

Special Dates of Interest

- Nov. 2 Gleaners Work Day
- Nov. 3 Baptisms
- Nov. 17 Annual Pledge In-gathering
- Nov. 18 American Red Cross
Blood Drive — Sign Up Now
- Nov. 28 Thanksgiving
OFFICE CLOSED

Check the weekly parish email, bulletin announcements, or the online calendar for a complete and up-to-date schedule of events.

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DEADLINE

December newsletter articles due Monday, November 11, 2013.

MAY I SUGGEST? BY THE REV. LISA TUCKER-GRAY



(Excerpted from Gratitude Sunday sermon, October 13, 2013
Read or listen to the whole sermon at: www.stjohnsplymouth.org.)

Then one of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice... Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?"

—(excerpted from Luke 17)

I don't know about you; more often than not, I have found myself to be one of the nine — one of those who, after receiving a gift along the way, has not always remembered to turn around and give thanks to God. But today, that is exactly what we are going to do.

Today is "Gratitude Sunday."

Today we are going to take time to think a bit about what we are grateful for- large or small; to offer specific words of thanks.

Today we are invited to be the Samaritan, the one who gave thanks, and not one of the nine who forgot.

Imagine that you have just turned around and come back to find Jesus to say thank you for this particular gift, blessing, healing, awareness.

Then write down your gift on your leaf you were handed when you came in this morning. We will be adding these leaves to the tree on the wall at the entrance for all to see our many blessings in the remaining weeks of this stewardship season.

Taking time to give thanks is simply another way of giving back to God, or to put it another way it is a way of loving God back. A number of years ago, author Anne Lamott explained in her book *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith* why she made her then teenage son, Sam, go to church with her every two weeks. I think her reason, as a parent is the same reason we need to be here today.

She writes:

I want him to go. We live in bewildering, drastic times, and a little spiritual guidance never killed anyone. I want him to see the people who loved me when I felt the most unlovable. I want him to see their faces... Kids who do not go to church are adored by God as well, but they don't get to meet some of the people who love God back. Learning to love back is the hardest part of being alive.

So take a few minutes now, write something on your leaf and you'll be loving God back.

STAY CONNECTED
Church: 734-453-0190

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Priest-in-Charge

734.834.0132
priestlisa@stjohnsplymouth.org

The Reverend Jeanne Hansknecht
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Office Hours:
Mon.-Fri: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

PASTORAL CARE

To inform Priest Lisa of a pastoral care need or emergency, please call or email using the contact information above.

Eucharistic and BeFriender Visits

The **BeFriender Ministry** is a lay pastoral care program. Trained lay persons enter into caring relationships with those in need of pastoral care, providing emotional and spiritual support.

Eucharistic Visitors bring communion to the homebound and those in hospitals or other care facilities.

To arrange a pastoral visit at home, or BeFriender or Eucharistic visits, contact Becky Nickels at 734.981.6831.

MAY I SUGGEST, *continued from page 1*

May I Suggest
by Susan Werner

May I suggest
May I suggest to you
May I suggest this is the best part of your life
May I suggest
This time is blessed for you
This time is blessed and shining almost blinding bright
Just turn your head
And you'll begin to see
The thousand reasons that were just beyond your sight
The reasons why
Why I suggest to you
Why I suggest this is the best part of your life

There is a world
That's been addressed to you
Addressed to you, intended only for your eyes
A secret world
Like a treasure chest to you
Of private scenes and brilliant dreams that mesmerise
A lover's trusting smile
A tiny baby's hands
The million stars that fill the turning sky at night
Oh I suggest
Oh I suggest to you
Oh I suggest this is the best part of your life

There is a hope
That's been expressed in you
The hope of seven generations, maybe more
And this is the faith
That they invest in you
It's that you'll do one better than was done before
Inside you know
Inside you understand
Inside you know what's yours to finally set right
And I suggest
And I suggest to you
And I suggest this is the best part of your life

This is a song
Comes from the west to you
Comes from the west, comes from the slowly setting sun
With a request
With a request of you
To see how very short the endless days will run
And when they're gone
And when the dark descends
Oh we'd give anything for one more hour of light
And I suggest this is the best part of your life

May it be so.

Blessings,

Priest Lisa

BLACK THURSDAY OR THE HOLIDAY FORMERLY KNOWN AS THANKSGIVING



BY THE REV. JEANNE HANSKNECHT

My favorite Thanksgiving memory as a child was when my parents and I visited my brother and his young family. They had just purchased their first home, and modest is really too nice of a word to describe it. My sister-in-law was fretting when we arrived on Wednesday because their gas oven wasn't working. So my mother, who grew up learning to cook on a pot-bellied stove, made the preparations to cook the bird overnight on top of the wood burner which served as my brother's central heating system. Having the sofa next to the stove for my bed that night, I was the lucky recipient of wonderful smells all night long. I didn't think it would be possible that a turkey could taste as good as that one smelled, but that was the most delicious Thanksgiving I have ever had and I have yet to taste anything that will measure up to this memory. It wasn't glamorous or gourmet, but it was sufficient and we were thankful.

God is sufficient. But we as a society are excessive. Commercialism and "affluenza"* (the epidemic of overconsumption) has turned our Thanksgiving story from one of deliverance into one of over-indulgence, both with the food and the "Black Friday" sales that have now crept insidiously into Thursday. My prayer for Thanksgiving is that our gratitude is for God's abundance and not our own. Our self-anointing with stuff, the mentality of every person for themselves, and the selfishness of grabbing what you can get because tomorrow it could be gone is very dangerous. Simply put, it perpetuates the fear (and the lie!) of scarcity.

God is abundant! God is sufficient. When we remember God's abundance and offer our thanks and praise to God and live in cooperation with God and one another, we too will bear fruit, like the harvest we are supposed to be celebrating. Our fruits, when manifested, are the fruits of the Spirit and they are abundant. They are free. And they are priceless. May our Thanksgiving cornucopias this year hold: Peace, joy, love, self-control, gentleness, kindness, patience, faithfulness, and goodness.

With gratitude,

Jeanne+

* For more on Affluenza watch the PBS documentary of the same name.

CROSSROADS CHRISTMAS DINNER

Crossroads Christmas Dinner is on December 22, and once again a team of us will be going to Crossroads to prepare a delicious Christmas dinner for hundreds of homeless and hungry individuals and families. What better or more meaningful way to celebrate Christmas than by giving a gift in Jesus' name to those who otherwise might go hungry? There are several ways you can be part of this gift.

- Volunteer to bake a turkey, slice it, store it in your own freezer, and then thaw it out and deliver it to the church no later than 11:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, December 21. We are delighted to use the drippings, if you have them, but please, no bones – just the sliced meat. Note that turkeys are at their lowest prices around Thanksgiving, so you may want to buy your turkey at this time.
- On Saturday morning, December 21, come to St. John's at 9:00 a.m., and help to prepare the stuffing, make up turkey trays, or make up silverware packets.
- Come to Crossroads on Sunday morning, December 22, to help with the final preparations of the meal. We leave from St. John's, or from our homes, at 8:30 a.m., and we are finished with our work at noon. A group from St. David's in Southfield will come in and serve the meal; however, you are welcome to remain and help serve or simply watch. Children are welcome and it's a great opportunity for them to learn a little of the true meaning of Christmas.
- You may also wish to donate one or more pies for the dessert. Pies should be baked, not frozen, when delivered to the church on Saturday morning, December 21.

Sign up for any (or all) of these activities on the sheet provided on the bulletin board. If you have any questions talk to any of the following:

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Joan Besonen | 734.981.5098 | joanbesonen@gmail.com |
| Michelle Gray | 734.404.5574 | iris760@aol.com |
| Becky Nickels | 734.981.6831 | ranickels@wowway.com |
| Lynn Rison | 734.334.2363 | lrison15@comcast.net |
| Dave Vaughn | 248.380.6939 | davaughn2486@att.net |

ADOPT-A-CHILD-SIZE WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Adopt-a-Child-Size provides WINTER clothing for low-income children in western Wayne and Washtenaw counties. You can provide clothing for a boy or girl by buying an outfit in one size. (For example: girl, size 6 or boy, size 10.) Your shopping list can include a winter coat, hat, gloves, shirt, pants, sweater or sweatshirt, underwear, socks, and pajamas. If an entire outfit is too much, join forces with a friend, or donate what you can and we will combine your clothing with others.

What is unique about Adopt-a-Child-Size is that the clothing is given to the parent or guardian so that they can give the new outfit to the child for Christmas.

Not a shopper? Not a problem! Adopt-a-Child-Size will use your cash donations to purchase clothing. All clothing must be collected by Sunday, November 24.

Diane Cuper coordinates the program at St. John's. She usually attends the 11:00 a.m. service or can be reached at cuper@comcast.net or by phone at 734.340.4807.

“THANK YOU LORD”

BY SHERRY BASS

This song*, which we sing often in church, has become our unofficial theme song. The lyrics and tune are simple, catchy and easy to remember. Young and old alike get caught up in its liveliness and sing with delight. I have noticed, since the arrival of Priest Lisa this summer, that “Thank You Lord” has taken on new meaning and energy for many of us in the congregation.

*For all you've given to me
For all the blessings I cannot see
Thank You Lord*

Since Priest Lisa's arrival, we feel loved and cared for. It is evident in the songs she sings to us, especially the blessing at the close of service, which always ends with “and know that you are loved.” I see it in the gentle way she gives each of us the Holy Eucharist on Sunday. Her smile, her touch, her pure joy are powerful, tangible signs of that love and care. Being in SonShine, I get to see the faces of the parishioners as they come up for Communion. I see in their returning smiles that they are feeling loved and cared for.

We have much to be thankful for since we welcomed Priest Lisa as our Priest-in-Charge. Not only have we seen many new visitors and a 35% rise in attendance over this same period of time last year, but we have seen others who have been away for some time come back to St. John's. Her leadership has inspired many of us in the congregation to be more inviting, more welcoming, more embracing to those who enter our doors for the first time or return to worship with us after a long absence.

Not only do we feel loved, but I think we are beginning to see that Priest Lisa has a plan for this parish. However, instead of just forging ahead, she is seeking our input as we move forward in the vision and mission for our church. Our contribution is valued.

The Sunday evening program, *Food for the Journey* has been about fashioning a vision and identity for St. John's. It is an exciting journey that I would encourage anyone to attend.

Be a part of crafting the plan to determine God's mission in this time and place. This well attended event each week has produced another benefit. It is a true St. John's community in that people from all three services mingle and get to know each other. Probably the most surprising aspect of this evening is that when Priest Lisa sings her blessing, all those in attendance join in singing the last verse, “and may you never forget, that you are loved.”

Priest Lisa is not content to be a part of this community in a superficial way. She truly wants to get to know each of us, and to that end, has begun to invite us to her small Friday night dinners that are truly a night of good food, fun and conversation. She has participated in all ministry teams to get to know their operations. She has been involved right from the beginning in pastoral care. Her door is always open, and she invites us in. WE ARE LOVED!

*With a grateful heart
With a song of praise
With an outstretched arm
I will bless your name
Thank You Lord.*

* *Thank You, Lord*
Words and music by Don Moen and Paul Baloche
Copyright 2004 by Integrity's Hosanna! Music

HOW I LEARNED ABOUT GIVING

BY PATTY MULLEN

My name is Patty Mullen, I am a member of St. John's and on Sunday, October 20, I provided the "two-minute testimonial" during our annual pledge campaign. Priest Lisa has invited me to share the longer version of my story, which I am happy to do.

On Monday morning, August 22, 2011, I packed my two boys, aged just 12 and about-to-be 15, into my car and drove 525 miles northwest from Falls Church, Virginia, to Plymouth, Michigan. We had been through a harrowing 2-year divorce during the worst economic crisis of our time. I had worked part-time as a mostly stay-at-home Mom, but had been unable to find a full time position. I was out of money and out of time. We were about to be homeless.

My sister, who lives in Plymouth, had reached out. With her help and a little bit of money loaned to me by friends, the boys and I were moving here to start a new life. We arrived at nine o'clock that night, exhausted, scared, disoriented, and relieved. I had no money, no job prospects, and knew exactly 3 people in the entire state: My sister, her husband, and her son. I had visited Plymouth a few times over the years and I knew how to get from her house off North Territorial to downtown, and from her house to Kroger—and I knew there was an Episcopal Church on Sheldon Road. Before we even arrived I had resolved to start at that church. I figured if I was lucky I might find some solace and comfort in response to my constant and desperate praying. I wasn't lucky; I was blessed.

I came to church that first Sunday and all I remember is that there was an announcement that the folk group would be starting rehearsals soon. I was in — no matter that I had never heard them and was a one-hour veteran of the congregation. I needed to sing, to worship, to get outside of the constant stress and crisis that consumed me. On the way out the door, I introduced myself to Pastor Bruce and told him that I wanted to sing in the folk group. He told me to turn around and he introduced me to the 2 women standing behind me: Julie Ford and Mary Alice Brunner. "They are going to take care of you," he said.

"They are going to take care of you." With those words I became a part of St. John's family and no crystal ball could possibly have foretold how much this congregation would take care of me and my children over the next two years.

I'll jump ahead now to December, 2011 — a dark, dreary, oh-how-I-wish-it-would-snow, but we'll-be-lucky-to-not-get-sleet Wednesday evening before Christmas. I was on my way home from my temporary job at the University of Michigan Health Service and I was stressed. We had had two days off for Thanksgiving, a day off for computer-system maintenance, and two more days off for Christmas were on the horizon. To many people, those days off are welcome mini-vacations, but to the temporary army that supports the University of Michigan and to other non-employees, they are days without pay. Five days without pay — one week — \$400 before taxes. Without that pay, I didn't know how I would pay the rent and give the boys even the smallest Christmas. We had already agreed that we wouldn't have a tree, that the boys would make gifts, but still I wanted to give them something, some semblance of a Christmas gift, and I couldn't. I simply didn't have any money.

We had dinner and I started getting ready for SonShine rehearsal. I got a text message from my former husband, "My job ends December 31." I nearly collapsed — was I going to lose my child support as well? No time to find out or worry; it was beyond my control. I checked email before walking out the

Continued on next page

door and saw a message from Randy, "Check your mailbox at rehearsal tonight." I didn't know I had a mailbox, but okay, I would check my mailbox at rehearsal. I came to church and sang — singing is how I pray — and tried to forget everything else.

Rehearsal ended at 9:00 and I went out to the parking lot only to remember that I had forgotten the mailbox. Fine. I went back in to find it. There was an envelope in my box, probably a Christmas card. I opened it and inside this beautiful card were four brand new crisp one-hundred dollar bills. I heaved a sob and, as tears streamed down my face, I heard, clear as day, "I'm taking care of you, Patty."

But God wasn't taking care of me alone. He was using you to work a miracle for me. The card wasn't signed, and to this day I don't know who orchestrated the gift. It was exactly what I needed to get through and to give my boys a small Christmas.

That was not the only financial support I was given. In August 2012 — one year after landing here — I was on the brink of starting my second teaching position. I was about to start but was in that place between the job starting and the paycheck depositing. Again, rent was in doubt. I came to church that Sunday and Dorian came over to me and apologized for not being able to be more present to me during her illness. She asked if there was anything I needed and then she said, "Let the church pay your rent."

This is a story about stewardship, but it is not the typical story telling you how wonderful it feels to give. Instead, I am here to tell you how terrible it feels to receive. But when the terror and the humiliation pass, when the tears dry, what is left is a profound and abiding gratitude. There is thankfulness that there are people in this church who do give, and give generously — though they may never know how their money is used and what miracles their generosity will allow.

For the first two years I was not able to give money to the church, but the boys and I did our best to give of our time and talent. I am able now to give money to the church and my family is trying to bring food for the food pantry every week. It is wonderful to give.

I am sharing this story to encourage you to give — to give generously of your time, your talent, and your treasure. Your gift matters.

I also want to say thank you. From the bottom of my heart — thank you.

SALVATION ARMY BELL-RINGING SEASON

The Salvation Army's main fundraiser is the Red Kettle campaign. Bell ringers remind shoppers that others need help in our own community. If you would like to help support the Salvation Army by ringing bells, sign up on the **SIGN ME UP** board. Choose a two hour slot during the following days:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Friday, November 29, | 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. | JC Penney in Canton |
| Saturday, December 7 | 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. | Hiller's in Plymouth |
| Saturday, December 14 | 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. | Starbuck's in Plymouth |

If you have questions, please contact Joan Besonen at 734.981.5098, 734.546.3666, or joanbesonen@gmail.com.



AARON RADATZ

This show will appeal to both adults and children — a great way for the family to spend a Saturday night over the Christmas holidays

Direct from his successful run in Las Vegas, magician Aaron Radatz returns to The Village Theater this December to celebrate the magic of the holidays with his action-packed show of magic and comedy. This show is a great way for the entire family to celebrate the holidays together. To learn more about the entertainer Time Magazine called, "the magician to see." www.aaronradatz.com

Saturday, December 28, 7:00 p.m.
Tickets: \$18.00 (group rate)

Village Theater in Canton
Order deadline: December 10

It is not necessary to be a St. John's member, so you are encouraged to ask family and friends to join you for any of these events. If we do not get the minimum number of requests for the group rate, you will be notified in time to purchase individual tickets if you still wish to attend.

Contact Dick Bass to order tickets: dickbass1943@gmail.com or 248.477.8481

Questions and suggestions are welcome.

THE BEFRIENDER MINISTRY: WHO ARE WE?

BY BECKY NICKELS

"The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them."

Ralph G. Nichols

The BeFriender Ministry is a lay pastoral care program where trained lay persons enter into caring relationships with those needing emotional and spiritual support. BeFriender candidates receive approximately 20 hours of training to learn how to provide a non-judgmental, listening presence to those they visit. Personal mastery of skills such as active listening and offering respectful responses are beneficial in all relationships. BeFriender training also addresses other topics such as grief and loss, spirituality, the role of silence and confidentiality.

Who are BeFrienders? BeFrienders are people willing to become a "listening presence" for those going through a time of transition in their lives. Transitions can be a time of stress or distress, grief or loss, or even changed circumstances, such as – but not limited to - the loss of a loved one, chronic illness, parenting challenges, career change, financial concerns or depression.

A BeFriender does not go to someone to gain information. Rather, he or she will listen without giving advice or making judgments. BeFrienders are comfortable with silence and maintain a strict policy of confidentiality. A BeFriender does not, and cannot, take the place of a family member or friend. However, a BeFriender can be a supportive visitor in addition to family and friends.

If you are interested in having a BeFriender, or know someone who does, please share your interest with Priest Lisa or BeFriender Co-Leaders Becky Nickels and Laurie Pocock. Contact Becky at 734.981.6831 or ranickels@wowway.com. Reach Laurie at 734.459.9574 or foreverlbp@aol.com.

—2013-2014 BAPTISM DATES—

November 3, 2013 **All Saints Sunday**
January 12, 2014 **Baptism of Our Lord**
April 19, 2014 **Easter Vigil**
June 8, 2014 **Pentecost**

Baptism Registration Forms are on the bulletin board outside the Parish Office. Complete the form and place it in Randy's mailbox, directly across from the office.

Anyone requesting to receive one of the sacraments—baptism, confirmation, marriage, or burial—needs to meet with Priest Lisa before any action is taken. Please send email to priestlisa@stjohnsplymouth.org.

Please remember in your prayers...

Linda Atton
 Tim Baird
 Bill Bass
 Jacqueline Bass
 Gary Besonen*
 Marcia Boileau*
 Amanda Brezinski
 David Burke
 Jennifer and Jeremy
 Butts
 Al Calille
 Dee Carlson*
 Joseph Carlson
 Tom Cooper
 Alva Davies*
 Josephena Davis
 Nancy Dressel
 Mary Flemming
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 Frances Lutz
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 Norma Miller
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 Cliff Brown
 John R. Daisley
 Paul-David
 Galbraith
 Evan Gearino
 Joe James
 Nathan Malafa
 Betty Jo McGarry
 Jim Lee Simpson
 Danny Williams
 Mark Wolf

* St. John's member



GLEANERS WORK/FUN DAY

Don't miss your last chance in 2013 to help at Gleaners Food Bank in Detroit on Saturday, November 2. As the holidays approach and we are all giving thanks for our blessings, please consider giving a few hours of your time to help Gleaners distribute food to those who need a little extra help.

We leave from St John's at 8:15 a.m. and are back about noon. Please sign up on the sign-me-up board. Contact Joan Besonen with any questions: 734.981.5098, 734.546.3666, or joanbesonen@gmail.com.



**American
Red Cross**

BLOOD DRIVE NOVEMBER 18

Our next American Red Cross Blood Drive is Monday, November 18 from 1:00 to 6:45 p.m. An appointment schedule will be posted for your convenience on the **SIGN ME UP** board, allowing you to choose the best time for you to donate. You may also contact coordinator, Carolyn Setty, at carolynsetty1127@yahoo.com or 734.469.4080.



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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

- 7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist,
Contemporary Music
10:00 a.m. Social Hour and
Children's Formation
11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist,
Traditional music

WEDNESDAY

- 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist and
Healing Service

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*"Proclaiming the
Love of Christ"*

November 2013