



THE PARISH PAPERS

St. James' Episcopal Church Parkton, Maryland



March, 2009

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. James',

Lent is a season set aside for self-examination so that we can discover anew what it means to be compassionate, forgiving, and caring Christians. For 40 days, we take time to reflect and pray about our relationship to God and to one another. This means offering thanks for the blessings of our life, and asking God once again, or perhaps for the first time: What are you calling me to do? What direction should my life take? Lent gives us the opportunity to align our lives with God's plan.

But to do this, we must repent of the wrong things "we have done" and of the good things "we have left undone." And so, with greater clarity and humility of heart, we pray, fast, and worship together, preparing ourselves for the great feast of Easter and to receive again the gift of eternal life.

The word Lent comes from the old English word for springtime. The Lenten season is a time for spiritual inventory-taking and spring-cleaning. A good way to begin would be to take on the kind of daily spiritual discipline that can deepen our faith in remarkable new ways: saying Morning Prayer at home or at church (9 a.m. Monday-Thursday), keeping a journal about our spiritual progress, helping out at a local food bank or shelter, writing letters (not e-mails) to relatives, befriending a neighbor in a new and genuine way, reading a spiritual classic (Thomas Merton, John Donne, Evelyn Underhill, Henri Nouwen), joining the Lenten reading group Thursday mornings, reading one of the books of Scripture (Genesis, Job, the Psalms, the Gospel of Luke, Hebrews).

And as we make our Lenten journey, we might ask ourselves these questions: Am I sharing gladly what I have with others? Am I showing more patience and understanding of my family, my friends? Am I listening more carefully to God, to others—and complaining less? Am I becoming a truly forgiving person? Am I less judgmental? What am I doing for those in need?

One theologian compared Lent to the opening of a window to the fresh air of spring. Lent is like that. As we open the window of our hearts, new life flows in, allowing our wills to be conformed more fully to God's. This wonderful Lenten collect gives us the guidance we need:

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men: Grant unto thy people that they may love the things which Thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found."

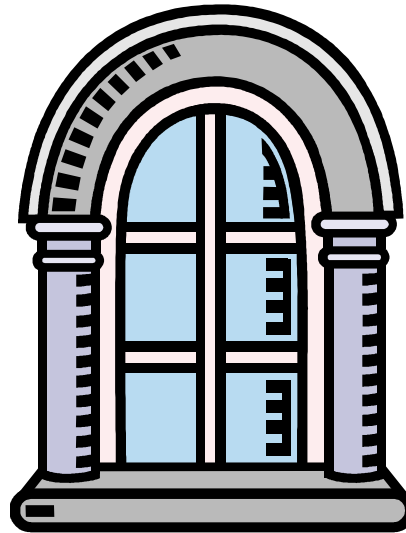
I invite you to the observance of a holy Lent.

Blessings always,
Elizabeth +

Dedicated to the Ones We Love

When the Education Wing was added to the St. James Parish Hall, an extensive fund raising drive was conducted to pay for the beautiful addition. Almost all of the money needed was raised, and we use the facility most every day. "Almost all" means we still have approximately \$60,000 to pay toward the mortgage.

As part of the original fund raising effort, individual architectural elements were made available for dedication. The first sale was conducted several years ago and



Upcoming Dates:
 Finance Meeting:
 Monday, Mar. 2, 7 p.m.

we completed dedication of the memorial plaques this fall.

In an effort to further reduce the debt, we are now offering the remaining elements for dedication. This is a great opportunity to remember someone dear to you.

The posters are located in the Parish Hall. Just sign your name for any open item (anonymous donations are also accepted) and give your payment to Chuck Schomann or the Rev. Elizabeth Orens.

Thank you for your support.

St. James' Preschool

Ingrid Carr, Director

Preschool has SOUPER February

We had so much success with our "Happy Feet" shoe drive. Our goal of 100 pairs exceeded that thanks to everyone's generosity.

The children celebrated their own "Souper Bowl" on Feb. 6. They were split into four teams, and they participated in various events from relay races and a bean bag toss to carpet "skating" on paper plates. All these events were followed by an amazing snack/lunch of soup, sandwiches, chips and salsa and pigs in a blanket. It was truly a fun-filled day.

A few days before Valentine's Day, the students took a walking field trip to the Parkton Post Office. There they learned about the internal goings-on of a Post Office, toured a mail truck and listened to a story read by the postmaster. To end the field trip the students mailed their handmade Valentine's Day cards to their parents.

The school hosted two Open Houses in February for enrollment purposes. We are accepting enrollment for our 2-year, 3-year, 4-year and Pre-K classes. If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please call the school at 410-357-9401 for information or to set up a visit.

**Mortgage
Meal**

**Sunday, March 29
5-6:30 p.m.
Free-Will Donation**



Reserve Your Seat:
 Call 410-357-4473 or sign-up
 in the Parish Hall

Vestry Nominations

The Vestry is accepting nominations for the next class.

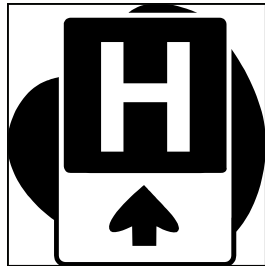
Parishioners can send their nomination to:
Steve Fox: sandlfox@aol.com or 410-343-2238
Scott Phillips: ksps4@aol.com
Emilie Pieper: emilie@manorview.com
Nominations due by April 17.

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday: April 5, 8 & 10 a.m.
Maundy Thursday: April 9, 7 p.m.
Good Friday Service: April 10, 12 Noon
Open for prayer from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Holy Saturday: April 11, 10 a.m.
Easter Day: April 12, 8 & 10 a.m.

Fund Raiser for Al Ahli Arab Hospital

In January, the middle school Sunday School class discussed the conflict in Gaza. Although there were different perspectives on who is right in this conflict, we all agreed that the victims of war merited our support. The children decided to hold a fundraiser for the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, an Anglican hospital that has been in operation for more than 100 years. This hospital had been hard hit by shortages of supplies combined with increased demand for care from Gaza residents injured in the conflict. The middle-schoolers organized a cookie bake on a Sunday in January. Assisted by the high school class, the warm cookies at coffee hour raised over \$175 in donations for the hospital. Thanks to all of the St. James' community for their support of this important effort.



14th Annual St. James'

Springfest

Saturday, May 16
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Live Entertainment
Children's Games &
Activities

Silent Auction
Civil War Encampment
Lots of Great Food
Crafters/Flea Market
Plants, Jewelry, Gifts
Wine Tasting

Don't Miss the Early Bird Breakfast

10x12 Vendor Spaces Available

410-357-4473



March Anniversaries & Birthdays

20 Gloria and Ken Whitaker
30 Ginny and Dick North



1 Jerry Matthews
3 Laura Greeley
5 Mary Schweitzer
9 Abby Walters
10 Genevieve Merryman
17 Wendy Pickering

Beyond the Brown Bag

In view of St. James' generous support of the Hereford Food Bank at Christmas and throughout the year, I wanted to become better acquainted with its history and workings. To this end, I recently met with Cathy Aiken, the new director.

Approximately two years ago, in response to the community needs, the Rev. Steve Cochran, pastor of the Hereford Methodist Church, established the Hereford Food Bank on church property. It remains there today and is the oldest of the three food banks in northern Baltimore County.

Early in 2008, the food bank was serving approximately 34 families. As the economic situation has worsened, need has increased and approximately 63 families are receiving assistance of some kind through the food bank. These include disabled, seniors, single parents and the unemployed. The average family size is three individuals.

On initial contact with the food bank, a family can obtain emergency food supplies for two weeks without verification of need. During this time, the director may assist the clients in identifying and verifying their needs and help them make contact with appropriate social Service agencies in the county. Beyond this, the director may intervene to forestall eviction, loss of utilities, supply heating fuel or assist with a late mortgage payment.

Each week a family can get a prepacked brown grocery bag of assorted staples. They may also choose two extra items from the shelves such as condiments or sugar. Additionally, one package of meat is given from the freezer, usually ground beef, pork chops, or chicken as well as two canned meat products such as spam or beef stew. At Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, an additional bag is given which includes a turkey or ham and seasonal items to provide a holiday meal as well as soup ingredients for later.

Support for the food bank comes from many sources including area churches, schools, scouts, local businesses and individuals. Graul's Food market provides meat and some baked goods and maintains an ongoing basket for staple contributions. First Fruit Farm donates in season produce and the USDA occasionally offers assistance in the form of donations.

Food stamps are limited to the purchase of food only so the donations of paper products, basic toiletries, diapers and sanitary items as well as cleaning supplies are always welcome. Detergents are needed in small sizes as the amount offered each week/month is limited and the law forbids repackaging of these items from larger packages.

Mrs. Aiken is exploring Federal Grants in hopes of eventually finding funds to help relocate the food bank at another location in the community as the church is currently involved in a building project and the food bank housing is very small.

The food bank, located on Monkton Road next to the Hereford Fire Co., is open Tuesday and Thursday, 2-3p.m. and Saturday, 9-11 a.m.

Currently, the food bank is staffed by 34 volunteers and help is always needed. Volunteers can work as few as 1 or 2 hours a month. This is a very worthwhile project. If interested in volunteering, you can contact Mrs. Aiken, at 410-343-0600 ext. 2.

Newsletter Survey

Are you interested in receiving the *Parish Papers* electronically? Do you prefer the paper copy or do you wait until you can read it online at www.stjamesparkton.org? Please contact Sharon Tillman, *Parish Papers* editor, with your preference.

With the Finance Committee exploring ways to cut costs, one way is to reduce postage and photocopying. Using an online resource, Constant Contact, I can produce the *Parish Papers* online and deliver it to your inbox. No additional software is needed for you to view it and it opens in your inbox, even with dial-up. Contact me with any questions or to let me know your newsletter preference.

sjtillman.trac@comcast.net or stillman@ang-md.org; 410-746-5251 or after 10 a.m. services

