



THE MESSENGER



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

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April 2010

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Faith Matters – God's Word for a Busy Season!

It is now just days before we once again experience the fullness of God's Word revealed in Holy Week and everything in our readings, ministry fellowship, outreach and communications is brimming with anticipation as well as energy of what we are experiencing already. It is an incredibly powerful tension of *already and not yet* – of preparing for taking up this next part of the journey, as well as letting go. In the midst of this, I find myself still drawn to the Word given to us this past Sunday from the Prophet Isaiah:

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. [Even the wild animals will honor me... (Cf. Isaiah 43:18—19)

As you have probably heard by now, we too know that something is about to happen – to burst forth – we, like God's People being addressed in Isaiah, are about to start a new chapter of our story. This, to me, is what happens with each and every Holy Week: something new is about to happen and God is ready to have us embrace new life. The question becomes, are we ready? Are we willing? Do we want to have God fulfill the promise that was declared? Do we take seriously the Good News that says God desires to make all things new...even us now?

God is not interested in recreating a past, but bringing us to a new day, a new life. Isaiah shows once more that "The People of God" is more than a label or title as 'the elect.' Instead, God desires an actual relationship from people. Moreover, this desire is not enough for a people or nation as a whole. Rather, God seeks and calls you specifically to be in a relationship – to become part of a whole new creation. Your own life is part of this mission we hear proclaimed and you are part of that "new thing" that God is bringing forth, and it is not the same with you. This, too, is a key message of Holy Week, that what Christ does is for you and the message of new life is not the same without your witness by what you offer the world. We have learned all too well in these past years what that message is all about – we are who we are because of you, and we are not the same without you! Your involvement and commitment makes a difference in who we are and what we can offer in mission.

This is the time, this is the week that we need to hear your voice, have you join in worship and let us celebrate with you all that God is asking you to offer for our life and ministry together. Whether through the special liturgies of Holy Week, the various ways to exercise your faith in action with outreach and the intentional collections, your willingness to share in time and talent and by your pledge to help make our vision a reality with our Accessibility Project, now is the time! Our witness will not be the same without you. As we begin the most powerful week of the church year as well as prepare for a new chapter of our story, it is both my hope and confidence that, with your continued commitment, the work we have begun together will continue to see its completion. Not only have we been thinking outside the box, we have embraced a vision for the future that is both bright and positive, as God begins *this new thing* for us.

Daven Clinton

St. John's uses Pay Pal!

From now on, when we forget our check-books, 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.

Visit the *Support Us* page on our parish website and you can donate to a number of causes with your credit card. St. John's is PayPal verified which 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 information, gift amount, and a memo regarding the purpose of your gift. ***Yes, it is that easy!***

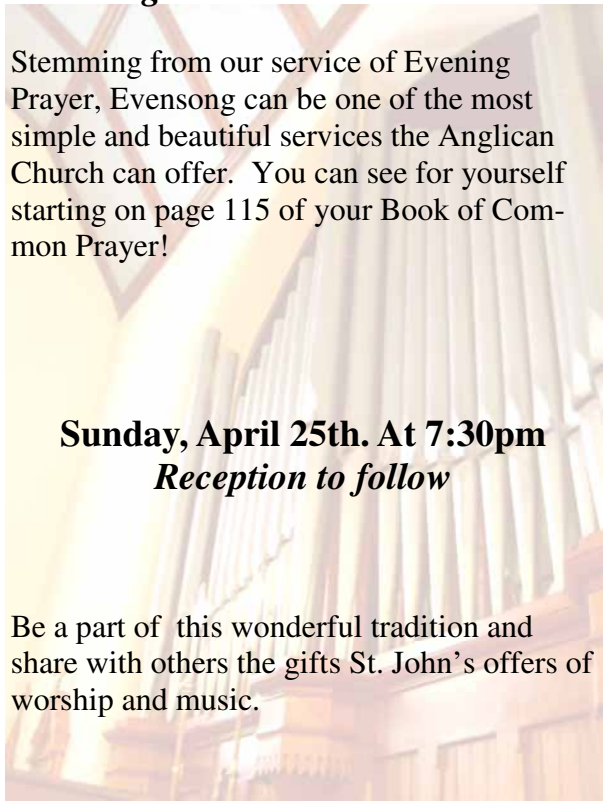


Evensong:

Stemming from our service of Evening Prayer, Evensong can be one of the most simple and beautiful services the Anglican Church can offer. You can see for yourself starting on page 115 of your Book of Common Prayer!

Sunday, April 25th. At 7:30pm
Reception to follow

Be a part of this wonderful tradition and share with others the gifts St. John's offers of worship and music.



Have you seen the video?

If you have not heard already St. John's is in the midst of our Accessibility Campaign (an effort to become a more welcoming and accessible space for God's people). New media is available to help all of us better understand the project including a video presentation!

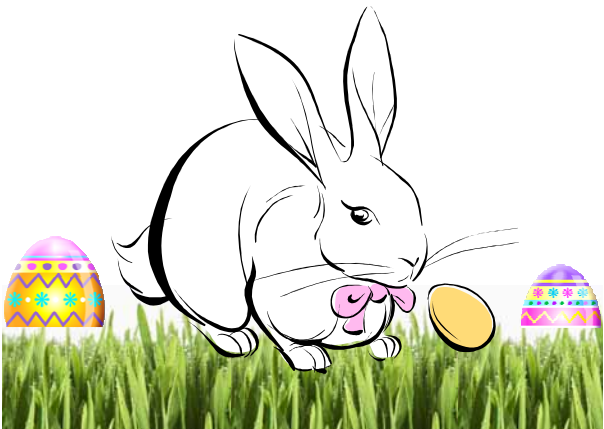
To watch the video go to our website (www.stjohns-saginaw.org) and click on the "Accessibility Campaign" link. Take a look! And learn how you can be a part of making our future more accessible!



Community Easter Egg Hunt:

The West Side Civic Association & MCVI are sponsoring a community Easter egg hunt on **April 3, at Noon.**

All kids ages 0-9 and their families are invited to come and hunt for over 18,000 candy filled eggs! Don't miss the special guest: The Easter Bunny!



Happy Birthday!

- 2 Ted Grigg
- 5 Cheryl Heath
- 7 Jimmy Harrell
- 9 Shirley Blodgett
- 9 Kathy Sedwick
- 10 Jack Mott
- 11 Aimee Lynes
- 12 John Reardon
- 14 Gary Hollman
- 15 Herb Spence Jr.
- 16 Brayden Winters
- 19 Marilyn Wells
- 23 Helene Whitehead
- 25 Ruth Joswiak
- 25 Michael Spence
- 27 William Heath
- 28 Betsy Greenwood
- 28 Gloria Moore-Graham
- 30 Marcie Winters

Happy Anniversary

- 22 Nancy & Dan Cramer
- 26 Cynthia & Steven Baillie

Festive Sunday Parish Potluck April 11th.

Easter isn't over on Easter Day! Although we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord each and every Sunday, we take special care to celebrate this special time throughout all Easter-tide! Don't miss this time of food and fellowship. Share with us one of your families favorite dishes and bring a friend!

Thank You

Thank you **Ellen Redfield** for your dedicated efforts assembling the Choir Notebooks each week.

Thank you **Marcia Hoffman, Jane Girdham, & Amy Simons** for your musical contribution to our Lenten Innovo Service.

Thank you **Sue & Jack Luxton, Barb & Berney Jones, Jan & Jerry Young, Kathy Smith, Tom Donaghy, Sharon Kaylor, Jane Vondrasak, Joan Wendland, Kim Burau, Sue Marquardt, Chris & Paul Schaub, and Darren Elin** for your help with our wonderful Lenten Fish Supper!

Thank you **Sue Luxton** and her **crew of helpers** for all of your hard work facilitating our Lenten Festive Sunday!

Thank you to **Pat Lynes, Bill Frederick, and Sue Brigham** for your extra efforts folding all of our special Holy Week bulletins.

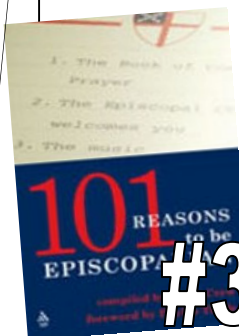
Is there someone in our parish who has gone above and beyond? If you would like to offer thanks, please call the office at 793-9575.

Good Samaritans:

Mar. 21 - Apr. 3	Jim & Marsha Braun	793-5015
Apr. 4 - Apr. 17	Joan Wendland	686-8363
Apr. 18 - May 2	Betty Donaghy	793-2700

The Book of Common Prayer allows a degree of uniformity in prayer while leaving room for the diversity of cultures, languages, and liturgical styles.

*The Very Rev. David G. Bollinger
Diocese of Central New York*



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

Making Our Future Accessible for All

Thanks to your commitment, support and generosity, this Holy Week will truly be a remarkable time in the life and story of St. John's. True enough, Holy Week is the week that really defines who we are and what we are about in terms of our life and ministry as the People of God, and this year is the opportunity to proclaim this truth in a new and bold way. This Palm Sunday is also our "Commitment Sunday." This is the day we are asking you to return your "campaign Commitment" cards for our Accessibility Project. These cards will be collected so that they can be incorporated into our Easter Celebration the following week as we proclaim the resurrection—new life offered to all! Now is the time we need to hear from **you!** We are so close to realizing this goal and with your help, the vision will become a reality, serving our community for generations to come!



Now, just days before Commitment Sunday, we have received over 34 commitments so far for a total of over \$112,000—that is 75% of our goal of \$150,000! We know that you want to be a part of this great work and your own commitment will make the difference, so please prayerfully consider how you can help and pledge! If it is more convenient, you can contribute via our secure website with your credit card. Go to <http://www.stjohns-saginaw.org/accessibility.html> to either download a copy of our brochure, to watch the video explaining our project or fulfill your pledge today. Remember this is our vision and together we can make our future accessible for all!

Hear What They Are Saying...

"This church, from its very beginning has been supportive of the generations to come. This transition is a calling from God to be loving and welcoming to everyone." ~Mary Spence

A Work in Progress:

Frequently we are confronted by situations which require our best efforts. Such a situation now demands our attention. How, most effectively, is St. John's going to fill the vacancy created by Darren's leaving at the end of May? Successful resolution of this situation requires the efforts and cooperation of the entire St. John's Community.

The Vestry and Staff are already working on this task. We have options! No decisions have been made! As the process evolves it is paramount that each of us participates and is kept knowledgeable. Vestry and Staff members soon will be contacting you advising you of developments and progress and inviting your concerns and ideas.

Throughout this process we must continue "to live into our vision." Through the Accessibility Project and through our several ministries we demonstrate our faith and our ability to serve. Together, we will make a difference!

Keith Birdsall,
Senior Warden



Holy Week at-a-glance:**Weekdays of Holy Week**

The Holy Eucharist will be celebrated each day in the chapel at Noon leading up to Good Friday.

**Maundy Thursday – April 1st**

(Worship at 7:30 with the Agapé Reception following)

Holy Week continues with the commemoration of the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus “on the night he was betrayed.” In this special service, we share in the response to the gift of Communion, where Jesus humbly and quietly washes the feet of his disciples. This deeply moving action gives us a real experience of how powerful servant ministry can be and will be offered to anyone who wishes to receive this symbolic act as part of the liturgy. The liturgy concludes with in a symbolic representation of that final night, with the stripping of the altar and all decorative furnishings from the church and the sacrament is reserved -- all while Psalm 22 is read or chanted; and ends with a silent meditation, without a dismissal, for the Church remains in prayer for three days – until the Great Vigil of Easter. This sacred time is known as the *Triduum Sacrum* -- the ‘sacred three days.’ Following the liturgy there will be an *Agapé Reception*, a simple reception remembering the fellowship the disciples shared.

Good Friday – April 2nd

(Service at noon)

As with Christians from as far back as the fourth century, the Church commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. The Holy Eucharist is not celebrated on Good Friday, but Holy Communion will be administered from the reserved sacrament.

The Great Vigil of Easter – April 3rd

(Flowering of the Cross at 7:30pm; worship begins at 8pm)

In ***The Great Vigil of Easter***, we move from the Passion and death of Jesus Christ to his Resurrection. The service begins in darkness and slowly moves into the light of the resurrection, beginning with the lighting of the new Paschal candle and its entry into a darkened church. Through this powerful liturgy, we recover the ancient practice of keeping the Easter feast. The traditional night for adult Baptism, the Vigil is where all our Lenten preparation leads us. As the Exsultet chant proclaims: “This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life!” Be among the first to sing “Jesus Christ is Risen Today” and welcome this most glorious of Christian feasts.

Easter Day – April 14th

(Holy Eucharist at 8am; Festive Choral Eucharist at 10:30am)

The Feast of Christ’s Resurrection and the promise that the resurrection holds for us is celebrated on this festive day. Be overwhelmed by the beauty and majesty of Easter celebrated in the Anglican tradition. The 10:30 liturgy will be enhanced by the great Easter hymns played by organ and brass as well as special music by our Choir.



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The Great Vigil of Easter is, in a nutshell, the most symbolic, meaningful, personal, and experiential service of the church year, explaining and demonstrating how we move from the Passion and death of Jesus Christ to his Resurrection.

The Easter Vigil is an incredibly powerful and special worship experience. The Vigil begins at ‘sundown’ as we move from Holy Saturday to Easter. Our abbreviated version of this timeless celebration begins with a “Service of light.” This is marked with the lighting of the ‘new fire,’ which is used to light the *Paschal* candle, representing the risen Christ. This ‘Light to the World’ is then carried in solemn procession, entering a darkened church where it will start to spread light throughout. The service of light concludes with the most glorious of all chants, *the Exsultet*, which explains the whole story of salvation. We then move into the liturgy of the Word with stories from the Old Testament. This is the night when the Church around the world welcomes the newest members to God’s family and renew our own baptismal vows, as well as being the first Eucharist of Easter – marked by the Easter Acclamation: “Alleluia. Christ is risen!” The Great Vigil of Easter gives the full meaning behind our celebration of the next day. Come experience a new dimension of the wonder and majesty of Easter this year! You are invited to help decorate the flowering cross by bringing your fresh cut flowers from your garden (or favorite florist). Come a little early (~7:30p) so that your flowers can be wired to be inserted into the mesh of our wooden cross prior to the service. Our celebration continues with a reception following the service.

“This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life!”

The Flowering Cross



Part of our Easter Celebration each year is a Flowering Cross. You are invited to help decorate the flowering cross by bringing your fresh cut flowers from your garden (or favorite florist) at **The Great Vigil of Easter**-April 3rd (8:00pm). Come a little early (~7:30p) so that your flowers can be wired to be inserted into the mesh of our wooden cross prior to the service. The finished cross will be processed into the church during the Vigil, be part of Easter morning and then be on display in the Garden throughout the week of Easter. Our thanks (in advance) go to Mary Ellen Whitney of Arden & Whitney Flowers for their continued generosity and assistance.



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Hope Totes & ERD Boxes

St. John's has been collecting supplies to assist the Saginaw Rescue Mission's Operation Hope Tote during this Lenten season. Personal care items such as shampoo, shaving razors, lip balm, soap, toothpaste, and clean socks have all been gathered in the purple totes you've seen in the Community Room. Palm Sunday the last of the totes were collected and taken to the Rescue Mission where they will be distributed to members of our community most in need of them.



In addition to Hope Totes, many members at St. John's have been collecting their spare change in the ERD Hope Chests! Episcopal Relief and Development uses these funds to provide not only critical aid around the globe but also sustaining needs such as schools and health clinics.



Thank you to EVERYONE who participated in either of these Lenten outreach projects!

From the Director of Music:

Sometimes I am asked, "what is your favorite time of year?" Most people expect me to answer, "Christmas," but I always tell them that I love Holy Week and Easter. The drama of the week is so beautifully presented in our liturgies, and I always look forward to that great moment at the Easter Vigil where we proclaim the "Christ is Risen!"

Our music for the week is a part of that story. I'm not sure what Palm Sunday would be like if we did not sing "All Glory, Laud, and Honor." Would Good Friday be as meaningful without "O Sacred Head Sore Wounded?" And Easter wouldn't be complete without "Jesus Christ is Risen Today."

In addition to the great hymns of the week, the choir sings some of the most beloved pieces in the repertoire during Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, the choir will sing two pieces from Sir John Stainer's "The Crucifixion." The powerful liturgy on Maundy Thursday is heightened by the singing of "Wash me Thoroughly" and "Drop, Drop, Slow Tears." Our Easter celebration is always spectacular and will feature a piece that is new to our choir which includes trumpets.

Holy Week and Easter are events not to be missed at St. John's. I'm glad to be making the journey to Jerusalem with all of you.

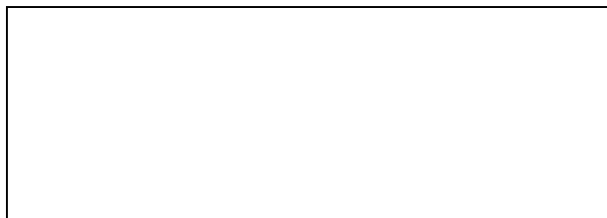
Soli Deo Gloria,
Kevin Simons



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Holy Week at St. John's...

Palm Sunday:
March 28th

Join us for a special Palm Sunday Service and breakfast at 10:00am!

Maundy Thursday:
April 1st @
7:30pm

Feet washing, the Stripping of the altar, and an Agape Reception mark this special day in the Christian Year

Good Friday:
April 2nd @
Noon

A Good Friday liturgy with communion.

The Great Vigil of Easter:
April 3rd @
8:00pm

The most dramatic service all year, the Great Vigil of Easter leads us to the Risen Lord!

Easter Day:
April 4th

The Feast of Christ's Resurrection and the promise of new life wait for you at each of our Easter Day services.

Holy Week 2010

