



MARCH TIDINGS

Volume 6, Issue 3

March 2024

A Reflection from Your Priest-in-Charge

And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous. [Genesis 17:2]

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

446 Hamilton Street
Southbridge, MA 01550
508-765-9559

holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com
www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org

The Rev. Judith Lee

Priest in Charge

Lynn Garland—Senior Warden
(508-801-4638)

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I read this week about the world's largest tree, called Pando, which grows in a high mountain basin in central Utah. It is comprised of 47,000 stems, stems which appear to be individual trees, but are in fact one part of a genetically identical tree that spreads out over 106 acres and is connected by a massive interwoven root system. So what looks like a 106-acre forest of 47,000 trees, is actually one tree.

The Pando is a wonderful image of our relationship with God and with each other. As descendants of Abraham and Sarah, we know that no matter how far we wander from a place we call home, from the people who have shaped us and from what we thought we knew, we are not alone, for we are rooted in God's life-giving promise. As followers of Jesus who have promised to walk the way of the cross, we know that in the moment when we feel most alone, when we see no reason to hope, in our darkest hour and our deepest shame, we will discover our inviolable and God-given wholeness—for we are rooted in God's life-giving mercy.

As you prepare to begin a partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran, we walk with Abraham and Sarah, trusting in the promise of a God who has watched over us on a journey that has brought us into an ever-expanding world, and has been grounded in life-giving relationships.

And we walk with Jesus promising to take up our cross—to set our mind *on divine things*, to embrace our vulnerability, to witness justice and resist complacency, to reclaim the deeply-rooted relationships with God and with each other that will sustain us in this new and ancient landscape as we grow into God's purpose for us together.

In the words of Steven Charleston, former Episcopal bishop of Alaska and Choctaw elder,

We will walk together through this lonely stretch of road, all of us who have come this far into the valley of shadows. We will not be afraid or anxious, for we have one another. We have our shared strength, our common wisdom, and our collective memory to help us through whatever may come. We have the quiet counsel of our elders and the boundless energy of our young ones. We have the depth of faith of many courageous hearts. We have the resilience and experience of all those among us who have passed this way before. And when the going gets hard, we have a thousand voices to sing, singing as we go along the twisted path toward higher ground, where the shadows will be far behind us.

Steven Charleston, *Ladder to the Light*
Mother Judith



Spiritual Formation: Children and Teens



March 3rd The Third Sunday in Lent
 9:30 am Family Worship
 11:00-noon: Youth Group (Grades 7-12)

Wednesday March 6th 5:30-7:30 pm Family Night at Bethlehem Lutheran
 Potluck supper, intergenerational stations, and closing prayers

March 10th The Fourth Sunday in Lent
 9:15 am Children's Chapel
 9:30 am Holy Communion with Hymn Sing

March 24th Palm Sunday: Family Worship Players: Dramatic Reading of the Gospel

March 29th Good Friday Family Worship Retreat
10 am Stations of the Cross at St. Anne- St. Patrick's
12-12:45 pm Lunch at holy Trinity
12:45-1 pm Scavenger Hunt
1-2 pm Separate groups: Teens Reflection; Pre-teen Project
2-3 pm Making Resurrection Gardens
 Please join us for the day, or for any portion of the day.

Children's Chapel: 9:15 am March 10 & 17

Adult Formation

Lunch and Learn: The Wilderness 11:30am – 1:00 pm Friday March 1st
 We will reflect on the meaning of the wilderness in Scripture, history, and Christian traditions: its spiritual, socio-economic, and political significance.

The Chosen: Episode 7 – Wednesday March 20th 5:30-7 pm @ Bethlehem Lutheran
 We will share a simple supper of soup, bread, and dessert before viewing and discussion.

Daughters of the King

I cannot do everything, but I can do something.
 What I can do, I ought to do.
 What I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do.
 Lord, what will you have me do?

The Lord has been good. As you all know, we have been busy collecting school supplies for Liberia. You have all played a very important role in this endeavor, and we are extremely grateful for your generosity and support. We are now in the process of packing very large barrels full to the brim and tightly packed. Believe it or not, we still have more packing to do!! All because of your incredible support we have more work to do. Thank you! More information to follow as we finish up this mission outreach.

As we move forward, I am happy to tell you that on **April 7, 2024** we will be receiving two new members into the Daughters of the King. We invite you all, our church family, to join us in welcoming and celebrating with us the induction of Rose Reith and Traci Stewart as they become new members into the Mary and Martha Chapter of the Daughters of the King. God's Peace & Blessings be with you all.

FHS

Robin Yates, DOK President

Lent & Holy Week at Holy Trinity

Lenten Bags – a prayer and a practice for each week

Lent Madness – Daily learning about the saints.

UTO Boxes – Daily offerings of thanksgiving

Handouts - A Guide to a Holy Lent & the symbols of Lent



Encountering God: Moving Forward: Thursdays 7-8 pm.

February 22nd —March 21st.

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

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

The Wilderness: In History, Scripture, and Art

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

We will share a potluck supper, prepare bags for Bethlehem's Closet, and close with Compline.

The Chosen: Episode 7: Wednesday March 20th 5:30-7:00 pm at Bethlehem Lutheran

Holy Week

March 24th Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion

Blessing of the Palms & Procession

Dramatic Reading of the Gospel by the Family Worship Players

Wednesday March 27th Lent Madness: The Final Golden Halo

Thursday March 28th Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm Holy Communion with Footwashing & Stripping of the Altar

9:00 pm – 9:00 am Overnight Vigil in the church

Friday March 29th Good Friday

10:00 am Family Worship: Stations of the Cross at St. Anne's & St. Patrick's

12:00-3:00 pm Family Worship & Teens Retreat

7:00 pm Service of Tenebrae

Daylight Savings

begins Sunday, March 10th

Remember to turn your clocks

AHEAD one hour before you go to bed on
Saturday March 9th.





Our March donations will go to the Bridge Fridge in Southbridge. Our focus will be on non-perishable Easter foods and snacks.

Building a Partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran Church

On December 13, 2023 the Vestry voted to begin conversations with Bethlehem Lutheran about sharing clergy, and a meeting was held in January with the senior leadership from each church. At Bethlehem Lutheran's parish meeting on **February 4th** their congregation unanimously agreed to begin this conversation about sharing clergy.

February 25th—Pulpit Swap: Pastor Dan Purtell presided and Preached at Holy Trinity and met with the Vestry.

March 4th—Pastor Dan will meet with Holy Trinity's Pastoral Relations Committee to learn more about how we build relationships within our community and about our pastoral priorities.

March 10th, the Holy Trinity Vestry and Bethlehem Lutheran's Council will meet at Holy Trinity for an afternoon retreat led by Pastor Sara Anderson, Associate to the Bishop of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Father Rich Simpson, Canon to the Ordinary for the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts. At this retreat we will together work out the details and logistics for our partnership.

2024 will continue to be a year of transition for both congregations, and for Pastor Dan, a year of learning in faith and grace as you grow into this new thing that God has promised.



1—John Grant
 2—Susan Grant
 4— Cat Reith-Lowery
 4— Sue Smith
 7—Laura Gervais
 8— Bethany Reith-Lowery
 9— Jack Burns
 9— Bridgette Bachand
 10— Benjamin Normandin
 12—Abigail Bullard
 16— Lynn Garland
 18—Ron Teixiera
 28— June Mosher
 31—Christopher Ballou

Vestry Highlights—February 7, 2024

Resolved

Appointed Standing Committees
 Designated Food Share for Souper Bowl of Caring

Discussion

Planning for February 25th pulpit swap & Vestry interview
 Discussed narrative questions for the Parochial Report
 Discussed importance of Vestry members taking Safe Church training

What have we done well?

- ⇒ Epiphany dramatization
- ⇒ Annual meeting;
- ⇒ communication about partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran;
- ⇒ Involvement with and by the youth

What could we have done better:

- ⇒ signing up for Safe Church training;
- ⇒ being more methodical in planning Sunday School

Sundays in March

- March 3rd The Third Sunday in Lent**
 9:30 am Family Worship
 11:00-noon: Youth Group (Grades 7-12)
 11:00 am Choir Rehearsal
- March 10th The Fourth Sunday in Lent**
 9:15 am Children's Chapel
 9:30 am Holy Communion with a dramatic reading & Hymn Sing
 11:00 am Choir Rehearsal
 1:00 – 4:00 pm Retreat with Bethlehem Lutheran Council at Holy Trinity
- March 17th The Fifth Sunday in Lent**
 9:15 am Children's Chapel
 9:30 am Holy Communion with a dramatic reading & Hymn Sing
 11:00 am Choir Rehearsal
- March 24th Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion**
 Family Worship Players: Dramatic Reading of the Gospel
 Making Palm Crosses during Coffee Hour
 11:00 Choir Rehearsal
- March 31st Easter Day: The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord**
 9:30 am Festival Holy Communion

The Fitzpatrick Fund Scholarship

The Fitzpatrick Fund is a memorial to Royce Fitzpatrick Jr. and his mother, Loretta P. Fitzpatrick.

Scholarships are given to a young person who is a member of Holy Trinity Church to be used toward the purchase of textbooks and/or learning materials, including electronic devices, and used in an institution of academic or vocational learning after secondary school.

Criteria for this award are church membership, need, good character and the desire to better oneself and begin anew, not necessarily previous standards of scholarship.

The Fitzpatrick family wishes the recipient perseverance, faith, and the joy of learning in any goal of learning after secondary school.

To apply send a letter addressing the above criteria, the school you will be attending and school year. Send to the priest and wardens:

The Rev. Judith Lee: jlee.holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com
 Lynn Garland, Senior Warden: lynn24gar@gmail.com
 Susan Howland, Junior Warden: howlands@charter.net
 or Holy Trinity Episcopal Church: 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550



March & April Mission Plate: Meals on Wheels America



Meals on Wheels America supports community-based programs dedicated primarily to addressing senior hunger and isolation. Their vision statement shares their hope for “an America in which all seniors live nourished lives with independence and dignity,” and their mission statement stresses their desire “to empower local community programs to improve the health and quality of life of the seniors they serve so that no one is left hungry or isolated” (<https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>).

To support their vision and mission, Meals on Wheels is staffed mainly by community volunteers. However, Meals on Wheels delivers more to seniors than just food. The meal is only the first step. While the meals help seniors remain independent, those meals in combination with the accompanying human interaction provide more than just independence. The meals along with the attention of the volunteers who deliver them provide seniors with access to tailored nutrition, social connection, and safety. Our donations to Meals on Wheels America, provide funding, programming, education, research, and advocacy. Indeed, their website claims, “Meals on Wheels America empowers its local member programs to strengthen their communities, one senior at a time” (<https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>).

Significant statistical data from the Meals on Wheels website:

- One in four Americans is 60+ and 12,000 more turn 60 each day!
- Among Americans 60 and older, 29 % have a disability, 24% live alone, and 12% are veterans.
- Seniors on fixed incomes are especially vulnerable to inflation.
- Older adults are already at greater risk of malnutrition because of decreased appetite, mobility issues and prescription medications.
- Of older Americans who receive help from Meals on Wheels:
 - 77% say the meals improve their health.
 - 85% say they feel more secure.
 - 92% report that the meals help them live independently.

Meals on Wheels starts with nutritious meals, but those meals create an opportunity for relationships to flourish and community connections to bloom and thrive. Those connections can then be used to identify needs and provide services that help seniors stay in their homes and feel independent yet supported. Meals on Wheels promotes good nutrition and social connection for seniors, thus improving their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Rose Reith





EASTER MEMORIALS

This Easter, you may wish to have a loved one remembered or to express special thanks to God for His blessings in your life. To do so, please complete this form and return it with your donation to the Church office by **Sunday, March 17th**. The donations collected for these memorials are used to purchase the flowers that decorate the sanctuary on Easter Day.

Exact wording of memorial will be:

Easter gifts for flowers are given to the Glory of God...

_____ in Thanksgiving for the life of _____
(Name of your loved one or ones)

OR

_____ in Loving Memory of _____
(Name of your loved one or ones)

OR

If this gift is in Thanksgiving of a person who is living, choose the following:

_____ in Thanksgiving for the Blessing of _____
(Name of person or blessing)

given by _____

[Your name(s) – please use exact wording you would like to have published. You may, for example, say something like “by his family” or “by her husband” followed by your name or you may simply use your name(s).]

Please return this information sheet, along with your donation, to the church office or drop it in the offering plate by **Sunday, March 17th**. Donations of any amount are appreciated and will offset the cost of the flowers for decorating the church on Easter Day. Please make checks payable to Holy Trinity Church with the notation “Easter Flowers” on the memo line.

Do you know someone who would appreciate Easter flowers from the church? Please write their name and address here so arrangements can be made to bring them flowers:

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR DONATION WITH THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

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Office Phone: (508) 765-9559

E-mail: holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com

Web site: holytrinitysouthbridge.org
(trinity)



**The Episcopal Diocese of Western
Massachusetts**

The Rt. Reverend Douglas Fisher

Sunday Service

9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

The Rev. Dr. Judith Lee
Priest-in-Charge



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