



APRIL TIDINGS

Volume 8 Issue 4

April 2026

A Reflection from Your Priest-in-Charge

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

The snow has melted! Praise the lord and Alleluia! If you are reading this before Easter, I'm sorry for the early Alleluia but it seemed like the right response. After a bleak, gray, and snow winter, a canceled service, ice roads, and below zero temperatures, it feels like we are finally starting to move beyond that mess. While we haven't started to quite see signs of spring yet, we've had a few days where the temperature has been higher and the sun has felt a little stronger. It certainly has felt good to soak in that vitamin D.

Although the winter has felt at times dreary and lifeless, we that life is at work behind the scenes and under the snow. We will see it soon enough, as the trees begin to bud and the flowers begin to bloom. In this particular season that we find ourselves in, with the world the way it is, it might feel like we are living in a barren and lifeless moment. Moments that sometimes to become too much to bear. Yet there is working happening behind the scenes. God continues to work behind the scenes. Even perhaps in those moments that feel a little too cold, a little too barren. We encounter this especially during Holy Week. As we follow Christ through his triumphant entrance in Jerusalem, we begin the week with shouts of hosanna and then the scene begins to shift dramatically. Jesus gathers the disciples around the table for the last supper, he prays in the Garden of Gesthamene, he is betrayed, arrested, beaten, tried, and then finally crucified. He is then laid in a tomb. In those moments before the Easter Sunday, those who loved and had followed Jesus must have felt like they were in the midst of a barren and liveless season. Jesus had a bet a cruel fate on the cross, they were in fear for their own lives, and all their hopes and expectations were dashed and left to hang with Jesus on the cross. Yet in the winter of their despair, God was still at work. In the stillness and uncertainty of Easter Saturday, in the midst of the quiet and grief, God was still at work. Death didn't know it yet, but it had already lost.

In the midst of trying seasons, we are reminded as we move through Holy Week, that God was at through all of it, even and perhaps especially in the darkest of moments. As we come to Easter Sunday and proclaim those Alleluias, we rejoice in the good news that God came to be with us, to walk with us, to teach us, to love us! That good news, that way in which God shows up, that is what we can hold on to, even in the midst of the wintery seasons of our lives. Thanks be to God that God is always in the midst of us, even in those deeply trying winter moments.

Alleluia, Chris is Risen!

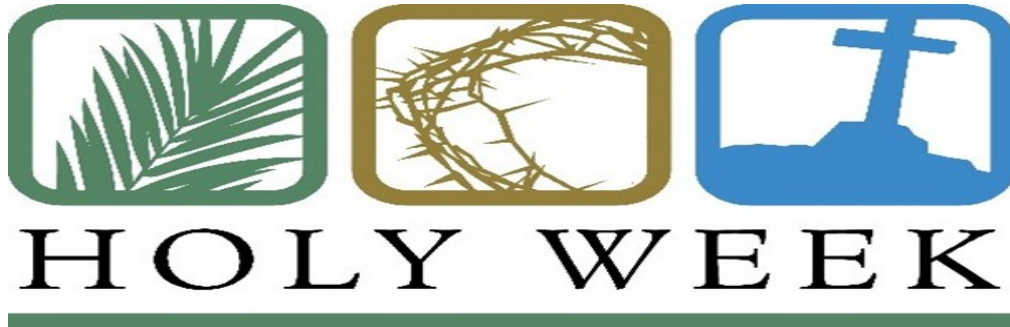
Pastor Dan

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April 2 Maundy Thursday

7PM Shared Service at Bethlehem Lutheran Church
345 Main Street, Sturbridge

April 3 Good Friday

7PM Shared Service at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
446 Hamilton Street, Southbridge, MA

April 4 Easter Vigil

7PM Shared Service at Bethlehem Lutheran Church

April 5 Easter Sunrise Service

6AM at Old Sturbridge Village

Easter Sunday Service

9AM at Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Easter Sunday Service

11AM at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church





The Holy Mowers

Casting Call for 2026 Lawn Care Season
(weekly shows, mid-April to mid-October)

Do you have what it takes to be a star member
of the HTEC lawnmowing team?

Yes, yes you do!

HTEC is seeking volunteers for the church grounds mowing team during the growing season. All needed equipment is available on-site; training available for first-time mowers.

Volunteers set their own schedule based on their availability.

More volunteers = fewer mows per volunteer = bigger cast party at the end of the season!

Interested? Contact the casting agent Josh Spooner to learn more.



BIRTHDAYS

- 1—Karen Ballou
- 1 – Anna Burns
- 6 – David DeMings
- 18—Susan Howland
- 20 – John Dirlam
- 20 —Madisynn Segarra



Food Pantry

Our April donations will go to

Wales Community Food Pantry

Please bring canned goods or your
favorite non-perishable food.

Thank you.

April Mission and Outreach :



The mission plate will be collected for World Central Kitchen

"Food is essential to life every single day, all over the world—and it is more important than ever in a crisis. Not only is a thoughtful, freshly prepared meal one less thing someone has to worry about in the wake of a disaster, it is a reminder that you are not alone, someone is thinking about you, and someone cares. Food has the power to be the nourishment and hope we need to pick ourselves back up in the darkest times."

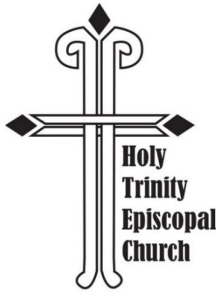
Chef José Andrés,

Please go to their website for more information at [World Central Kitchen's story](#)
Please give generously as you are able.

The Mission Committee

[Anne M Bouvier-Monroe](#)





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PARISH COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT 3/11/2026

As followers of Christ, we commit to actively work to maintain open and healthy relationships with each other, respecting our differences and welcoming diversity. We acknowledge that our human frailties make this challenging at times.

To help us live into this commitment, the Vestry has set forth the following guidelines for how we will interact with each other and how we will address difficult situations.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. We will speak with respect to one another, even if we are upset or angry.
2. We will refrain from name-calling or using disparaging language either when speaking directly to each other or when talking about someone else to another person.
3. We want clarity in communication.
- I. We agree to take responsibility for asking questions if we are not sure we understand what someone has said.
2. We agree to respond with respect and patience if someone asks for clarification of something we have said.
4. We will be honest and straightforward with each other, even if it is uncomfortable.

GUIDELINES FOR TIMES OF DISAGREEMENT OR CONFLICT

5. To maintain healthy relationships, we agree to address disagreements or conflicts, with the goal of resolution and reconciliation, as soon as possible rather than letting them intensify.
6. If possible, we will go to the person with whom we have a concern and speak with them about it in a respectful way, even if we are angry or upset.
7. If we are too upset to speak in a respectful way, we agree to refrain from interaction until we are able to do so.
8. If the person who is upset needs support in order to do this, the person may approach a member of the vestry or a trusted parish member to consider options.
9. If someone has a problem with an individual and comes to you instead, encourage them to go to that person.
10. If the person who is upset feels it is not possible to address the concern directly or if the issue cannot be resolved at the individual level, it should be brought to the priest or one of the wardens. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to bring an issue to the Executive Committee or the Vestry.

Continued next page

11. If an issue is brought to the Vestry, to protect confidentiality, the matter may be addressed in Executive Session (not included in the minutes)
12. If it cannot be resolved at the parish level, it may be brought to the diocese.
13. We will respect confidentiality, with the following exceptions:
 - a. A person that is going to do physical harm to someone else or themselves.
 - b. A child, an elderly person, or a disabled person has been abused or neglected.

While we hold these expectations for all members of our parish, this is especially true for those who hold leadership position, including committee chairs as well as vestry and clergy.

As Vestry members, we agree to help each other hold to these standards.

Signed by

Rev. Daniel Purtell
Mary Bridget Burns
Eileen DeMings
David Monroe
Nancy Waugh
Lynn Garland

Ryan Bousquet
Cat Reith-Lowery
Susan Howland
Robin Yates
Josh Spooner



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**The Episcopal Diocese of Western
Massachusetts**

The Rt. Reverend Douglas Fisher

Sunday Services

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Pastor Dan Purtell, Priest-in-Charge



Website



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Tithly - Giving
