

ST. PAUL'S NEWS

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - LANSING, MICHIGAN

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Lent & Stewardship

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

It is not often you hear these two words linked together and yet, I wonder if they represent a worthy way of entering into the season of Lent this year. Both – Lent and good stewardship – require us to take the time necessary to discern how we will live our lives as Christians. Taking stock of what we have, both materially and spiritually; discerning what is getting in the way of living fully into the life God has given us – be it cobwebs in our spiritual closet or an imbalance in our expenditure of resources.

I think we forget that stewardship is not about the annual pledge drive – which, by the way, is an important fundraising effort to keep the doors of the church open, the heat on, and the photocopier running. Stewardship is about taking stock of all that we have, the many resources God has gifted us in terms of our time, our gifts and talents, and our financial resources; and then stewarding the use of them in a way that is supportive of God's creative efforts in our world.

Lent in many ways, requires the same thoughtful and prayerful process – taking stock of our lives and all that we have and are – considering how we are living into and out of our faith – and consciously letting go of those things that block our paths to spiritual health. Lent is our yearly reminder to tend to our Christian being – physical, spiritual and emotional – and ask the questions of how well we are stewarding these God-given resources. How is your prayer life? Are there areas in your faith that need tending to? In what ways are you supporting God's efforts to bring

about a kingdom of justice and mercy for all? Christ died for all of us – how does that impact my daily life and future efforts? Lent and stewardship – not such an odd couple after all.

2016 Lenten Meditations

Each year, Episcopal Relief & Development (ER&D) produces a small book of meditations for the Lenten season. Once again, we are pleased to provide you with a copy of this booklet which offers each day a prayer or scripture reading, and a brief meditation written to aid you in deepening your faith in the risen Christ and strengthen your connection to our community. I commend this booklet to all of you and it is available in the Merrifield Room on the sign-up table.

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...and more!



We're on the web!
www.stpaulslansing.org

Lent and the Liturgy for Lent

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

The paschal mystery of the dying and rising again of Jesus Christ and our participation therein is the theological core of the gospel, and its liturgical celebration is the central event of the church year.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of this season of repentance, penitence, reflection, contemplation, fasting, and self-denial. Our liturgy on this day has its roots in the Old Testament, where covering oneself with sackcloth and ashes was a sign of repentance and mourning. Early Christians also used sackcloth and ashes as a sign of their repentance. The imposition of ashes during this service is intended to give ceremonial embodiment to the theme of penitence. Ash Wednesday was also the day public penitents were admitted to their penitential discipline, so that they might be readmitted to communion before Easter. Taken together, these rites remind us that we stand before God as sinners doomed to die, and that it is only through God's merciful gift that we can hope for anything else.

Since the early days of the Church, Lent has been a time of preparation for deeper commitment to Christ (the preparation of baptismal candidates) and a time of renewal and re-dedication to the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant. I offer you the following for reflection so that your Lent may be a holy experience.

Repentance

The prophet Joel sounds the call in the Old Testament Lesson on Ash Wednesday, "Turn back to me with your whole heart . . . turn back to the Lord your God; for he is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever constant, always ready to repent of the threatened evil." (Joel 2:12-13). Lent is a time of conscious turning to the Lord in honest and sincere ways. It is a time of reaffirming previous conversion experiences and with renewed vigor, to set Christ and the things of God as the central focus of your life. Lent is a time to re-establish priorities. What are your priorities and do they reflect God's presence in our life?

Penitence

When we consciously turn to God, we know we are mortal, frail, weak, and not in complete control of ourselves. We know that we have, in the words of St. Paul, "sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." And so as a mark of the sincerity of our repentance we confess our sins, examine our consciences, deal with the dark side of our lives and seek God's forgiveness. What are the sins which need confessing so that you might feel the overwhelming love of God's forgiveness and grace?

Reflection

We take time in Lent to reflect on the Word of God in scripture through regular worship and participation in the sacramental life of the Church, as the special means of Grace. We study . . . we pray . . . we meditate . . . we listen for God! In Lent we make a special effort to clear our minds of unimportant things and think about ultimate things: sin and redemption; freedom from our idols; our separation from God and our salvation; death and resurrection. What are those things that clutter your mind and use your energy that prevent you from focusing on God and our salvation?

Simplicity

Lent is a special season and calls forth the need for austerity to reflect the themes of penitence. The music, the liturgies, the simplicity of the altar setting clearly state that Lent is a time when there are changes from our normal way of doing things in the Sunday liturgy.

Worship in Lent

The First Sunday of Lent begins with The Great Litany. The gateway to Easter joy is the acknowledgement of our limitations and the seeking of forgiveness. It is one of the chief ways we prepare for Easter. The Great Litany has been used in the Church for centuries. Today, we join our Christian brothers and sisters who have gone before us as we pray this litany.

Sunday liturgy for Lent 2 through Lent 5

The remaining Sunday liturgies in Lent will begin with the Penitential Order. This draws our attention to our sinful nature and need for God's forgiveness.

I invite all of you into a holy Lent – to consider this a time of change and growth; a time to reflect on your faith life and your commitment to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; a time to prepare yourself to receive God's grace as one of his children, holy and beloved. May all of you find newness of life and forgiveness of sins during our forty days of Lent.

Lenten Book Reviews

Four Mondays in February and March

By Chris Couch

St. Paul's will continue its tradition of Lenten luncheon book reviews this year on four Mondays in February and March. Lunch will be at noon (\$7), with the reviews from 12:30 pm to 1 pm. You should sign up in the Merrifield Room if you plan to eat so we can get an accurate count for food. You are welcome to bring your own lunch. There is no need to sign up if you are not eating but just showing up for the review. Here is this year's quite varied lineup of reviewers and books:

February 22 – Rev. Karen Lewis reviews *The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing from Your Bible*, by Joel M. Hoffman. The book "gives us the stories and other texts that didn't make it into the Bible even though they offer penetrating insight into the Bible and its teachings."

February 29 – Chris Couch reviews *Lamentation*, a Matthew Shardlake Mystery Novel, by C.J. Sansom. This is a mystery/detective novel set during the waning days of the reign of Henry VIII, as Protestants and Catholics battle for control of the future, endangering the radically Protestant Queen Catherine Parr.

March 7 – Sue LeDuc reviews the *Secret Chord: A Novel* by Geraldine Brooks, a novel about the life of King David.

The publishers say that "Brooks takes on one of literature's richest and most enigmatic figures: a man who shimmers between history and legend. Peeling away the myth to bring David to life in Second Iron Age Israel, Brooks traces the arc of his journey from obscurity to fame, from shepherd to soldier, from hero to traitor, from beloved king to murderous despot and into his remorseful and diminished dotage."

March 14 – Mark Rudd reviews *The New Jim Crow- Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. According to Mark, Professor Alexander makes a strong case that the War on Drugs, specifically targeting black men, has led to their mass incarceration and relegated millions to a permanent second-class status, thus decimating communities of color. She argues that the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a modern system of racial control- a new Jim Crow. In keeping with our theme this year at St. Paul's of learning about and addressing issues of race, this is an especially important message to hear.

Sacred Conversations - 2016 Lenten Series

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

Our Wednesday night Lenten series this year will continue our focus on racial justice and the sin of racism. Each evening, we will utilize materials developed by the Trinity Institute to aid us in engaging in those uncomfortable conversations about racism, the racial turmoil of our age, and our role in building racial justice. This five-week course features prominent Episcopalians, academics, and sociologists through video presentations followed by our own small group conversations. The schedule of classes are:

February 17

Spirituality and Racial Justice with
The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, our Presiding Bishop

February 24

Witness and Racial Justice with
The Rev. Kelly Brown Douglas

March 2

Reparation and Racial Justice with Jennifer Harvey

March 9

Theology and Racial Justice with J. Kameron Carter

March 16

Racism and Racial Justice with Eduardo Bonilla-Silva

I realize that racism and racial injustice are difficult topics for conversation. I realize that most of us believe that we are not racists, which suggests all the more that we need to be part of this conversation so that we can begin to understand our role in a world where for too long, people of color have been treated in horrific ways that, at times, is beyond our comprehension. My hope is that you will join us in this journey of learning and conversation— one that Christ has called all of us to which we accept each time we renew our baptismal promises.

Dinner from The Catered Affaire will be offered at 5:30 PM at a cost of \$7.00 and the class will start at 6:30 PM. Please sign up if you will be eating dinner.

PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Music Notes

By Jeff Walker, Minister of Music

In September I enrolled the church as an affiliate member of the Royal School of Church Music. Founded in England more than 80 years ago, it has become an international and ecumenical organization with over 11,000 members. During January I started to use their fine choir training program, Voice for Life, with the children's and youth choirs, and also certain components of it with the adult choir.

The curriculum includes a series of five progressive workbooks. The main topics are posture, breathing, using the voice properly, musical notation, singing with understanding, and how to sing in a choir. In just a few short weeks, the use of these materials has made a noticeable difference in all three choirs. I'm excited to continue this excellent program through the rest of the choir year and beyond.



Celebrating Dorothy Marsh

Susan Henderson and Barb Bellinger-Heany were among those celebrating Dorothy Marsh on her 90th birthday in January with her family at the Olive Garden. Dorothy, a retired social worker and advocate for persons with developmental disabilities, is a longtime member of St. Paul's. She has served several times on Vestry, been active in social justice ministries and mission and outreach programs, was a Lay Eucharistic Minister, and earned a reputation as a book reviewer extraordinaire, among many other things.

It's on the Calendar Save the dates!

By Susan Millar

The ERD Used Book Sale is scheduled for two Sundays, **February 21 and 28**. We will need your book donations by *February 14*. You may leave your donations next to the elevator, in or next to the red bin (Books in good condition, CDs and DVDs -- please, no texts, magazines, or computer manuals).

Parishioners and friends: Please search your shelves for books that you have enjoyed but probably won't read again but that others might enjoy. When you donate these books you are making space on your bookshelves for "new" ones that you may purchase during the sale. This is what we call a win-win situation!

And keep in mind what motivates our planning for this sale in the first place: Raising funds to support the work of Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) as it strives to transform lives. This happens when they help people feed their families, work to keep entire communities healthy, and assist people to grow their businesses and invest in the future. We can make a difference!

So please join others, donating and buying books. When you pay for your purchase, generously add a contribution to the price of your books to strengthen and increase this wonderful work of outreach done through our national church.

A Thank-You from Debby Pierce

Thanks to all of St. Elizabeth Guild, B&PW and ECW and countless others.

A very big Thank You to all who helped me this past year with at the many setups and preparing food for different occasions and especially for taking care of the Funeral Reception for my Mother. You all are so responsive to any request - I love you all.

PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

News from the Annual Meeting

St. Paul's held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 24, after the 10 am service, just as we were going to press, and here are some of the highlights.

- Rev. Karen Lewis, who led the meeting, thanked the outgoing members of the Vestry, Marti Narezo, Chris Krupka, and John David Hawkins for their service to the parish. Special thanks to Chris Krupka, who served this past year as Senior Warden. Laura Julier, who has been filling a vacancy since summer, is eligible for re-election.
 - Four new members were elected to the Vestry by acclamation: Keeli Baker, Larissa Clark, Laura Julier, and Jim Milne.
 - Two delegates to the diocesan convention were elected: Kathy Vogel and Lyn Zynda. A third delegate will be selected later.
 - Marilyn Maloney was the recipient of the Canterbury Award for her devotion to the parish, in particular taking communion to parishioners unable to attend church.
 - Jeffery Irwin presented the Treasurer's Report, covering the financial results for 2015 and the prospects for the budget in 2016. Jeff reported that the 2015 financial results were on budget and gave us reason for optimism. There was no need to use the Perpetual Fund during the year. But he also reported reasons for concern about 2016. The 2016 operating budget has not been finalized by the Vestry because
- a decrease in pledges from the previous year projects to a substantial deficit. If additional pledges are not obtained, the Vestry will face the challenge of reducing costs.
 - Jeff Irwin also reported that an audit of 2014 financial records was conducted by Kirk Lindquist, Bradley Deacon, and Libby Richardson, and their report did not indicate any significant concerns in the financial records or processes. Treasurer Irwin thanked the team for their service. He also expressed appreciation to Theresa Milne, who serves as bookkeeper, in addition to her duties as Parish Administrator; to Libby Richardson for her assistance with bookkeeping; and to Rev. Karen Lewis.
 - Rev. Karen Lewis presented her year-in-review report for a year that she began as priest-in-charge and ended as Rector. More on this in future editions.
 - During the Annual Meeting, parishioners conferred at their tables on ways to increase revenues in the coming year, and later the results were shared meeting-wide.
 - At the Vestry meeting immediately after the Annual Meeting, the Vestry elected Lyn Zynda as Senior Warden and Jeff Kressler as Junior Warden for the coming year.
 - Copies of the Annual Report for 2015 and the 2015 Annual Financial Report are available in the Parish House.

The following is a letter to the parish from Sally Lawrence, whose husband Don died December 27th.

GRATEFUL

Dear St. Paul's family,

There are no adequate words to express my thanks for your outpouring of support and love during a very difficult time. Whether it was with kind words and a hug, cards, food, helping with the beautiful service or luncheon, or many other ways, it was a great gift to me and the family. When it was time for the family to leave, they did find it difficult, but they all observed the wonderful support I receive from the St. Paul's family and said it made leaving a little easier. They knew I was cared for and in good hands. Thank you for that; you are truly a special place, and I am blessed that Don and I found our way here over ten years ago.

~Sally Lawrence

YOUTH

Parent Forum

Has your child ever asked you if Grandpa/Grandma is sleeping and you are stumped with how to explain death to them? Join us on **Sunday, February 21, after the 10:00AM service** for our first Parent Forum. Our topic is how to explain Death and Dying to children. Carol Laub, Kathy Vogel, and Rev. Karen Lewis will be our panel to offer ideas, answer questions, and provide a theological guide. Activities will be provided for the children. Bring a dish to pass and join us for conversation.

Lenten Scavenger Hunt!

We will once again explore our building with a Lenten Scavenger Hunt **each Sunday in Lent, beginning February 14th**. The children will meet in the Chapel after each 10:00 AM service to receive their clues to different parts of the building and a prize.

Lenten Devotional

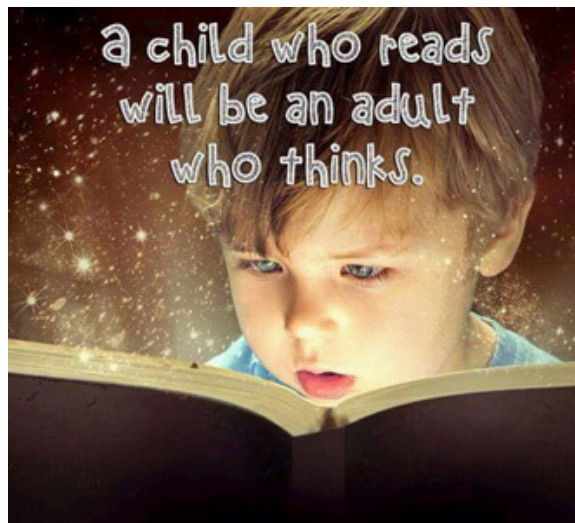
This year for Lent we will be taking a journey in Prayer with 6 Holy Women and Holy Men. We will learn about, pray with, and live out our faith with these Holy People. Each week has 7 activities for you as a family to do. The children are encouraged to bring in the activity, place it on the hall bulletin board and receive a prize.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is here! Well the curriculum is here. This year's theme is Egypt: Joseph's Journey from prison to palace. We will gather **June 13-17** for fun, faith, and fellowship! And lots of singing and dancing! All volunteers are welcome!

St. Paul's Reading Corner

By Barb Lindquist



*The Word of God
can be imprisoned
in a book.
It can also be
preserved in a book,
and it can be
released
through a book,
to take wings
in the minds
and hearts
and hands
of its readers.
~Erwin John*

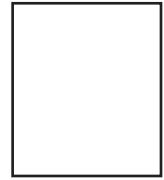
Start a new habit for Lent – check out a book to share with a child in your life!

Calendar

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Sanctuary 4:30 PM Lange Ensemble 6:30 PM Bible Study	1 9:00 AM Bhutanese Refugee Support Group-Merrifield 12:00 PM 4Fs	2 FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION/CANDLEMAS 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service 6:00 PM Stewardship Ministry Team	3 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 4:00 PM St. Aelred's Ministry 5:30 PM Children's Choir 5:30 PM Mission & Outreach Ministry	4 5:00 PM EIP Classes (Drive Defensive) 6:00 PM Youth Choir 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	5 OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 PM AA Meeting	6
7 FOOD BANK SUNDAY 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Sanctuary 4:30 PM Lange Ensemble	8 9:00 AM Bhutanese Refugee Support Group-Merrifield 6:30 PM Building & Grounds Ministry	9 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service 6:00 PM B & PW	10 ASH WEDNESDAY 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 12:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service in Chapel 5:30 PM Children's Choir 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service in Sanctuary	11 Theresa Milne Away 6:00 PM Youth Choir 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	12 OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 PM AA Meeting	13
14 Baptism Anniversary Celebration 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Sanctuary 11:30 AM Communications Committee 4:30 PM Lange Ensemble 5:00 PM Youth Group	15 ERD Book Sale Set UP 9:00 AM Bhutanese Refugee Support Group-Merrifield 6:00 PM Vestry Dinner - Meeting @ 6:30 pm 11:59 PM SPN Deadline!!	16 ERD Book Sale Set UP 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service	17 ERD Book Sale Set UP 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 5:30 PM Children's Choir 6:30 PM Lenten Series & Dinner w/the Rev. Lewis	18 ERD Book Sale Set UP The Rev. Lewis-- Fresh Start All Day 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 6:00 PM Youth Choir 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	19 ERD Book Sale Set UP OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 PM AA Meeting	20 ERD Book Sale Set UP
21 ERD BOOK SALE 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Sanctuary 11:30 AM Parent Forum 4:30 PM Lange Ensemble	22 ERD BOOK SALE 9:00 AM Bhutanese Refugee Support Group-Merrifield 12:00 PM Lenten Book Study w/lunch 5:30 PM Liturgy & Music Ministry 6:00 PM Recycling Ministry Team	23 ERD BOOK SALE 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service	24 ERD BOOK SALE 9:00 AM 4Cs 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 5:30 PM Children's Choir 6:30 PM Lenten Series & Dinner w/the Rev. Lewis	25 ERD BOOK SALE The Rev. Lewis Away-Repairers of the Breach 6:00 PM Youth Choir 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	26 ERD BOOK SALE OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 PM AA Meeting	27 ERD BOOK SALE Vestry Retreat
28 ERD BOOK SALE The Rev. Dr. Carter Away 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Chapel 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion in Sanctuary 4:30 PM Lange Ensemble 5:00 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM Bible Study	29 9:00 AM Bhutanese Refugee Support Group-Merrifield 12:00 PM Lenten Book Study w/lunch	1 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service 6:00 PM Stewardship Ministry Team	2 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 4:00 PM St. Aelred's Ministry 5:30 PM Children's Choir 5:30 PM Mission & Outreach Ministry 6:30 PM Lenten Series & Dinner w/the Rev. Lewis	3 6:00 PM Youth Choir 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	4 OFFICE CLOSED 12:00 PM AA Meeting	5 DIOCESAN COUNCIL

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Laurie Nevin
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Kathy Vogel



Enter St. Paul's Guardian of the Golden Halo contest today!

Complete a Lent Madness Bracket and turn it into the office or place it in the offering plate by 2/10/2016. Voting is online and begins on February 11th. To read complete details go to www.stpaulslansing.org click on Adult Education, and scroll down to Lent Madness.
