



# Tidings of Holy Trinity Church

## May 2014

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*Holy Trinity is called to recognize, communicate and celebrate God's presence within, among and around us.*

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### THE MISSION PLATE

For the month of May the Mission Plate donations will go towards Episcopal Relief and Development / Haiti.

So many are struggling there that we need to continue our support financially and in prayer. Please be generous, and pray for the families that need clean water, food, shelter and spiritual comfort and strength. When we combine our offerings with those of other Episcopal churches, the sum is surely greater than the parts. Thanks be to God.

I am returning to Massachusetts on 5/2/14, and will see you all soon after. It will be wonderful to be worshipping with you all again. The temperatures are rising now; 93 degrees expected today! Hope your mild temps will continue for you, and no more ice and snow!

I miss you all and look forward to seeing you soon.

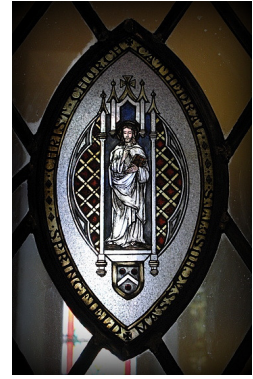
*Suzy Sharp, Green Valley, AZ*

**We are pleased to include Bishop Doug's sermon to the clergy at the service of the Renewal of Vows as a fresh look at parish life and ministry.**



## Renewal of Vows 2014

by [Bishopfisher](#)



*Each year the clergy of the Diocese gather during Holy Week to renew their vows in the context of the Eucharist. Below is Bishop Fisher's sermon given this morning, Tuesday April 15 at Christ Church Cathedral.*

### **Gospel: John 12:20-36**

I love Holy Tuesday and the opportunity to renew our vows. It is a time to reflect deeply from the soul about our relationship with the Crucified/Risen Christ and the mission he has given us. Thank you, Brother Curtis, for leading us with such insight in that reflection this morning.

And, it is a time to meet new clergy who have arrived among us. One Holy Tuesday back in New York, I introduced myself to a new priest in the Diocese as we were lining up to process into the liturgy. In the course of the conversation, I told him I could predict what the last words of the sermon would be. He asked if I had received a copy of it from the Bishop. I told him “no, I just know with a preacher’s sixth sense.” He doubted me so I made him a friendly bet (this was before I became the anti-casino bishop.) I said the sermon would end with the words “unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

I won the bet. If you want to bet with your neighbor in the pew as to the last words of this sermon, the anti-casino bishop invites you to do that now. You will have the answer in ten minutes.

And, here is another answer we will get to in ten minutes: how do we reconcile Jesus’ encouragement to “hate our life in this world” with the words of the Prophet Bruce – “it ain’t no sin to be glad you are alive?”

Today’s gospel gives us another Philip and Andrew story. Andrew, the second most popular saint in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, has four churches named after him. They announce to Jesus that the Greeks want to see him. This is a great opportunity to restore the steep decline that has occurred among the followers of Jesus. That decline in followers had begun in chapter six of John’s gospel where we read, “*many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.*” The timing is odd because it happens right after the Feeding of the 5000 and one would think that would have begun the Great Awakening, not ended it. Mark and Luke also mention this decline in average Sunday attendance” after the Feeding of the 5000. They tell us about the feeding of the 4000 - a twenty per cent decrease in church attendance in just a few days.

Now, here is the chance. The Greeks have arrived (and they probably have young families.) Jesus can make up for the followers who have left, restock the Sunday School and have a sparkling parochial report to hand in at the end of the year. He can tell the Greeks about the new youth group that has just started,

*Renewal of Vows continued on page 3.....*

*Renewal of Vows continued from page 2....*

the pot luck suppers, the way we are “just like family” in this church. But no, not Jesus. He talks about death - his death. And, he talks about our death – about losing the life we love. He even tells them to “hate their life in this world” without explaining to them that this is rabbinic overstatement. John tells us he lost even more followers.

Somehow, by God’s grace, you and I are still here. We have not turned back and we want to continue to “go about with him.” Or, as the great hymn says, “there’s no turning back, there’s no turning back.” What will that mean? The answer to that question has many dimensions, and in this gathering of believers, I know you have insights I do not have. But I will just offer you two possibilities for what it means to “lose the life we love” and “go to where Jesus is.”

The first involves losing the love we have for our agenda – the way we have predetermined how our life should be. There is a story I have told in several of our churches – not because I am a lazy preacher but because it gets so many heads nodding “yes,” opening the listeners to the ever surprising, eternal and yet ever new, wisdom of Jesus. It is the story of Ann, a young woman who signs up to run a five-mile race in her town for charity. She works out every day, getting ready for the race. She goes to the town square with other runners, the gun goes off and Ann runs. Every mile there is a marker - one mile, two miles, three miles. Ann begins to think, “This is odd. The race is five miles and we have not turned back yet.” Four miles. Ann can’t figure this out so she catches up to another runner and says, taking deep and weary breaths, “when are we going to turn around?” The runner gives her an odd look and says “what do you mean ‘turn around’?” Ann says, “Well, this is a five-mile race and we are already past four miles.” The runner replies “Five mile race? This isn’t the five-mile race. That started in a different section of town. This is the marathon – 26.2 miles!”

Ann could not believe it. This was not the race she signed up for. This was not the race she trained for. This was not the race she was prepared for. She decided she would just quit right there and then. But then she thought “This is not the race I signed up for. It is not the race I trained for. It is not the race I’m prepared for. But, it is the race I am in.” Ann embraced that race. She kept running. She didn’t set any records but she finished the race. She ran the race she was in.

Have any of you ever felt like Ann? Has your ministry ever felt like that? This is not what I signed up for. It is not what I am prepared for. It did for Philip, the apostle who is so prominent in today’s gospel. In the Acts of the Apostles, we are told Philip went on a very successful preaching and healing tour in Samaria. “*The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did.*” Unclean spirits come out of the possessed. The lame are cured. “*There was great joy in that city.*”

Philip puts his name into the Transitional Ministry Office and with that great win in Samaria on his resume; Philip is expecting a plumb of a parish. The angel from the Transitional Ministry Office comes to him and tells Philip “*get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.*

*Renewal of Vows continued on page 4.....*

*The Renewal of Vows continued from page 3.....*

*The wilderness road.*” The road that is in the middle of nowhere. That’s where your new ministry will be. Philip goes but you can tell he is discouraged. The great crowds of Samaria are gone. Now he has a church of two - an Ethiopian eunuch who is a court official and himself. The Ethiopian is reading Isaiah and with disdain Philip asks him “*do you even know what you are reading?*” The Ethiopian admits his ignorance, asks Philip to explain it to him. Philip does and the result is his first baptism in his new church in the middle of nowhere.

“To lose the life we love...and go to where Jesus is.” It might mean letting go of our well researched, tightly held agenda. The one where we pray “Your will be done...but in case you are interested God, here is what my will is.”

Here is a second dimension of “To lose the life we love...and to go where Jesus is”. And it might be harder than the first one. This dimension means following a dynamic, passionate Jesus who is constantly on the move and who does not consider our personal religious experiences as important as the kingdom of God coming on earth as it is in heaven.

I invite us to consider the sermon Mary Glasspool, suffragan bishop of Los Angeles, gave at the House of Bishops recently and reported on in my blog. Her text was the Road to Emmaus story from Luke. You know the story. After the death of Jesus and reports of his resurrection, two disciples walk dejectedly away from Jerusalem to Emmaus. The Risen Jesus, whom they do not recognize, walks beside them. They talk to him about what transpired in the last few days. Jesus explains the scriptures to them. They ask Jesus (whom they still don’t recognize) to stop and have dinner. When he does, Jesus takes bread, blesses it, breaks it and gives it away. When he does that gesture he did so many times before, they recognize him.

Then Mary, a great preacher, really gets into it. She proclaims “That’s not the end of the story! No sooner do they recognize the Risen Christ...then Jesus vanishes. We may have some problems with the biology of that statement but let’s not let that blind us to the *theology* of it. What the Evangelist, Luke, is telling us here is that once the moment of insight has been received around the table, *the action is no longer around the table*. The action is somewhere else. ‘*That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem.*’ They left the safety and familiarity and nourishment and comfort of their table fellowship in Emmaus; and returned to the riskiness and complexity and even barrenness and challenge of Jerusalem. The disciples couldn’t stay in Emmaus, lifting their glasses and saying to each other, ‘Wow! Have we ever had a profound religious experience!’ No! The experience required they risk themselves in sharing it with others; that they go back to Jerusalem not just to *tell* the truth, but to *do* the truth - not just to share their experience of the Risen Jesus; but to continue his mission and ministry in the world with those whom the world cares least about: the poor, the oppressed, the sick, the friendless and the needy.”

*Renewal of Vows continued on page 5.....*

*Renewal of Vows continued from page 4....*

Jesus, who is constantly on the move, has told us where he will be next. He makes it so clear in Matthew 25. I don't need to read it. It is already in your soul. "When I was hungry..." "When I was in prison..."

Jesus, who appears as the Risen Christ more often in John's Gospel than any other, tells us in that Gospel that the apostle, Thomas, the one who doubts a spiritual experience that does not include the wounded of this earth, is right. Jesus is taking his wounds and all the wounded of this earth with him. To go where Jesus is means losing a life we love and embracing the life of a wounded world. That is a whole new love. It is God's love for us and for our neighbor.

Perhaps, that is how we can come to an understanding of what "hate your life in this world means." Maybe, Jesus did mean it literally. Think about some of the life of this world. It is described in such raw honesty in the Litany of Penitence on Ash Wednesday.

We confess to you Lord "our exploitation of other people." Don't we hate that?

"Our blindness to human need and suffering, and indifference to injustice and cruelty." Don't we hate that?

"Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us." Don't we hate that?

Yes, we do and "it ain't no sin to be glad we are alive" - alive in Christ who is letting the "whole world know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new."

At the end of this service, we will continue the long-standing tradition – that we started last year - of completing the journey we began on Ash Wednesday. The journey that began with a great truth "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." We will be anointed ("Christed") with the other half of that truth. "Remember love is always stronger than death, and unto that love you have now returned."

And, that love will do nothing less than bring about a kingdom of mercy, compassion and hope. Amen.

+Doug

### **Palm Sunday Bake Sale: Success Indeed!**

Many, many thanks to all that provided and purchased baked goodies at the Palm Sunday Bake Sale. A total of \$200.25 was raised. This money, together with the Mission Plate money for March and April, will be use to buy playground toys for the girls and boys at West Street School. This is a wonderful reflection of the LOVE we have in Christ—sharing our JOY with children in our community. Thank you for sharing that JOY and making "recess time" enJOYable!

# COMMUNITY YARD SALE

May 17, 2014

8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church  
446 Hamilton Street, Southbridge

**RAIN OR SHINE!**

Booth space available to the community for \$10 per booth.  
Tables (approximately 9'x9') will be available on a first come,  
first serve basis. Inside and outside space is available.

Contact the parish office (Tuesday or Thursday mornings) to receive an application and reserve a space. (508-765-9559) Parish members are invited to donate yard sale items to the church between April 21st and May 15th. Items will be accepted during office hours, on Sundays after worship service, or by other arrangements with Tamsin Lucey.

**Application deadline is May 10th.**

*Light refreshments available all day for a free will donation.*

**VESTRY MEETING MINUTES AND FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE BY REQUEST. IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY, PLEASE CONTACT CHRIS BOLTE, PARISH ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY, DURING OFFICE HOURS 508-765-9559 (TUESDAY & THURSDAY 9AM-1:30PM) OR BY EMAIL.**

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

12–Gordon Adams

15–Sally Baum

28–Mary Hicks

*If we are missing anyone or have the wrong date for this month's list, please contact the office.*

## **Box Tops for Education**

West Street School, like many other schools, collects Box Tops for Education. These can be found on a large variety of food products that you may already be buying. Please bring Box Tops for Education and place them in the collection boxes in the Narthex.

## Youth Christian Formation

**Join us for Family Worship  
in Blakely Hall  
May 11 & 25.**



**STAY CONNECTED - LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! HOLY TRINITY CHURCH SOUTHBRIDGE**

## **FINANCIAL REPORT—February Financial Update**

### **March and 1st Quarter 2014 Financial Report**

- › A few income lines are under budget due to seasonal income and a few are over budget leaving the bottom line within budget.
- › Oil and insurance will be under budget until the large bills are paid; money is moved to a sub fund monthly to keep this money in reserve.
- › The “program expense all other” is over budget due to:
  - o a 2013 bill for advertising being paid in 2014.
  - o The 3-year online cloud backup expense came due in February, and increased storage needed to purchased.
  - o The photocopier needed more repairs than anticipated, but the overall per copy expense remains low, we need to budget a more realistic amount of money for photocopying.
- › The Organist/musician and clergy lines continue to be under budget until we have employees.

To prepare for large seasonal expenses money is held in reserve:

- › \$1,166 monthly into Oil Fund
- › \$450 monthly into the Insurance fund

#### **Other items:**

- › The memorial funds are currently \$1,657.
- › The Audit is well under way and in good hands with Peg Nelson, chair and Anita Bullard and Lynn Garland members.
- › The vestry approved Financial Policy and Procedures; they will be kept in the office for viewing.

Thanks and Blessings,  
Susan Howland, Treasurer

## **Prayers to Partake and Participate**

*Almighty God, whose love is stronger than death; during this Easter Season help us to overcome our fears. Keep our eyes open to what you are doing in the world around us. Allow our imaginations to soar to the possibilities for sharing your love, compassion, hope and mercy. All this we ask in Christ's name. Amen.*

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We would like to print prayers each month that readers can partake of and participate in saying together. If you have a prayer you wish to share please send it to the church for the attention of Parish Administrative Secretary. Many thanks!

## **TEMPTATION 101**

Starting Thursday May 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in the Lounge at St. Anne's and every Thursday through July 17, we are invited to join in reading C. S. Lewis' The Screwtape Letters. The series of 9 readings will be lead by Bro. Paul Henry, A.A. Please look for more information on the flyer on the Community Events board in the foyer, or contact St. Anne's in Sturbridge.



## Loaves and Fishes Ministry

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me". We all keep this verse in mind when we contribute to the Loaves and Fishes Ministry and provide food for the Food Pantry housed at Blessed John Paul II. Thank you to everyone who brought in food during April, 5 large bags of food were delivered at the end of April.



Brown paper bags and shopping list suggestions are always available at the back of the church—they will be by the font on Sunday May 4<sup>th</sup>. Please give as you are able - food returned by Sunday May 25<sup>th</sup> will be blessed before going to the pantry that week.

*With Love, Peace and Joy, Service & Ministry.*

*Bill Nelson & Tamsin Lucey*

## **MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!**

The success of the Yard Sale on Saturday, May 17, will be greatly increased (and the stress greatly reduced) if there is LOTS AND LOTS of help!

Please look at your calendar and set aside some time.

These are the times we need help:

- ⌚ The week before (sorting ad setting up  
(please see Karen Ballou for days and times)
- ⌚ On the day, early in the morning 6:00am-8:00am
- ⌚ During the sale 8:00am--1:00pm
- ⌚ Afterwards with cleanup—1:00pm-3:00pm



Please see Tamsin Lucey for more details.  
Thank you in advance for your time and help.

## **SHARING GOOD NEWS!**

The search is over—the call has been made—Father Richard will be our new permanent half-time priest starting Sunday, June 1, 2014! Please join me in welcoming him officially to Holy Trinity Church! Please mark your calendar NOW and plan to join us on Tuesday, September 30, at 7:00 pm when Bishop Doug Fisher will officiate at a service celebrating New Ministry. This will be a festive celebration with reception following. Invitations will be extended to all the clergy in the diocese, all our local priests and pastors, as well as the whole parish.

*With Gratitude and Blessings,*

*Tamsin Lucey,  
Senior Warden*



The Ecumenical Fellowship Community warmly invites you to join them in celebration of the

## National Day of Prayer

Thursday, May 1, 7:00 pm  
on the Sturbridge Common.

The National Day of Prayer belongs to all Americans. It is a day that transcends differences and brings together citizens from all backgrounds. We pray for seven areas of our country and community:

*Government, Military, Media, Business, Education, Church, and Family.*

In the aftermath of so many tragedies in our state and unrest and conflict in many parts of our world, we can come together in prayer and unity and hope for the future.

All are welcome, we pray rain or shine.  
Bring your own lawn chair or blanket if needed.



### United Thank Offering

Holy Trinity is thrilled to announce that Heather Bousquet has picked up the baton from Barbara Kalber as **United Thank Offering** Coordinator. Our parish in-gathering will be Sunday, June 1 with a second chance of Sunday, June 8.

Watch for the celebration and count up the coins in your Blue Box and Thank You!

### Green Thumb Ministries - showing off our best self! (aka Making a good first impression!)



We would like to add color - annuals - to the front yard ready for the Yard Sale, May 17, and the Bishops visit, May 18. Please stop by the church and add your own at your convenience.

There will be a June date for further yard work!

Bart Krug [pbprov@gmail.com](mailto:pbprov@gmail.com)

### ANNUAL SPRING TEA

Saturday, May 3

11:00am-2:30pm

Oxford First Congregational Church, 355 Main Street, Oxford

Adults: \$9.00; Children under 6: \$6.00

Reservations suggested for parties of 6 or more. Contact Barbara 508-987-0549



**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH IS COLLECTING CANS AND BOTTLES FOR MISSION & OUTREACH. DONATIONS MAY GO IN THE LARGE SILVER BOX IN THE PARISH HALL.**

Holy Trinity Church, Episcopal  
446 Hamilton Street  
Southbridge, MA 01550

## Holy Trinity Church

446 Hamilton Street  
Southbridge, MA 01550

**Office Phone:** (508) 765-9559

**E-mail:** holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com

**Web site:** holytrinitysouthbridge.org

### Office Hours:

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

\*unless otherwise noted\*

The Episcopal Diocese of Western  
Massachusetts

The Rt. Reverend Douglas Fisher

## Sunday Services

9:30 a.m. Rite II Choral Holy Eucharist

Guest Celebrant and Preacher  
The Rev. Richard Signore

### Save These Dates

#### **Holy Trinity Church**

Thursday, May 1—7:00 p.m.—National Day of Prayer

Saturday, May 3—11:00 a.m.—Annual Spring Tea—Oxford First  
Congregational Church

Sunday, May 11—9:30 a.m.—Family Worship

Monday, May 12—7:00 p.m.—Vestry Meeting

Saturday, May 17—8:00am-1:00pm—Community Yard Sale

Sunday, May 18—9:30 a.m.—Bishop's Visit and Confirmations

Monday, May 19—7:00 p.m.—Stewardship Prayer Group

Sunday, May 25—9:30 a.m.—Family Worship

#### **Class Information**

Mondays @ 1:00 p.m.—Zumba Gold

Mondays @ 2:15 p.m.—Line Dancing

Wednesdays @ 9:00 a.m.—Yoga

Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m.—Yoga

Fridays @ 7:30 a.m.—TaiChi (no class 3/28)

Fridays @ 6:30 p.m.—Salsa—6 week sessions