

The Messenger

A newsletter of

St. John's Episcopal Church

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The Rev Mark Preece, Interim Rector

February 2012

Building for the future with thanksgiving and praise

Message from our Interim Rector

Dear Friends—

In a couple of weeks, it'll be Ash Wednesday, and we will once more be invited "to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God' holy Word." (BCP, page 264) Ready or not, it's almost Lent; time to think about how we'll answer the invitation this year.

Lent can seem like a dismal time of giving things up – it can in fact *be* a dismal time, if we're not careful – but the prayer book also reminds us that the point of Lent is to "cleanse our hearts" so that we can "prepare with joy for the Paschal feast." However we observe Lent, joy is always in season.

Many people have places of refreshment they love, places they return to regularly. Maybe it's a cabin by a lake or a house at the shore, maybe it's a place to ski. We love these places not because of the luxury or choice they offer – going there may in fact mean giving up cable channels, high-speed internet, and some of the other comforts of home. Rather, we love these places because they allow us to *focus* on a certain quality of life: hanging around in the water, racing down a mountain, spending undistracted time with people we love.

Lent can be a time of refreshment in our lives, too: a time to focus on the source of our life and peace and hope. Lent invites us to indulge in the luxury of taking ourselves seriously, to examine our lives honestly, identifying the things that distract us from what we know in our heart of hearts is most important. It calls us to live without duplicity, which literally

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means doubleness. The Ash Wednesday gospel has Jesus criticizing people who do the right thing not simply because it's the right thing, but in order to impress other people as well. He tells us to do whatever we do with one audience in mind: God, "who sees in secret." Decide what's important, he says, and focus.

Here's what's in the traditional Lenten toolkit:

Fasting (reducing our consumption of food);
Self-denial (giving up something we find pleasurable);
Prayer (committing ourselves to a prayer discipline);
Spiritual reading and study (scripture or some other nourishing texts);
Self-examination and confession (committing to a discipline of awareness of the way we live our lives);
Good works (find something worth doing and commit to a discipline of doing it).

Would you like to be part of a Lenten group here at St. John's? There are lots of possibilities that seem intriguing to me (from exploring the future of the church to studying the ancient Prophets; from contemplative prayer to contemporary short stories with spiritual content), but choosing a topic and scheduling time can be a challenge unless we have a sense of who's interested. We still have plenty of time to get whatever materials are involved. Please email me (rector@StJohnsRandolphVt.org) or grab me after church if you'd like to explore this.

Or maybe you feel called to do something on your own. Either way, "God comes to us disguised as our life," as an old friend of mine used to say. Lent is a time to commit ourselves to making whatever changes we need to make so that we can pay attention.

Peace,

Mark

Vestry of St. John's

Steven Eubanks, Senior Warden
Ray Mayer, Junior Warden
Linda Nagy

Nancy Wright
Susan O'Malley
Ellen Baker

Treasurer, William Arnold

Receipts Treasurer, Jane Eubanks

Clerk, Pat Mayer

Delegates to 2011 Diocesan Convention – Mickie Richardson, Marcia Stone, Neil Richardson
Alternate Delegates – Gay Gaston, Susan O'Malley, Nancy Wright

Please visit our website <http://stjohnsrandolphvt.org>

Our e-mail info@stjohnsrandolphvt.org

Shrove Tuesday

There will be a pancake supper at St. John's hall on Shrove Tuesday, February 21st at 5:00 pm

Schedule of Church Services on Ash Wednesday

Services on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd, will be at Noon and 6:00 pm

St. Margaret's Guild

The St. Margaret's Guild will meet FRIDAY, February 3rd, at 5:30 pm for a potluck dinner and meeting. Please come and join us as we plan our year!

FINISHING FRIDAYS will continue every Friday afternoon. Bring a bag lunch or come after lunch. All welcome!

Thanks, Pat Lawrence

MDC (Ministry Discernment Committee)

The committee would like to thank the parishioners of St. John's Church for their interest, questions and suggestions. We appreciate and carefully consider any input or concerns you have brought to our attention.

At this time we are busily preparing for our History Event which is scheduled for March 4th, right after the 10 o'clock service. At this get together we want to focus on important events that have taken place in the history of St. John's Church. For the History Event to be a success, it will require stories and recollections from as many of you as possible. Some of you may be or have been asked to share some information at this event. It is our hope that all members of the congregation will share any memory they have or history that has been passed on to them. It is important that we consider who we were and where we have been in order to discern who we want to be and where we are going.

We look forward to seeing you all on March 4th. If you can not be at the History Event and wish to share some information, please contact one of the committee members.

Thank you,

Carol Doss, Chairperson

Pastoral Care Committee

Once again, the Pastoral Care Committee met by telephone due to a variety of reasons. And once again, we are grateful that nothing earth shattering needs our attention. Cards and phone calls were made to those parishioners who remain on our “watch” list. The visit to the Joslyn House was a Morning Prayer service rather than Communion due to the break-in at church where items from the Visitor’s kit were stolen.

I remind you that the members of the Pastoral Care Committee are:

Pat Mayer

Ginny Cantlin

Beth Pelletier

Lee Sease

Mickie Richardson

Should you be aware of someone who is experiencing great things to be shared or difficulties that we should be aware of, please let any one of us know so that we may follow up. Our mission is to take good care of our own.

Respectfully submitted – Mickie Richardson

Community Notes

>Randolph Community Suppers<

The Community Supper for February will be held on Tuesday, February 28th at Bethany Church, Main St., Randolph – Pot Luck by the folks at Bethany. Doors open at 5 pm

>Lenten breakfasts at Bethany<

The long-standing tradition of breakfast each Wednesday morning during Lent at Bethany Church is being held again this year. Clergy from various churches in the area will be the speakers each Wednesday. The breakfasts begin at 7 am. The first one will be held on Wednesday February 29th and will continue through April 4th.

Anniversaries – February 2012

Weddings:

Feb 17 Jim and Judy Gardner

Birthdays:

Feb 1 Phil Plumb	Feb 13 Ginny Cantlin
Feb 5 Jane Eubanks	Feb 18 Nancy Wright

Baptisms:

Feb 11 Anna Sease

Sunday ministries

	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Readers</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
Feb 5 10 am	Ray Mayer	Pat Mayer	Susan O'Malley
Feb 12 10 am	Gay Gaston	Mickie Richardson	Mickie and Neil
Feb 19 10 am	Steve Eubanks	Christine Gilbert	Anna/Lee Sease
Feb 26 10 am	Bob Sparadeo	Neil Richardson	Ellen/Phil Plumb

	<u>Oblations</u>	<u>Intercessions</u>	<u>Coffee Hour</u>
Feb 5 10 am	Ellen/Phil Plumb	Carol Doss	Jane Eubanks
Feb 12 10 am	Nancy Wright/Joyce Burrell	Neil Richardson	Susan O'Malley
Feb 19 10 am	Pat and Ray Mayer	Linda Runnion	Louise Clark
Feb 26 10 am	David/Gay Gaston	Mickie Richardson	Mickie Richardson