



Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

March 2008

FROM THE



Lent is a time we tend to be more consciously aware of our faith. It's one of the few times that people I barely know will ask me advice about fasting on

Fridays or what to give up, and seem perfectly at home with having a discussion of how we live out our faith. This year we have the added effect of the presidential primaries, where faith has been a significant talking point.

This week a report came out on religion in America. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life's report, "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey," found that about 40 percent of Americans have switched religious affiliation at some time in their lives. The Roman Catholic Church seems to be losing the most, with mainline churches (like the Episcopal church) not far behind; more and more people say they have no religious affiliation—though it's not a matter of not believing, they say, just of not being any one religion in particular. Among the churches gaining the most are evangelical, pentecostal, and holiness churches, which place an emphasis on personal, individual faith.

Of course, we Episcopalians believe that faith should be personal and individual, as well as

shared in a worshiping community. But we're not always very good at talking about our faith, about expressing what it is that we believe and how that affects our lives. We get embarrassed; we don't want to be thought of as pushy or overbearing.

Yet in the baptismal covenant we are asked, "Will you proclaim in word and example the good news of God in Christ?" We answer, "We will." And doing that can be as simple as telling a friend that what we did over the weekend included going to church, or sharing with someone that praying to God got us through a tough time, or when we've asked what we gave up for Lent, answering not only with what we gave up (if anything) but also telling them about the Tuesday evening prayers of the daily readings we've been doing as a parish.

So who have you shared your faith with recently? Who has heard or seen the good news of God in Christ? See if this month you can find at least one opportunity a week to share that good news. And maybe we won't have to be numbered among those declining churches, but even more importantly, some of those unaffiliated people might find a church home, and maybe you will find your own faith growing.

- Raewynne

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Maundy Thursday

6:30 P.M. Soup & Bread Supper followed
by Holy Eucharist

Good Friday

Noon - 3 P.M. Solemn Good Friday
Liturgy

Easter Eve

7:00 P.M. - Easter Vigil

Easter Day

8:00 A.M. - Holy Eucharist

9:30 A.M. - Holy Eucharist

REPORT FROM THE WARDENS

According to our By-laws, membership on a Vestry committee ends at the Annual Meeting so each year at the February Vestry meeting new committee appointments are made.

Following is a list of committees for 2008:

Finance - Marc DeSimone (chair), Donna Wachter, Charlie Kreussling, Bob Scott.

Buildings and Grounds - Jeff Smith (chair), Jack Schultheis, George Krall.

Stained Glass Windows - Donna Austin, Bob Scott, Barbara LoPresto, Tony Bastin
Cemetery - Ken LeCluse (chair), George Krall (Vestry liaison).

Stewardship - Chris Mauro (chair), Edna Rousseau, Jack Schultheis, Ron Tebbutt.

Outreach - Sue Krall (chair), Carol Maybee (chair emeritus), Edna Rousseau (Vestry liaison).

Christian Education -

C.F. & E. - Kathy Sides, Les Bengtson,
Jack Schultheis, Chris Mauro

Sunday School - Karen Noack

Public Relations - Debbie LaMano

Chamber of Commerce Liaison - Nancy Rasmussen

Parish Life - Karen Douglass

The Rector and Wardens are ex-officio members of all committees.

The chairpersons will be contacting members of the parish to join with them so that the work of these committees can continue. IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF YOU WOULD CONTACT A CHAIRPERSON AND OFFER YOUR ASSISTANCE. Many of these committees involve work that can be done on your own schedule.

Jerilyn Glogg has "volunteered" to be our parish "Scrapbook Mistress." Please help her by taking photos of various activities and giving her copies. We also need photos for our bulletin boards – and someone to update them!

The Vestry will be going on retreat April 4 - 6. We will be going to the Trinity Conference Center in West Cornwall, Connecticut.

We are still in negotiations involving the sale of the house at 493 North Country Road. We have agreed to a price, but contracts have not yet been signed. You will notice that the tenants have been cleaning out the house. They will be vacating sometime this month.

May God bless you in this holy season.

- Pat and Jeff

COMING UP

As we head into the last weeks of Lent and then into the season of Easter, a number of things are coming up:

Over the last year, I've been aware that the way we have our church space arranged isn't always working well for our worship. The Eucharistic ministers, choir, acolytes and I have trouble with the complicated dance we do to keep out of each other's way. When I baptize babies I worry about hitting their heads on the sharp corners of the doorway and credence table. The organist can't hear the music he is playing. At the early service there is a huge empty distance between me at the altar and the congregation in the pews. We have members with mobility challenges, but we struggle with making more space for them and keeping fire access open. We ground our faith-lives in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, but the font is hidden in a corner, and the altar is obscured by the choir stalls.

Over coming weeks and months, we will be doing some experimenting. We'll be making some changes, temporary at first, as we experiment to see what might work better for us. Please let me know if you have any ideas!

Also, on our liturgy: There are many ways and many appropriate styles of language in which we worship God. Our prayer book provides a range of choices; there are supplementary resources approved by the Episcopal Church. You may have noticed that our liturgies do vary from time to time, as we use different Eucharistic prayers, confessions, prayers of the people, blessings, and even forms of the Lord's Prayer. Using a variety enriches our experience and understanding of what we do when we

worship. It makes allowances for the many different preferences we have among our parishioners, and it means that when we visit other Episcopal parishes, we're less likely to be caught out thinking, "I didn't know that was in the prayer book." So enjoy the variety. Know that no changes are permanent – they usually last for a liturgical season (or less). And open yourself to God speaking to you in a new way. (And if you missed the Instructed Eucharist last week, when we explored why we do what we do, copies of the material are available at the back of the church).

Finally, before Lent began, we finished reading the book *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. This is the foundation for our work of planning where we are heading as a parish. After Easter, we will begin a process of reflection on the practices that we believe are core to our ministry here in St. James, and where we need to grow. I encourage you to read the book if you have not done so, or at least pick up a summary of the chapters (available at the back of the church), and pray about where we might be called.

- Raewynne



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Due to the way Easter falls this year, it was decided to continue with the "This is My Body" lesson cycle through Sunday, March 2. For the rest of the year, we plan on the following:

March 9 - Pretzel Sunday - the children will go to Mills Hall following Communion.

March 16 - Palm Sunday - The congregation meets in Mills Hall at 9:30 for the procession. The children will remain in church for the reading of the Passion.

March 23 - Easter Day - Alleluia signs will be in the narthex for the children as they enter. There will not be an Easter egg hunt following the service.

March 30 - April 27 - new lesson cycle, "Esther, the Queen Who Saved Her People".

May 4 - June 1 - new lesson cycle, "The Miracle of Jesus."

June 8 - end of Sunday School Brunch.

ARTISTS WANTED - of all ages, especially kids. Help us paint a "Promise Rainbow" mural on the wall of the lower level of the education building. A sketch will be provided, and painting will take place after Communion (same time as Sunday School) on various Sundays throughout the summer. It is necessary to sign up in advance so that materials and supplies are on hand, as well as adult supervision for this project. Anyone interested in being part of this fun project please sign up by email or phone and let me know which Sundays you are available.

- Karen Noack
981-3989
kjsnoack@optonline.net

GOOD FRIDAY BLOOD DRIVE

Once again, we will be hosting our annual Good Friday Blood Drive on Friday, March 21 from 3 P.M to 8 P.M. in Mills Hall. Your gift of time and one pint of blood can save up to 3 lives in the Long Island community.

Eligibility criteria include:

- * Being between 17 - 76 years of age.
- * Minimum weight of 110 lbs.
- * No tatoos in the past 12 months.
- * Must have a valid I.D. and know your Social Security number.

Expect a call from a fellow parishioner in the upcoming weeks asking you to sign up. Since blood cannot be manufactured, its only source is healthy, caring people like you.

Please call me if you have any questions.

- Edna Rousseau
584-7853

NEWS OF THE PARISH FAMILY

Ernest Thompson, brother of Lilian Moleti, passed away in mid-February after an illness. We extend our sympathy to Lil, Bob, and their family.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to Darcy (Dorothy) Smith Borden and her husband, the Rev. Carl Borden on the birth of their son, George Robert, who was born on February 18. The proud grandfather is DuBois Smith. The family lives in the Fargo, ND area.

MARCH CALENDAR

- 3 Finance Committee 7:30 P.M.
4 Holy Eucharist 7 P.M.
Lenten Series 7:30 P.M.
Recovery Group 7:30 P.M.
6 Bible study 10 A.M.
Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.
10 Vestry meeting 7:30 P.M.
11 Holy Eucharist 7 P.M.
Lenten Series 7:30 P.M.
Recovery Group 7:30 P.M.
13 Bible study 10 A.M.
Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.
16 **Palm Sunday**
Holy Eucharist 8 & 9:30 A.M.
18 Recovery Group 7:30 P.M.
20 **Maundy Thursday** Soup &
Bread Supper followed by
Holy Eucharist
21 **Good Friday**
Service Noon - 3 P.M.
Blood Drive 3 - 8 P.M.
22 **Easter Eve** Vigil 7:00 P.M.
23 **Easter Day**
Holy Eucharist 8 A.M.
Holy Eucharist 9:30 A.M.
24 Office closed
25 Recovery Group 7:30 P.M.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Marge Kreussling
Emily Eckert
Ann Tebbutt
Tony DeVito
Ernie Harders
Marc DeSimone
Ken Wille
Dorothy Conn
Guy Reuge
Daniel Krall
Harry Toop
Carol Maybee
Justine Guinaw
Ruth Rutigliano
Patricia Brack
Emily Rose Miller
Derek Lally
Dolores Marge
Michael LaMano
Nancy Rasmussen
Ryan White

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Marc & Deidre DeSimone
Jeff & Karen Smith
Ralph & Patricia Martinsen
James & Nancy Petschauer

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Strawberry Festival - June 21
Harvest Festival - October 18