

THE SAINT



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
YOUNGSTOWN, NEW YORK 14174

FEBRUARY 2012

Beloved people of St. John's,

The second half of January brought us something of a surprise: winter, with snow and cold and wind and ice, after a green Christmas and balmy temperatures had put us off guard. But now we look to February, and even as the cold weather continues, (at least from time to time,) we are beginning to see some hints of the coming of spring. The days are lengthening; it's been going on for some time, but now it's truly noticeable.

And if spring is not quite in the air, certainly love is! Valentine's Day is coming; not exactly a holy day, but still something we mark by reaching out in love to others. Our annual Canaan House Valentine's Basket Party is coming right up; there's a notice with more details further on in this issue of THE SAINT.

Yet another sign of love is the beginning of Lent. It surprises you that I call it a sign of love? Think about it: we walk through a desert period, in fast and prayer with Jesus, commemorating the love he showed (and the God showed through him) in his life and ministry, and in his suffering and death. As our own St. John tells us in his First Letter, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." Our various Lenten practices, the sacrifices we make, both as individuals, (the things we choose to do without, the extra time we take for prayer, worship and study, the alms and offerings we make for the sake of others,) and as a faith community, (the changes in our worship forms, doing without "Alleluia" in our prayers and hymns, extra worship services and special projects,) are designed to remind us of God's great love, and of our call to love God and neighbour, even through difficulties.

As Lent unfolds, there will be some extra opportunities for worship and for group fellowship and study. In conjunction with this, there will also be a change, for the duration of the season of Lent, in our Wednesday schedule: the mid-week Eucharist will be at 11:30 am, (rather than at 10:00 am as it is at present,) followed at noon by a simple lunch of soup and bread to go along with a Lenten study session. We should be finished by 1:15 pm. Also on Wednesdays, the same study session will be repeated at 6:00 pm, with soup and bread served for a light supper, and concluding with Compline at 7:15 pm.

I am still making the final choice of theme for the Lenten Study Sessions; the three I am currently considering are:

1. **Saving Salvation: The Amazing Evolution of Grace**
2. **Embracing an Adult Faith (video-based, with Marcus Borg)**
3. **Do You Believe? Living the Baptismal Covenant**

If one of these particularly interests you, let me know, because I will need to make a choice as soon as possible. I am looking forward to engaging in study with you, and hope that many of you will choose to take advantage of these opportunities.

Meanwhile, happy Valentine's Day!

Love,

Allen



Ash Wednesday

Why have Lent? More specifically, why change our normal patterns of prayer, worship, and spiritual practice, for a brief season? Why give over our “Alleluias,” why fast, why take on extra disciplines? I’ve been asked those questions, in many contexts, by many people. “After all,” some say, “shouldn’t we be sorry for our sins all the time? Shouldn’t we praise God all the time?”

And of course we should – should repent, should praise God, at all times and in many ways. But still the Church keeps these special Lenten disciplines – prayer, fasting, almsgiving – at this season, as she has for many centuries.

Why? What value do they have? What’s the point?

The value, of course, is for us, and the point is, we’re human. And as obvious as that might seem, we tend to live as though it weren’t obvious at all – thinking we can control life, acting as though we had no limitations, behaving as if we, and not God, were in the driver’s seat.

To be human is to be weak, imperfect, limited. Most people don’t like to think about that, don’t like to look, long and hard, at the reality of what it is to be human. Most people like to look at, think about, the bright, sunny, upbeat side of things. In Lent, the Church asks us to look at two darker things, two harsh realities: we are sinners, and we are mortal.

We are mortal: whether our lives are long or short, they are limited, they will end. We die, and the timing of life and death is in God’s hands, not ours. And we are sinners: the very best we can do falls short, far short, of the perfection of God’s holiness; falls short of the purity of the life of Jesus. And often enough, our sins, our selfishness, does real damage to others, to ourselves to life in this world.

We don’t like to think about those realities; we prefer to cover death with flowers and saccharine verse; we prefer to explain our sins away as mistakes, minor failings, often as someone else’s responsibility. We fill our lives with distractions and diversions of every kind; we shop, we eat and drink, we watch television endlessly, we fill every waking moment with noise and activity, and so we are never quiet and still – but it is in stillness that God can break through to us.

So we are called to fast – to do without some of those things with which our lives are over-full. A bit of food, to be sure; because there’s nothing quite like a touch of hunger to remind us that we’re not all-sufficient, that we’re weak and need to rely completely on God. But we are free to fast from other things as well, from the surfeit of consumption and entertainment that keep our lives too crowded for God, too busy to notice our own shortcomings, our own sins. In doing without these things, we leave ourselves time and space to confront our own sinfulness, the damage we do to ourselves and to others, and to own up to these things.

By tradition, Lent is the time especially to confess our sins: to God, most certainly, and we will do that in a moment, together, a bit more specifically than we do most Sunday mornings. But for many Christians, it becomes more real when we also admit to our specific sins to another person. It’s harder, of course, but people often find it much more healing, too.

Besides fasting, we are called to pray, to spend some real time in communion with God: silent, open to God’s Word in Holy Scripture, open to God’s Spirit moving within us, moving us to repentance, gratitude, and charity.

And we are called to almsgiving: to sharing what we have with those who have less. There is no point in fasting if the money we save is only stored up for self-indulgence later; God wishes to take us out of ourselves, so that we can love him more by loving our neighbor. And whether we have much or little, what we *do* with what we have says a very great deal about who we are and what we truly value.

The disciplines of Lent may seem unpleasant at first, because they force us to come face to face with our weakness, our sin, our mortality – just as the ashes we wear force us to remember that we are dust. But in these encounters with ourselves at our most wounded, we meet God, and discover anew that God really does love us, really does forgive us, really does long to bring us closer to himself, to give us the grace we need to be faithful to the Gospel. And so I invite you to begin this Lenten journey with earnest care, but also with holy joy.

WARDENS' REPORT

The January vestry meeting was held on January 11, 2012

Mary Ellen Aureli spoke on the NYS Landmarks Conservancy matching grant for repairs on the church. We will get a \$3000 grant that means that after the repairs are made they will reimburse us. The cost of the project will be \$6378. That means that we will be having a capital fund drive most likely beginning in March.

Jim Poole our treasurer reported that our software program for the membership program is on track Vickie Suitor will be going to a meeting at the Diocesan Center regarding NYS law on investments.

The Strawberry Fest will be held for 2 days - June 16th and 17th. We will need lots of help so please help as much as you can as this is our main fund raiser for the year.

Parish Activities will be held on January 21st - will report more next month what the activities will be for this year.

Mary Wieland and Fred Stephens

Free Tax Preparation Service Available- Starting February 1st trained AARP Volunteer Tax Aides will be available at the Lewiston Library and the Lewiston Senior Center to help prepare and file both federal and state tax returns. Although primarily focused on assisting seniors, this service is open to all. Volunteer tax preparers will be at the Lewiston Library on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and at the Lewiston Senior Center on Friday afternoons. To make an appointment, call the library (754-4720) or the Senior Center (754-2071). To process your returns you must bring the following documents:

- A copy of your 2010 tax returns. This will help the preparer to identify any carryover credits.
- **Written proof of the Social Security** numbers for any person that will be listed on the return. You, your spouse, your dependents. The best proof is the actual Social Security Cards.
- **All of your 2011 tax documents.** W-2s, 1099s, broker statements, etc.
- Your checkbook or your bank book that shows the routing number and account numbers of your bank accounts. These are required if you wish to have your refund/amount owed credited or debited directly to/from your bank account.

Tax Tip: If you are over the age of 70 ½, using the standard deduction and making withdrawals from an IRA, you should consider utilizing a **Qualified Charitable Distribution** for all of your contributions to Saint John's (or any other charitable contributions). The Trustee of your IRA makes a distribution directly to the charitable organization from your account. Such a distribution is considered non-taxable. This option can also assist you in meeting your minimum required withdrawal. More information is available in IRS Publication 590. -- Jim Poole, Treasurer

Nurse's Notes – from Kit Williams

The Truth About Sodium and High Blood Pressure

If your blood pressure is high, chances are your doctor will tell you to watch your sodium intake. Unfortunately, that advice is not always correct.

You see, it's not sodium intake that aggravates high blood pressure. Rather, it's an excess of sodium in relation to potassium.

Sodium and potassium are two of the body's minerals that regulate nerve transmission and fluid retention. When you get too much sodium and not enough potassium, you can get high blood pressure, and also muscle cramps, fatigue, irritability, confusion, muscle weakness, abdominal bloating and even heart disease.

The typical American diet is backwards – providing twice as much sodium as potassium. You will get better results by eating 3 servings a day of high potassium foods – including bananas, apricots, avocados, cantaloupe, figs, seedless raisins, beans, potatoes, winter squash, and unsalted tomato sauce. ENJOY!

(BottomLineHealth)

Lenten Wednesday Schedule

2/22 Ash Wednesday
11:30 am Holy Eucharist w/Ashes
12 noon Soup & Bread Lunch with
Adult Study Group
6:00 pm Soup & Bread Supper with
Adult Study Group
7:15 pm Holy Eucharist w/Ashes

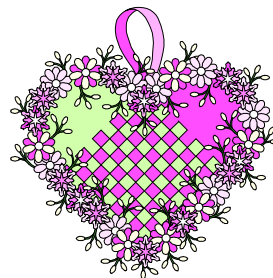
Remaining Lenten Wednesdays:

2/29, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21, 3/28, 4/4

11:30 am Holy Eucharist
12 noon Soup & Bread Lunch with
Adult Study Group
6:00 pm Soup & Bread Supper with
Adult Study Group
7:15 pm Compline

Note: No Compline 3/14

Valentine's Basket Party



*Join us Sunday, February 5th
in the Parish Hall
following the 10am service
to put together the
Valentine's Baskets
for the women of Canaan House.
Refreshments will be provided.*

**Attention Youth and Parents: Camp Applications are available now!
Scholarship Applications also available. See Mother Ellen.**

Bishop's Ball



**Saturday, February 11, 2012
7-10 p.m.**

**Diocesan Ministry Center
1064 Brighton Rd., Tonawanda**

**Open to Grades 6-12
\$5 Donation
Formal Dress Requested**



All-Parish Breakfast
Sunday, 19 February 2012
9:00 am
Parish Hall

Topic: Carnival, Shrovetide, Mardi Gras

Menu: Let's wait and see what the weather's like!

Looking ahead to March:



St. Patrick's Day
Corned Beef Dinner
with Cabbage, Potatoes,
Dessert and Beverage



Saturday, March 17, 2012
St. John's Parish Hall
4 pm to 7 pm
\$8:00 per person

Tickets will be available to win this Princess Catherine Bride Doll



This will be our first fundraising event for 2012.



February 2012



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Holy Eucharist 10:00 am	2	3	4
5 Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 am Epiphany 5 Valentine Baskets Party, after 10:00 service	6	7	8 Holy Eucharist 10:00 am Vestry 7:00 pm	9	10	11 Bishop's Ball 7pm - 10 pm Diocesan Ministry Center Grades 6-12
12 Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 am Epiphany 6	13	14	15	16 Movie Night 7pm	17	18
19 Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 am Epiphany Last 9 am Breakfast	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday Holy Eucharist 11:30 am & 7:15 pm Soup & Program, 12 pm & 6 pm	23	24	25
26 Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 am Lent 2	27	28	29 Holy Eucharist 11:30 am Soup & Program, 12pm Soup & Program, 6pm Compline, 7:15 pm			

February 2012 Sunday Ministry Schedule

<p>Date: Feb 5th Epiphany V Acolytes. Euch. Min.. Karran Swayze Lectors: 1st Lesson . . . Don Henry Psalm Choir & Congregation 2nd Lesson. . . Mary Wieland Greeters. Ushers.. Mary Ellen Aureli & Lark Mattoon</p> <p>Coffee Hour. . . 8 ----- 10 ----- Flowers. Altar Guild Team B</p>	<p>Date: Feb 12th Epiphany VI Acolytes. Euch. Min.. Mary Wieland Lectors: 1st Lesson . . . Walter Brauza Psalm Choir & Congregation 2nd Lesson. . . Karran Swayze Greeters. Ushers.. Chris Foster & Kris Jordan</p> <p>Coffee Hour. . . 8 ----- 10 ----- Flowers. Altar Guild Team C</p>
<p>Date: Feb 19th Last Sunday after Epiphany Acolytes. Euch. Min.. Shirley Oldfield Lectors: 1st Lesson . . . Kelsey Jeffs Psalm Choir & Congregation 2nd Lesson. . . Shirley Oldfield Greeters. Ushers.. Kelsey Jeffs & Casey Jordan</p> <p>Coffee Hour. . . 8 ----- 10 ----- Flowers. Altar Guild Team A</p>	<p>Date: Feb 26th First Sunday in LENT Acolytes. Euch. Min.. Jim Poole Lectors: 1st Lesson . . . Nancy Poole Psalm Choir & Congregation 2nd Lesson. . . Dolores Jones Greeters. Ushers.. Donna Jeffs & Dolores Jones</p> <p>Coffee Hour. . . 8 ----- 10 ----- Flowers. Altar Guild Team B</p>
	<p>PLEASE NOTE: If you are unable to serve on the scheduled Sunday, you are responsible for arranging for a substitute.</p> <p>THANK YOU!</p>

Team A: Don Henry, Marie Oblamski, Judy Stewart, Karran Swayze

Team B: Kay & Tony Collard, Lark Mattoon

Team C: Chris Foster, Mary Joan Hannah, Sally Phillips

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
P.O. BOX 366
MAIN & CHESTNUT STREETS
YOUNGSTOWN, NY 14174-0366

Change Service Requested



THE SAINT FEBRUARY 2012

St. John's Episcopal Church

*The Mission of St. John's Parish is to glorify God by growing in Christ's love
and sharing that love with others through worship, fellowship, and service*

The Rt. Rev. R. William Franklin,
Bishop

The Rev. Ellen Brauza,
Vicar

The Rev. Deacon Vickie Sutor,
Deacon

Kate Harrington
Organist & Choir Director

Kit Williams
Parish Nurse and Pastoral Care Minister
Mary Wieland, Sexton

Wardens

2013 Mary Wieland 2014 Fred Stephens

Vestry

2013

Kay Collard, Mary Joan Hannah
2014

Donna Jeffs, Shirley Oldfield
2015

Michael Banks, Donald Henry
Clerk, Karran Swayze (pro tem)
Treasurer, Jim Poole

If you would like more information about St. John's, check out our website: stjohnsyoungstown.org

If you have a prayer request or if you would like to speak to a priest please call or e-mail the office.

The phone is on a monitored answering machine and we will respond to your request as soon as possible.

Phone/Fax: (716) 745-3369

E-mail: stjohnsytown@verizon.net