during this glorious feast and to welcome our newly baptized! **This service will use incense!** If you find heavy fragrances a distraction to your worship, consider attending the Easter Day services which will not use incense.

## Easter Day

April 5 @ 8:00am & 10:30am

Easter Day, which immediately follows Holy Week, is the great feast day when the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is celebrated! Come and sing "Christ, Our Lord is Risen Today" with organ and brass, renew your baptismal vows and celebrate our salvation with Christ!





# BABY BOTTLE OUTREACH

Don't forget to bring back your baby bottles on Easter! Every coin collect stays in Saginaw and goes directly to purchasing diapers, formula, and other essentials for mothers escaping abusive situations at H.I.S. Restoration Ministries.

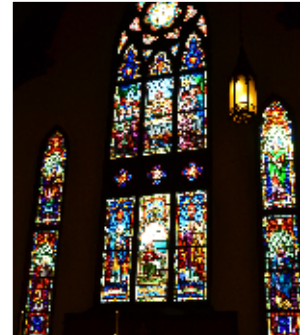


# GO TEAM! (THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW TEAM)

Have you enjoyed a long affiliation with St. John's and have a story to tell? Or maybe just an interest in history or a talent for research? Then you're the right person for the job!

A team is forming to begin study on our beautiful stained glass windows as we start down our path of restoration. Digging into our rich history for the families they honor, the artists involved, the years they were created and all of the other fascinating facts waiting to be uncovered!

**Please contact Amy Simons in the church office for details and to add your name to our list.**



# MAY CONFIRMATIONS & RECEPTIONS

Bishop Ousley will be confirming, receiving, and baptizing persons into the Episcopal Church at this annual service. Diocesan confirmations reinforce that this is a rite of entrance into something larger than the local expression of the Church.

The official Confirmation/Reception service will be held **Saturday, May 2 at 3:00pm** at Trinity Church (815 N. Grant Street) in Bay City.

*Is this something you feel called to do? Please contact Amy Simons in the church office by April, 15th so that we can communicate our intentions to the Diocese. Then, plan on attending **Episcopal 101** with Fr. Daniel following the 10:30 service April 12, April 19 and April 26.*

# MEET MARY JO

Hi! My name is Mary Jo Hudson and for the next three months, I have the privilege of being an intern at St. John's as part of my preparation for the priesthood.

I was born in Saginaw, (my parents grew up on the east side) but was raised in Midland. I am the oldest of eight children. I worked for the Roman Catholic Church for 25 years as a director of Religious Education and Pastoral Associate, first here in Saginaw and then in the Kalamazoo area. While down state, I earned masters degrees in Religious Education from Aquinas College and Counseling Psychology from Western Michigan University. For several years, I felt myself being called from the Roman tradition to something else, but was quite sure to what. Finally, after much thought, prayer, and online-searching, I attended a Eucharist at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and immediately knew I was home. I was received into the church in May of 2013 and began my discernment process for ordination in May of 2014.

I'm looking forward to learning more about the Episcopal Church through my time at St. John's and though meeting and working with you. Thank you for your warm and gracious welcome!



## Birthdays

Apr. 2 - Ted Grigg  
 Apr. 3 - Julia Cannon  
 Apr. 3 - Isadora Inman  
 Apr. 4 - Janis Thom  
 Apr. 7 - Jimmy Harrell  
 Apr. 8 - Lauren Gerhardt  
 Apr. 8 - Kathie Humpert  
 Apr. 9 - Shirley Blodgett  
 Apr. 14 - Kinzlie Byron  
 Apr. 17 - Jackie Blackney  
 Apr. 19 - Marilyn Wells  
 Apr. 20 - Kathryn Coman  
 Apr. 21 - Rebecca Curell  
 Apr. 23 - David Thamm  
 Apr. 24 - Ruth Joswiak  
 Apr. 25 - Benjamin Keehn  
 Apr. 28 - Betsy Greenwood  
 Apr. 30 - Thorin Magyar

## Anniversaries

Apr. 26 - Stephen & Cynthia  
 Baillie  
 Apr. 27 - Scott & Tracy  
 McCallum

## MARCH 29

Palm Sunday

## APRIL 2

Maundy Thursday @ 7:00pm

## APRIL 3

Good Friday @ Noon

## APRIL 4

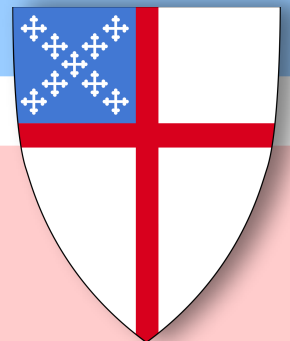
Holy Saturday @ Noon  
 The Great Vigil of Easter @  
 8:00pm

## APRIL 5

Easter Day @ 8 & 10:30am

## APRIL 12

Episcopal 101 Classes Begin



## VESTRY

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### AMY SIMONS

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### AL GISSENDANNER

Sexton