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St. Philip's Church

CommonLife

February & March 2017 Volume 8 Issue 2 & 3

Welcoming the weary, dedicated to discipleship

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

Rector's Message



Rev. Kathryn Boswell
Rector

Dear brothers and sisters,

We are sailing some choppy seas these days. Our country – indeed the whole world – seems to be dividing itself into camps: security vs. compassion, environment vs. freedom, strength vs. cooperation, my religion vs. your religion, my good vs. your good. And nowhere is this division sadder and more tragic and more harmful than in the Church, the Household of Jesus Christ. We are entrusted with the legacy of being lights in the darkness; we are called to be the salt that guards the world that our Father loves from the corrupting influence of fear and greed; if our house is divided against itself, how will it stand? And if the house of God falls, what becomes of the world? So, where do we go from here?

Let us say, hypothetically, that I was born into a Roman Catholic family of liberal Massachusetts Democrats. One might even hypothesize that a tiny bit of Kennedy DNA found its way into the tinned milk our mothers used to use for infant formula. Hypothetically, that might explain a lot. However that might be, I found myself recently visiting a friend, a wonderful sister in Christ, whose roots are nearly as different from mine as they could possibly be, a woman whose car bears bumper stickers saying things that make the hair on the back of my neck curl. Here was the dilemma of today's Church writ small – how can the two of us possibly love one another – not just tolerate one another or be nice to one another, but genuinely love one another – when we seem to be opposed to one another in so many ways?

I believe my good friend and I know a big part of the answer to that question. The secret is, we listen to one another. My friend shows me a photograph of her son's wedding and shares the great joy she felt being there, the pride she feels in her family, the love she has for them and how much she worries about them. She tells me how she has been worried about changes in her own life; about the pains and the loneliness of growing older, about the sorrow of feeling cast aside as a person who is no longer useful. It turns out, she and I share so many of the same fears, the same joys, the same pain, just as we share a common faith in our Father who is the source of our joy and the



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TO:

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giver of comfort in our sadness. Our shared humanity and our shared faith so far outweigh the accidents of our birth and the passing turbulence of our times.

In these days of polarization and partisanship it is more important than ever to heed the words of St. Paul when he reminded us: “our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” When we forget this, when we begin to see our brother or sister as the enemy, instead of our true enemies – hatred, and injustice, and fear, and greed, and lies – then the darkness gains a little traction, and the rot of the world spreads a little further. We need to stand firm.

However – and this is very, very important also – we are not called to huddle together and make nice with our fellow Christians, like Nero with his fiddle, while the whole world burns around us. It matters for us to go out into the world and seek the truth and to fight for righteousness – the very thing we are supposed to hunger and thirst after. It is right to search our consciences and to act in faith as residents in this country, though we know that we live here as aliens ourselves, and citizens of a different country. If we don't work for the rights of the vulnerable; if we don't spend ourselves for the “least of these” we are poor disciples indeed. We will disagree about policies and agendas, but each one of us is responsible before our Lord to pursue his ways to the best of our abilities and understanding.

And to that end, I invite any of you who are interested to gather on five Wednesday evenings during Lent (March 8, March 15, March 22, April 1, and April 8) to have an open discussion of some of the pressing issues in our country, to consider what Scripture would bring to bear on our understanding, and to bring our concerns and the needs of the world to God in prayer. Our purpose is NOT to convince one another or to arrive at the same conclusions, but to seek the truth, and to listen to one another, and to pray together. We'll meet at 5, so if you would like you may bring your supper with you – or we may decide to take turns bringing something to share. The idea is definitely to keep things simple.

Little children, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God.

Peace,
Kathryn+

March 2017

| Sunday | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | 1 ASH Wed. 5pm Service | 2 Common Cents 10-2pm | 3 Noon Stations of the Cross | 4 Com- mon Cents 10-Noon |
| 5 The First Sunday in Lent 10 am Holy Eucharist | 6 | 7 Common Cents 10-2pm Brown bag citizenship 5pm | 8 Lenten Lunch at St. Philip's | 9 Common Cents 10-2pm | 10 Noon Stations of the Cross | 11 Common Cents 10-Noon 10 am Vestry |
| 12 The Second Sunday in Lent 10:00 am Holy Eucharist | 13 | 14 Common Cents 10-2pm | 15 Lenten Lunch at Knapps Station | 16 Common Cents 10-2pm | 17 Noon Stations of the Cross  | 18 Common Cents 10-Noon |
| 19 The Third Sunday in Lent 10:00 am Holy Eucharist | 20 | 21 Common Cents 10-2pm | 22 Lenten Lunch at St. Andrew's Brown bag citizenship 5pm | 23 Common Cents 10-2pm | 24 Noon Stations of the Cross | 25 Common Cents 10-Noon Feast of the Annunciation |
| 26 The Fourth Sunday in Lent 10 am Holy Eucharist | 27 | 28 Common Cents 10-2pm | 29 Lenten Lunch at Free Methodist Community Dinner 5-6:30 pm  | 30 Common Cents 10-2pm | 31 Noon Stations of the Cross | |



February 2017

| Sunday | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|--|---|------------------------------|-----|--|
| | | | 1 | 2 Common Cents 10-2pm | 3 | 4 Common Cents 10-Noon |
| 5 The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour | 6 | 7 10:00am Bible Study Spiritual Disciplines Common Cents 10-2pm | 8 Women's Guild at noon at Nancy's Cookie exchange | 9 Common Cents 10-2pm | 10 | 11 Common Cents 10-Noon 10 am Vestry |
| 12 The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour | 13 | 14 10:00am Bible Study Spiritual Disciplines Common Cents 10-2pm  | 15 | 16 Common Cents 10-2pm | 17 | 18 Common Cents 10-Noon Community Lunch Program 10-noon |
| 19 The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour | 20 | 21 10 am Bible Study Spiritual Disciplines Common Cents 10-2pm | 22 Community Dinner 5-6:30 pm  | 23 Common Cents 10-2pm | 24 | 25 Common Cents 10-Noon |
| 26 The Last Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour | 27 | 28 | | | | |



DINNERS

February 22

Chicken and Biscuits
Steamed Vegetables
Fruit salad
Cookies

March 29

Meatloaf
Mashed Potatoes
Green Beans
Dinner Rolls
Desserts

*Owe no one anything, except
to love each other, for the
one who loves another has
fulfilled the law.*

- Rom 8:13

The Way of the Cross

Every Friday in Lent it is our tradition to meet at noon for The Way of the Cross, a devotion that comes from our Episcopal Book of Occasional Services. It is a powerful way of experiencing our Lord's Passion and Death with our whole selves, not merely reading the Scriptures and thinking about them, which is of great value, but walking from icon to icon, treading by faith in our Lord's footsteps from his arrest to the moment his body was laid in the tomb.

We are people of the Resurrection, proclaiming every moment of every day that Jesus is alive and present with us in power through his Holy Spirit. We proclaim that the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea in which Jesus was laid is forever empty. We do not walk the way of the Cross to wallow in our grief and guilt. We walk to remember anew, with amazed and thankful hearts, how our Lord's love brought him to suffer all things as a mortal man that we might share his divine life forever. I invite you to join us as we allow this Lenten devotion to deepen our love for the One who loved us more than his own life. If anyone is unable to attend the noontime Way of the Cross because of work, please speak to me about arranging an evening devotion in addition to the regular time.



“The purpose of Lent is not only expiation, to satisfy the divine justice, but above all a preparation to rejoice in His love. And this preparation consists in receiving the gift of His mercy—a gift which we receive insofar as we open our hearts to it, casting out what cannot remain in the same room with mercy.

“Now one of the things we must cast out first of all is fear. Fear narrows the little entrance to our heart. It shrinks up our capacity to love. It freezes up our power to give ourselves. If we were terrified of God as an inexorable judge, we would not confidently await His mercy, or approach Him trustfully in prayer.

Our peace and our joy in Lent are a guarantee of grace.”

Thomas Merton

*The
Season
of
Lent*



February Birthdays:

- 10th—Linda Dafoe
- 10th—Stacey Ledger
- 12th—Al Layo
- 17th—Nancy Levison
- 20th—Lynn Howe
- 24th—Michael Harris

March Birthdays:

- 1st—Felix Levison



February Anniversaries

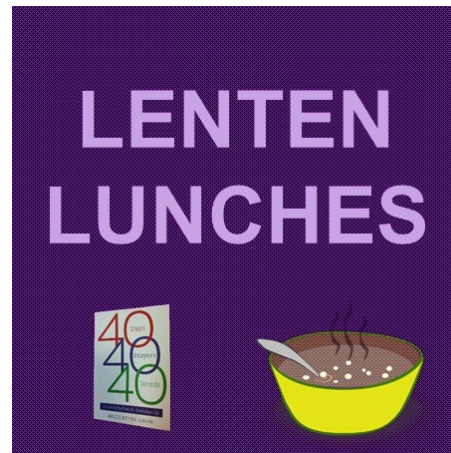
- 1st Larry & Carol Cavallaro
- 7th—Scott & Linda Dafoe

Lenten Luncheons

Lent is a solemn time, a time for soul-searching, repentance, and self-denial. But as Christians, we don't travel the desert road of Lent alone; we journey as a community, worshiping, praying and studying together. And each Wednesday in Lent the churches of Norwood gather and share faith, fellowship and food: a community of communities, each congregation taking it in turns to open our doors in hospitality. It is a very good tradition.

These are the proposed dates and locations of this year's luncheons:

March 8 -- St. Philip's
March 15 -- Knapps Station
March 22 -- St. Andrew's
March 29 -- Free Methodist
April 5 -- Norwood United Ministries



The Lenten season is devoted especially to what theologians call contrition, and so every day in Lent a prayer is said in which we ask God to give us 'contrite hearts' [from the Lenten Collect, *The Book of Common Prayer*]. Contrite, as you know, is a word translated from Latin, meaning crushed or pulverized. Now modern people complain that there is too much of that note in our Prayer Book. They do not wish their hearts to be pulverized, and they do not feel that they can sincerely say that they are 'miserable offenders' [from the General Confession at Morning and Evening Prayer, *The Book of Common Prayer*]. . . . But [they are] not understanding the words. I think the Prayer Book is very seldom talking primarily about our feelings; that is (I think) the first mistake we're apt to make about these words 'we are miserable offenders'. I do not think whether we are feeling miserable or not matters. I think it is using the word miserable in the old sense — meaning an object of pity. That a person can be a proper object of pity when he is not feeling miserable, you can easily understand if you imagine yourself looking down from a height on two crowded express trains that are traveling towards one another along the same line at 60 miles an hour. You can see that in forty seconds there will be a head-on collision. I think it would be very natural to say about the passengers of these trains, that they were objects of pity. This would not mean that they felt miserable themselves; but they would certainly be proper objects of pity. I think that is the sense in which to take the word 'miserable'. The Prayer Book does not mean that we should feel miserable but that if we could see things from a sufficient height above we should all realize that we are in fact proper objects of pity.

How often have I lived through these weeks without paying much attention to penance, fasting, and prayer? How often have I missed the spiritual fruits of the season without even being aware of it? But how can I ever really celebrate Easter without observing Lent? How can I rejoice fully in your Resurrection when I have avoided participating in your death? Yes, Lord, I have to die—with you, through you, and in you—and thus become ready to recognize you when you appear to me in your Resurrection. There is so much in me that needs to die: false attachments, greed and anger, impatience and stinginess. . . . I see clearly now how little I have died with you, really gone your way and been faithful to it. O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again. Amen.

(Henri Nouwen, from *A Cry for Mercy: Prayers from the Genesee*, Orbis)

A Hymn to God the Father

*Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
 Which was my sin, though it were done before?
 Wilt thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
 And do run still, though still I do deplore?
 When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
 For I have more.*

*Wilt thou forgive that sin which I have won
 Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
 Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
 A year or two, but wallow'd in, a score?
 When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
 For I have more.*

*I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
 My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
 But swear by thyself, that at my death thy Son
 Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
 And, having done that, thou hast done;
 I fear no more.*

John Donne

Thoughts on the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin
from *24 Hours That Changed the World*
 by Adam Hamilton
 (pp. 51-52)

***The only thing necessary for evil to triumph
 is for good men to do nothing.***

“I am certain that at least a few of those seventy-one Sanhedrin members must have questioned whether putting Jesus to death was the right thing to do. Some had to wonder whether this man might not truly be the Messiah. But there is nothing in any of the Gospel accounts to indicate that a single one of them, other than Joseph of Arimathea, disagreed when it came to the death sentence they sought from Pilate. [This is a] fact of human existence: Resisting those in leadership or in the majority, even when we believe they are doing wrong, is exceedingly difficult. When the tide is moving, we tend to be afraid to stand up and resist. I have seen this in myself from time to time. There have been occasions when people in authority said, “This is the way we ought to go,” and I did not speak out for fear that doing so would make me look foolish. I have the feeling there were people in that Sanhedrin who later on said, “Why didn't I say anything?”

Martin Niemoeller, a Lutheran pastor in Nazi Germany during World War II, saw the sins being committed against the Jewish people and at first decided not to object. Only later did he begin to speak out against what he had seen. Words attributed to Niemoeller movingly express his analysis of the situation: 'First they came for the Communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews and I did speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me and by that time there was no one left to speak up anymore.'

I am also reminded of a quotation from the eighteenth-century British philosopher and politician Edmund Burke: 'The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.' Keeping silent, doing nothing when you see that something is wrong, is a sin.

No one spoke up in the Sanhedrin. No one asked, 'Is this really in keeping with our faith?' How many times in recent history has the same thing happened – during the Holocaust, in Jim Crow America, in South Africa, at Abu Ghraib, and in your life and mine. How many times have we known something was wrong but were afraid to speak up? I am not talking about simply pointing out other people's sins. We all know Christians who freely point out the sins of others; they are not being courageous, just obnoxious. I am talking about those times when you are part of a group about to do something that is clearly wrong or when you see injustice being done to someone and all it would take would be one person speaking up, but everyone remains silent. What would have happened if one or two or three of those Sanhedrin members had simply said, 'This isn't right, regardless of what we think about this man. It's not in keeping with what God teaches us.' In our own situations we must be able to say, with great humility and despite our fear, 'You know, this just doesn't feel right.' ***In that pivotal moment when 'Say something' and 'You dare not say anything' are both pounding in your head, say something.***



A Prayer for Lent

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.
 I do not see the road ahead of me.
 I cannot know for certain where it will end.
 Nor do I really know myself,
 and the fact that I think I am following your will
 does not mean that I am actually doing so.
 But I believe that the desire to please you
 does in fact please you.
 And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
 I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
 And I know that, if I do this,
 You will lead me by the right road,
 though I may know nothing about it.
 Therefore I will trust you always
 though I may seem to be lost
 and in the shadow of death.
 I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
 and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*

Thomas Merton (from *Thoughts in Solitude*)