

St. John's Episcopal Church | Saginaw, MI

THE MESSENGER

March / April 2018

Growing into the Full Stature of Christ.



From the Rector

I mentioned recently from the pulpit of the individual Christian's need to grow into the full stature of Jesus Christ, to become mature in the Christian faith. The Episcopal Church marks this stature in the sacramental rite of Confirmation. From the Catechism of The Book of Common Prayer 1979 we learn:

Q. What is Confirmation?

A. Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Q. What is required of those to be confirmed?

A. Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Q. What is required of those to be confirmed?

A. It is required of those to be confirmed that they have been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

The next Confirmation service in the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan will be on April 14 at 2pm at St. Christopher's in Grand Blanc.

I will offer Confirmation instruction on Saturday, March 31 from 9am to Noon at St. John's for those who desire to express a mature commitment to Christ and be prayed for by a bishop in Apostolic Succession, the Church's tangible, historic line back to the first Apostles of Jesus.

If you were Confirmed in the Roman Catholic or Lutheran traditions and would like to make a formal commitment to Christ in the Episcopal Church, you can be Received by Bishop Catherine Waynick at the April 14 service with the following words: "... we recognize you as a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, and we receive you into the fellowship of this Communion" (BCP, page 418).

If you have already been Confirmed in the Episcopal Church and would like to Reaffirm your faith, Bishop Waynick would pray the following words: "... may the Holy Spirit, who has begun a good work in you, direct and uphold you in the service of Christ and his kingdom" (BCP, page 419).

I invite you to prayerfully consider the instruction and sacramental rites offered by the Episcopal Church. The Church's symbols are outward expressions of the life-transforming substance desperately needed in our day. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Upcoming Events

Semi-Annual Kitchen Round-Up

March 2 @ 10 AM - We all love the delicious goodies that come from our kitchen. But just like home, kitchens need a good once-over now and then. If able, come give our kitchen a good top-to-bottom scrub down! Many hands make light work.



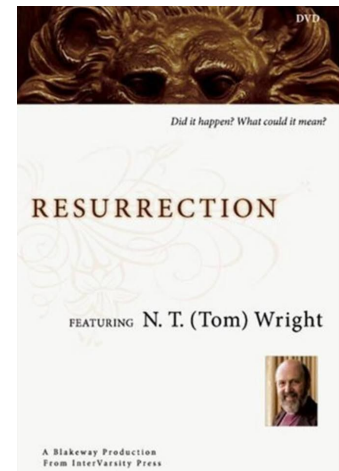


Electronic Giving Q&A

March 4 @ 9:15 AM - Amy Simons explains how it works, answers questions, and helps register those who are curious about electronic giving.

Bible Studies

Sunday, March 11 @ 9:15 AM - Fr. Curt moderates a discussion on Resurrection: Did it happen? What could it mean? The most startling claim of Christianity is that Jesus rose from the dead after being brutally executed on a Roman cross two thousand years ago. Could it possibly be true? And if it were, what difference would it make today? N.T. (Tom) Wright walks us through the political, historical and theological issues at stake in Jesus' day and today. Shot on location in Greece, Israel and England, Resurrection presents the essence of Wright's thinking on this pivotal event in the Gospels. Well-known for his landmark "The Resurrection of the Son of God", Wright brings clarity and insight to one of the most profound mysteries in human history.



Tuesdays @ 10:30 AM - All are welcome as we continue to progress through our reading and discussion of "The Story."

Salmon Supper

Friday, March 23 @ 6:00 pm - This is it! The fellowship event you've been waiting to taste all year... the St. John's Salmon Supper! 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 the less fishy among us. Tickets are \$10.00/adult, \$5.00/child. Seating is limited so don't wait to reserve your seat! We'll also be in need of volunteers to help pull this amazing meal together. Sign-up in the community room or contact Amy Simons.





What's the Point of Holy Week?

Palm Sunday. Let's be honest, for those of us who go to liturgical churches (Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, etc.) 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 anymore.

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. As holidays go, Easter is hard. It's much harder than Christmas. At Christmas we get to look forward to a cute little baby. On Easter, we need to deal with death first. 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. Then Jesus is betrayed (Maundy Thursday), killed (Good Friday), raised from the dead (Easter Vigil), then the empty tomb is revealed (Easter Day).

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.

I know it isn't practical for everyone to attend 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.

Holy Week Service Times

March 25 @ 8 AM & 10:30 AM - Palm Sunday

March 29 @ 7 PM - Maundy Thursday

March 30 @ Noon - Good Friday

March 31 @ 7 PM - The Great Vigil of Easter

April 1 @ 8 AM & 10:30 PM - Easter Day

News

Brighter Lights at St. John's!

Some of you may have already noticed but the lights are starting to burn brighter at St. John's. Recently, we've replaced all of our failing T12 bulbs and ballasts in the Community Room with more cost effective and energy efficient LED lighting. WOW, what a difference! The next electrical projects on the docket include installing an organ jack in the front of the church for more flexible musical services and lighting the outside of the building for better safety and visibility at night.



Contact Us

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

989-793-9575

www.stjohns-saginaw.org

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Curt Norman, Rector & Priest - curt@stjohns-saginaw.org

The Rev. Pam Renna, Priest Associate - pam@stjohns-saginaw.org

Ms. Amy Simons, Administrator - amy@stjohns-saginaw.org

Dr. Kevin Simons, Director of Music & Organist - kevin@stjohns-saginaw.org

Mr. Al Gissendanner, Sexton

Vestry & Other Leadership

Mr. Ric Roberts, Senior Warden

Ms. Kathryn Coman, Junior Warden

Mr. Todd Barshaw

Ms. Marsha Braun

Mr. Lucas Curell

Mr. Brad Fergin

Ms. Barb Ilkka

Ms. Sarah Keenan-Lechel

Ms. Dawn Penney