

FEBRUARY TIDINGS

Volume 6, Issue 2

February 2024



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A Reflection from your Priest-in-Charge

God of our pilgrimage, we have found the living water.

Refresh and sustain us as we go forth on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The New Zealand Prayer Book

Strange as it feels that Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year, it reminds us that our journey through Lent is journey into a deeper, wider, more all-encompassing love—for God, for each other, for ourselves.

On Ash Wednesday we are *invited . . . in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditation on God's holy Word.* [BCP, 265]

This is an invitation to love: To see more clearly, to face ourselves fearlessly, to claim the freedom to change our lives, to defy shame and pretense, to open our hearts to the infinite love of God that sustains us.

Love makes room for the growth and understanding that is only possible by prayer, learning, and reflection.

Love deepens in the solitude that we associate with Lent, a solitude in which we continue to be surprised by the depth and strength of our relationships: relationships that allow the space we all need, relationships that help us to see ourselves unflinchingly, relationships that give us hope and a peace beyond our understanding.

And this Lent will be the first step in your journey to calling a new priest. Beginning in love, that is a journey into a

relationship that will both change and affirm your self-understanding, a holy companionship.

I am grateful to be taking this Lenten journey with you. Lent is a time for letting go, for looking beyond the horizon, for creating space for resurrection. Our relationship has both given me comfort and made the world larger for me. It has made it possible for me to journey through the pain and joy of love and to see signs of God's presence all around me.

As I was reflecting on Lent this week, I read this meditation by Steven Charleston, in *Spirit Wheel*:

Joyful Defiance

*Let's slip out the side door of sorrow
Round past the watchman of worry
And make for the green fields beyond. . . .*

Let's believe we have all we need and more to spare.

*It is not pretense but an act of joyful defiance
Against all that would hem the heart
All that would constrain the love within.*

*Come slip out the side door
To find the peace that waits in the green
fields of faith
Beside streams of distant laughter.*

Mother Judith



February Mission Plate

The Mission Plate funds for the month of February will be going to the Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) 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 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.

Loraine Brumskine
Member of the Mission and Outreach Committee



Our donations for February will go to the Wales Community Food Pantry. They have requested pasta sauce, canned meats (spam, corned beef, chicken), and hash.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



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

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

5:30 PM

Homemade Pancakes

Sausage

Juice, Milk, Coffee & Tea

In the Undercroft (downstairs)

FREE WILL DONATION

Resolved

- ⇒ Approved the 2024 budget
- ⇒ Send money for the John Dirlam Fund to the Trustees of the Diocese
- ⇒ Send money from the Legacy Fund to the Trustees of the Diocese
- ⇒ Nominated Ryan Bousquet to be a candidate for Vestry
- ⇒ Nominated John Grant and Lorraine Brumskine to be Delegates to the 2024 Diocesan Convention and Cat Reith-Lowery and Robin Yates to be Alternate Delegates
- ⇒ Agreed to have the Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on February 13th
- ⇒ Agreed to hold the traditional soup fundraiser for the Souper Bowl of Caring on February 11th
- ⇒ Agreed to host coffee hour for the Annual Parish Meeting on January 28th

Lent at Holy Trinity**Ash Wednesday: February 14h**

Ashes to Go at Holy Trinity 7am-8am & at Bethlehem Lutheran: 7-9am & 3-5 pm

Holy Communion with Distribution of Ashes: noon & 7 pm

A packet with ashes and a prayer card will be available to take home

Lenten Bags – a prayer and a practice for each week

Lent Madness – Weekly learning about the saints.

UTO Boxes – daily offerings of thanksgiving

Encountering God: Moving Forward: Thursdays 7-8pm. February 22-March 21.

An online program sponsored by the New England Synod-ELCA:

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/J1RbpdMxsdSy7Wdu9>

Family Night at Bethlehem Lutheran: Wednesday March 6th 5:30pm-7:00 pm

Supper, Intergenerational activities, Prayer

Lunch & Learn: Friday March 1st: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

The Wilderness: In History, Scripture, and Art

The Chosen: Wednesday February 28th 5:30-7:00 pm at Bethlehem Lutheran

March date TBA

Sundays in Lent: A Brief introduction to Episcopal Liturgy

February 11th The Liturgical Calendar

February 18th The Book of Common Prayer

March 3rd The Gathering & The Liturgy of the Word

March 10th The Holy Communion & Dismissal



The choir will begin rehearsing on Sunday, February 11th at **A Note from Our Choir Director**

11:00 to prepare for Lent and Easter. We will rehearse after church for the rest of February and March until Easter. We sing on Maundy Thursday, which is a special service. If you enjoy singing, please consider joining us. If you can carry a tune, you are welcome to sing.

Would family worship enjoy singing a song during the service on Easter? Please speak with Anne or email her at anniebouv@gmail.com.

Singing together brings a special meaning to our spirituality.

Blessings,

Anne

Anne M Bouvier-Monroe

"Prayer is the song of the heart. It reaches the ear of God even if it is mingled with the cry and the tumult of a thousand men." Khalil Gibran

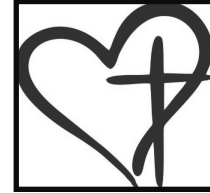


Spiritual Formation: Children and Youth

February 4 The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord / Candlemas
 9:30 am Family Worship with blessing of candles to take home
 11:00-noon: Youth Group (Grades 6-12)

VBS Sunday: TBA

Children's Chapel: 9:15 am February 11 & 18



Teens

Holy Trinity Youth Group

This young, energized group of individuals (let there be no doubt about that) is taking off and is excited to be part of a nurturing and engaging congregation. The youth are our future.

Sunday February 4th 11:00 - 12:00

Indoor play
 Family Game Planning (Church Community Activity)
 Plan Tubing, Sledding or Skating (Fun Activity)
 Meeting time and format discussion
 Bring at least one friend

Saturday February 24th (time to be decided by the youth 2/4)

Family Game Time
 Food, Drink, Fun for everyone in the parish
 Come Together, Right Now, Under Me (Who sang this?)

Coming in March

Karaoke Coffee House (Community Event) Date TBA
 3/24/24 After the Maundy Thursday Service ~8:30 pm
 Youth Group Christian Fellowship (Spiritual Growth and Development with Mother Judith)

Adult Formation

The Chosen: Episode 6 – Wednesday February 28th 5:30-7 pm @ Bethlehem Lutheran

We will share a simple supper of soup, bread, and dessert.

We are partnering with Bethlehem Lutheran for monthly viewing and discussion of Season 1 of this popular video series about the life and ministry of Christ. Robin Yates is facilitating the discussion. The series can be seen on Amazon Prime, Netflix, and <https://www.angel.com>

Lunch and Learn: The Wilderness 11:30am – 1:00 pm Friday March 1st

We will learn about the meaning of the wilderness in Scripture: its spiritual, socioeconomic, and political significance. We will discuss scriptural passages and sayings of the Desert Mothers & Fathers, and we will look at various images of the wilderness in Christian art.

The HTEC Reading Group is taking a break until the summer, when we will regroup to make plans for the next program year.

ENCOUNTERING GOD: Moving Forward With a changing church

God has been acting in our lives from the very beginning, in pain and chaos, through wilderness and travel, on the Ark and in locked rooms, as we doubt and question, in redemption and on mountaintops, in the quiet stillness and desperate grief, as buildings have risen and as they've crumbled, through imprisonment and gnashing of teeth, as we celebrate elaborate feasts and as we break bread in simple settings.

Join us, the New England Synod, including congregations, members, lay leaders, clergy, the curious, and some of our ecumenical partners, in a collaborative bible study, as we explore encounters with God through the lens of a nonlinear model of change.

Each Monday during Lent, one of our facilitators will release a 3-5 minute video introduction of our theme. You can review and watch these videos independently or you can use them and the accompanying questions as part of a midweek worship service.

On the following Thursday evening, we'll hold a Zoom session from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Our facilitator for the week will engage those gathered on Zoom in exploring our encounters with God today. We'll spend time in conversation, sharing, and prayer.

On the second Sunday of Easter, we will provide resources for worship that draw on our time together.

A Lenten Collaborative Bible Study

Five weeks starting Feb. 19th through March 21st

Week 1 - Genesis 8: The Flood Subsides

Rafaela Radcke, LLM Santuario/ Nuevo Amanecer, Synod Council

Exploring the realistic pain that acknowledges the difference between how things are and how they COULD be.

Week 2 - Ezekiel 37:1-14: The Valley of Dry Bones

Rev. Elizabeth Nees, Transition Consultant, Coach (PCC), Dean Boston Metro

Looking at possibility not as the answer to pain but instead as worthwhile learning opportunities that exist in the midst of, alongside, and perhaps, because of, painful realities.

Week 3 - Matthew 15: 21-27: The Canaanite Woman's Faith

Rev. Dr. Richard Simpson, Cannon to the Ordinary, Episcopal Diocese of Western MA, and Rev. Jennifer Gregg, Missioner for Servant Leadership

Challenging old assumptions and thinking out of the box so that we can build relationships with people who want to participate in ways not currently defined by existing structures.

Week 4 - John 3: Nicodemus Visits Jesus

Cassandra Wilson, Synod Council, Member of Redeemer, Woburn, MA

Stepping into the unknown to learn new ways of thinking, being, and doing, by sitting within that chaos and holding space open for questioning and deep discernment.

Week 5 - Luke 24: The Walk to Emmaus

Ryan Heckman, Christian Ed. Director St. Matthew, Avon CT

Moving toward testing, learning, re-ordering, and connecting new ideas and insights, to possibilities.

Summary of Meeting with Bethlehem Lutheran on January 18, 2024

It was a very successful first meeting. Canon Rich Simpson opened the meeting with prayer and then we introduced ourselves. It was quickly clear that we are all in agreement about finding a way to share Pastor Dan's time and that Pastor Dan is excited about this opportunity to serve both parishes. Everyone was interested in making a plan that would be mutually beneficial to both parishes and would support Pastor Dan in this new role, and we worked together well. It was made clear that we are agreeing to a trial to see how this works out rather than making permanent commitments.

The folks at Bethlehem Lutheran were open about the fact that they have financial urgency and are hopeful Holy Trinity can cover 50% of Pastor Dan's compensation package. Despite the urgency, they are looking at this in a positive way that will be mutually beneficial and support the spiritual growth of both parishes rather than acting from a place of scarcity and fear. We agreed with this perspective.

As the Lutheran folks were clear about their hope that we could cover 50% of Pastor Dan's compensation package, Susan shared that there is a possibility Holy Trinity could not cover that amount. The Lutheran folks were open to that possibility but obviously would like to know as soon as possible what we can bring to the table. Pastor Dan, Terri and Mike didn't have exact figures, but said Pastor Dan's annual salary package is between \$90,000 and \$95,000 annually.

Canon Rich expressed his hope that we would be able to find a way to cover 50% as it is easier from a logistics standpoint to have a 50/50 sharing. Boundaries and expectations will be difficult, at least at first, but with a 50/50 sharing it would be a little easier. It is important for us to provide definite information about this as soon as possible but it was clear this meeting was not the place to finalize that decision.

It's clear that this will not be an easy discussion for us, but it is one we need to have as soon as possible. To proceed in good faith and full transparency, we need to be clear about what percentage of Pastor Dan's compensation we are able to cover.

We also discussed some of the dynamics involved for both parishes. While it will be new for Bethlehem Lutheran to adjust to having a half-time priest, they are ready for this and are aware that this will be an important focus of work for them. Their process is different than ours. While both Terrie and Mike were confident that everyone in their parish is aware of what is coming and of the meeting on Thursday, there has been no official announcement or formal discussion. Decisions are made by the congregation, not the Council. They have an annual meeting on February 4th during which the congregation will be formally presented with this option and will vote whether or not to authorize the Council to proceed with conversations about partnering with Holy Trinity. Both Terrie and Mike expect the vote will be affirmative.

Adding to this is learning to share their priest with another parish. Pastor Dan will also have to balance the loss of a full-time relationship with the Lutheran parish with the excitement of forming new relationships. While we are used to having a part-time priest, we have never had to share a priest with another parish. This will require working things out, not only with Pastor Dan, but also with the Council at Bethlehem Lutheran, which will be new for us.

NEXT STEPS

1. Holy Trinity Vestry needs to decide what percentage of compensation we can support as soon as possible. This discussion will start with the Executive Committee, perhaps in combination with the Finance Committee, and then brought to the Vestry.
2. Once this is decided we should work on a draft of a Covenant.
3. We will email a copy of the Mutual Ministry Covenant that was approved by the Vestry in June 2022 to Terrie Novack to help them with their transition
4. February 25th: Pulpit Swap so Holy Trinity and Pastor Dan meet each other in shared worship and fellowship, and Mother Judith will lead worship at Bethlehem Lutheran
5. The Vestry will meet with Pastor Dan after the 25th, either later that same day or on another day that week as a formal interview as we consider calling him to be our Priest-in-Charge. We can make the decision at that meeting (after he leaves) or in another meeting.
6. March 10th 1-4 pm: Vestry/Council retreat at Holy Trinity to work out the details: new times for worship, percentage of time for each parish, coordinating other meetings/activities that Pastor Dan needs to attend for both to ensure we don't schedule on the same day/time.

Submitted by
Lynn Garland, Senior Warden

Thank you and congratulations to our Vestry members and Convention Delegates who were elected and commissioned at the Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024



1-year term:

Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Treasurer
Clerk

Lynn Garland [4th term]
Susan Howland [4th term]
Nancy Waugh [4th term]
Jean Frost [4th term]

Vestry Members (3-year terms, ending in 2027): Ryan Bousquet & David Monroe
Delegates to Diocesan Convention (1-year term, through January 2025)

John Grant:	Vestry Delegate
Lorraine Brumskine:	Non-Vestry Delegate
Cat Reith-Lowery:	Alternate Delegate
Robin Yates:	Alternate Delegate

Not up for re-election:

Class of 2025 Cat Reith-Lowery & John Grant (terms ending in January 2025)
Class of 2026 Robin Yates & Eileen DeMings (terms ending in January 2026)

Many thanks to Lana Pieczynski & Lorraine Brumskine for their faithful service; they have completed their terms.

Sundays in February

February 3rd The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord (transferred)

Candlemas: Blessing of candles for our homes

9:30am Family Worship

11am—noon Youth Group meeting (Grades 7-12)

February 11th The Last Sunday after the Epiphany / Souper Sunday

9:15am Children's Chapel

9:30 am Holy Communion

10:30 am Souper Bowl of Caring

11:00 am Choir Rehearsal

February 18th First Sunday in Lent

9:15am Children's Chapel

9:30 am Holy Communion

11:00 am Choir Rehearsal

February 25th Second Sunday in Lent

Pulpit Swap with Bethlehem Lutheran

Pastor Dan Purtell will be Celebrant & Preacher

9:30 am Holy Communion

11:00 am Choir Rehearsal

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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



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Tithe.ly—Giving