

FEBRUARY TIDINGS

Volume 5, Issue 2

February 2023



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A Reflection from your Priest-in-Charge

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. [Isaiah 43:19]*

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Frederick Buechner [Wishful Thinking, p. 118]

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This statement by Frederick Buechner came up during our discussion in

Practicing Our Faith about the idea of "vocation." It has given me a new way of thinking about the discernment we begin this year.

We often use this word--which derives from the Latin *vocare*, meaning *to call*—to say that our work is more than just a job when it gives us a sense that we are serving a purpose larger than our own needs or aspirations. We often associate vocation with a call to religious life.

At the same time, asking the question "What is God calling us to become?" can sound a bit lofty for our ordinary lives. How can we tell? How do we know when to say yes to a God who so often speaks in silence? In days filled with demands and duties, the call of God is—understandably-- often drowned out by the calls of our families, friends and supervisors, not to mention the media and the ups and downs of our own longing.

But Buechner brings us down to earth. When have you, as a community or as a member of this community, felt a wholeness that you could not necessarily put into words? When have you said *Yes, this is my home, this is what Holy Trinity is about?* When have you said *Thank you, Lord for bringing me to this place. Thank you, Lord for these companions.*

Walk in Love, the book we are reading as part of the *Practicing Our Faith* program, suggests these questions for discernment:

Where is your deepest gladness? When do you feel most joyful together?

Where do you see the community's deepest need? How and where does your joy meet that need?

What will Holy Trinity look like in five years if you say yes to a specific decision?

Every vocation brings freedom and peace but it also involves a cost, perhaps the cost of something we treasure. *What will be the cost of any decision you make? How can you support each other to accommodate that cost?*

This is the prayer for the February Vestry meeting. May it be our prayer as we learn to share our gladness and our vision of the community's deepest need.

O God, your spirit of Wisdom was present at the creation and with Jesus at his baptism: Open our hearts to that same Spirit, and strengthen and guide us to love and serve you and our neighbors, through

Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mother Judith

February Mission Plate

The Mission Plate funds for the month of February will be going to the Worcester Community Action Council Fuel Assistance Program. This program aids limited-income homeowners and renters in paying their home heating bills. WCAC's Fuel Assistance Program serves all of our local communities (cities and towns) within Central Massachusetts. Well over 10,000 households obtained fuel assistance through WCAC last year.

This year's economic picture for many of our vulnerable local families isn't any brighter than last year. With the devastating effects of the tripledemic (Covid, Flu, and RSV), rising housing and food costs and escalating utility and heating costs, many people in our local area are struggling to afford to keep themselves warm this winter. Please, give as generously as you can to this program. No one should be left in the cold during this time of crisis.

Thank you.

Susan Grant, Member of the Mission and Outreach Committee

Sundays in February

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| February 5 | Family worship: Youth will lead the service
Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord: Candlemas—Blessing of candles for homes
Scout Sunday
10:45-noon - Teens meeting after the service
11 am Choir Rehearsal |
| February 12 | Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany
9:15am Children's Chapel
10:45 am Souper Bowl of Caring: Soup sale after the service
11 am Choir Rehearsal |
| February 19 | Last Sunday after the Epiphany
11 am Choir Rehearsal. |
| February 26 | First Sunday of Lent
ER-D Sunday
11 am Choir Rehearsal |



2—Tamsin Lucey
5—Nancy Waugh
6 – Briella Bousquet
15 – Jones Lowery
17—Barbara Wilson
18—Judith Reich
23—Emily Thompson



Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Supper
Tuesday
February 21st
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Watch for more information about
donations, setting up, and serving.

Vestry Highlights: January 4, 2023**Resolved**

Transfer Legacy Funds to the Trustees of the Diocese of WMA

Transfer Dirlam Funds to the Trustees of the Diocese of WMA

Approved the amended 2023 budget

Selected additional questions for the CAT survey

Discussion

Planning the Annual Parish meeting: It will be a hybrid meeting held in the Parish Hall; Vestry will host coffee hour.

Ash Wednesday**February 22, 2023**

Ashes to Go	7-7:30am	Hamilton Street
	8-9am	Bethlehem Lutheran Parking Lot
	3-3:30 pm	Hamilton Street
	4-5:30 pm	Bethlehem Lutheran Parking Lot

Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes

Noon without music

7:00 pm with music

Praying Hands Ministry

Our Praying Hands Ministry makes prayer shawls and lap blankets for anyone in need of prayer and comfort.

There is a basket with blessed prayer shawls at the back of the church. Shawls can be taken for anyone in need of prayer, love, and comfort. A card is attached to write in the person's name. Have you considered learning to knit or crochet a prayer shawl to be your-Lenten discipline? Contact Susan Howland to learn more.

If you would like more information, or wish to request a shawl for a particular person, please email Susan Howland, howlands@charter.net, or call/text 508-612-3198.





HOLY TRINITY'S SUPPORT OF THE FOOD PANTRY AT ST JOHN PAUL II

In January we collected shelf-stable milk. For February we will collect soup (canned or boxed in aseptic packaging). In addition to those items, I want to reissue the challenge from several years ago that we each donate a non-perishable food item that we would be excited to find at the food pantry if we needed a comforting meal and had no money to buy ingredients.

I think it would be wonderful if we brought in one of our favorite foods--a comfort food, a favorite ingredient, or something more unusual that one does not typically find in a food pantry--something that could nourish the soul as well as the stomach.

Our teens will take leadership for this ministry. Karron Lacey has agreed to work with me to support the youth leadership. Karron has volunteered at the Food Pantry in the past so she is going to meet with people who are involved and find out more about the particulars of what they can best use and what other help we can offer. We want to continue the practice of having the children and youth bring food items to the altar during the offertory to be blessed, and I also am looking forward to hearing their suggestions about other ways they might put their own personal stamps on gathering and delivering our donations. I am excited about the possibilities they may suggest, given their fresh perspectives.

I have made a point of adding shelf stable milk to the list of requests because so many articles and newsletters I have read about food pantries stress that milk is one of the more challenging items because it is typically refrigerated.

Overall, though, I think the most important thing is that we continue to support the food pantry however we can because as long as there is a need, our Lord would want us to respond with generosity, love and kindness.

You may be aware that the food pantry can get practically free food from the Worcester County Food Bank (WCFB) when it comes to many of the staples we might think of, such as rice, pasta, canned meats. What they do not get practically free are the kind of things that make those staples into a meal. For example, I just looked up the WCFB online and found that they prefer not to get donations of items in glass jars, which would mean that foods like tomato sauce and pickles are not among the foods that St. J.P. II would be likely to get from WCFB. The following chart shows some of the items that they could use because they do not get them from the Food Bank.

Thank you, Rose Reith



February Food Donation: Soup

January May September	February June October	March July November	April August December
Hamburger Helper Tuna Helper beef stew soup Spaghettios soup mix (like Lipton's chicken noodle) Ramen noodles Spaghetti sauce Shelf stable milk	pancake mix maple syrup jelly cereal – what they get from the pantry is pretty generic like corn flakes and wheat Chex, so more “fun” types are appreciated Shelf stable milk	powdered lemonade mix iced tea mix tea coffee Spaghetti sauce shelf stable milk toilet tissue soap dish soap	soups and stews crackers mayonnaise ketchup mustard relish shelf stable milk toilet tissue soap dish soap
Toilet tissue, soap and dish soap are on here twice because those are things that people need that none of the typical support systems provide; they are a necessary item that even WIC and other federal and state-based food assistance programs do not cover.			

Congregation Assessment Tool: February 2nd–23rd

Planning our future together.



Holy Trinity is entering into a time of discernment during which we are gathering information to guide our decisions for our future. Recently, you have heard and read about one aspect of this process: The Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT), developed by Holy Cow Consulting. This tool is used by all the congregations in our diocese that are in transition. It will provide a picture of who we are as a congregation and what directions might be important for our future. Your response is essential.

On February 2nd all active parish members will receive a link to the online survey, along with a hard copy of the questions. All answers are strictly anonymous. We have no way of matching any assessment to a particular person, so please feel free to share candidly your perceptions, opinions and experiences. The assessment will take **40-60 minutes** to complete. Please note that once you begin the online survey you must answer every question, and if you exit before completing all the questions your data will be lost and you will need to begin again.

The Vestry will announce ways for individuals to complete the hard copy and submit it for someone else to do the data entry. There will also be the opportunity to complete the online survey at the church with some assistance. Watch for more details.

All hard copies must be submitted by Sunday February 19th and online surveys must be completed by **February 24th** in order for the results to be compiled in time for Canon Rich Simpson to study them before meeting with the Vestry on March 11th to review the results and explore next steps.

Our future together depends on your participation and honest answers.

With gratitude and hope,
Your Vestry



Sunday February 12th after the service

We are returning to the popular Holy Trinity tradition, joining with groups across the country to raise money for local organizations addressing food insecurity.

A variety of homemade soup will be available for sale.

Prices: \$4.00 /pint

\$5.00/quart

Please join us after the service to treat yourself and help others.

Thank you to our intrepid and gifted cooks for providing the soup.

Inclement Weather Plan: Winter 2023

Every Sunday in February, weather permitting, we will hold a service of Holy Communion at 9:30am that will be livestreamed on our Facebook Page. Please know that if, due to inclement weather, it is deemed necessary to cancel the service, an announcement will be posted on the Holy Trinity website (www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org) and on our Facebook page, and an all-parish email will be sent out. Please consider the road conditions and parking availability when making your own decision to attend the service. We will continue to livestream our service every Sunday on our Facebook page, and the recorded service will be available on our website every week.

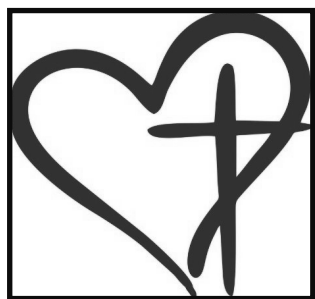
Please note that during a snow emergency Hamilton Street is an emergency route and NO parking is allowed on either side.

Parking regulations: alternate side parking on Hamilton Street **December 1-April 1:**

- At 7:00 pm on odd-numbered days park on the odd side of the street until 7:00 pm the following day.
- At 7:00 pm on even-numbered days park on the even side of the street until 7:00 pm the following day.

Faith Formation

Spiritual Formation: Children and Youth



February 5th – 9:30 a.m. Family Worship: Youth will lead our service
 Candlemas: Blessing of Candles for Home
 Scout Sunday: Special prayers with and for our Scouts
10:45-11:30 – Teens meet after the service

February 12th – 9:15am Children's Chapel
9:30-10:15am Sunday School
10:45am Souper Bowl of Caring

Confirmation Classes:

Teens will meet for reflection, study, fellowship, and pizza.

Saturday February 11th	4-6 pm
Saturday March 18th	4-6 pm
Saturday April 15th	4-6 pm

All teens are welcome and encouraged to join these discussions, even if they are not sure they want to be confirmed.

Rehearsal and service on the Eve of Confirmation: Saturday May 13th time TBD

Confirmants, parents, sponsors and mentors will gather for prayer, reflection, and a rehearsal.

Adult Spiritual Formation

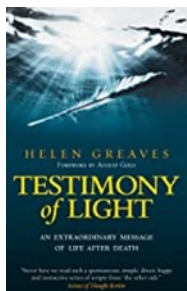
Faith Formation Steering Committee: Eileen DeMings (Chair), Heather Bousquet, Lorraine Brumskine, John Grant, Susan Grant, Cat Reith-Lowery, Rose Reith, and Robin Yates

Practicing our Faith: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices: 1st & 3rd Thursdays @ 7pm on Zoom

February 2	Chapter 21	Theology: The Trinity: The Creator
February 16	Chapter 22	Christology: The Incarnation
March 2	Chapter 23	Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit
March 16	Chapters 25 & 26	Evangelism: Knowing Our Story; Telling Our Story

HTC Reading Group February, 2023: Discussion on Thursday February 23rd 7pm

Helen Greaves, *Testimony of Light* (TarcherPerigee; the first American edition Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin 2009)



Frances Banks died, as she had lived, fully aware of what she was experiencing and where she hoped to go. She was an Anglican nun for 25 years and for much of that time, the principal of the Teachers' Training College in Grahamstown, South Africa. Her friend Helen Greaves was by her side as she finally lapsed into unconsciousness. One evening weeks after Frances's death, Helen sensed her presence. This extraordinary encounter marked the beginning of contact between them from both sides of the veil—between life as we know it and life on "the other side." *Testimony of Light* is based on these communications that Helen received telepathically from Frances. The writings have been authenticated by those who knew them both and who were familiar with their individual writing styles.

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**The Episcopal Diocese of Western
Massachusetts**

The Rt. Reverend Douglas Fisher

Sunday Services

9:30 a.m. Holy Communion

Priest-in-Charge

The Reverend Judith Lee



Website



Facebook



Tithe.ly—Giving