



The Journey

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Welcome to the first edition of "The Journey"- we have changed the name of our monthly publication.

After careful review and thought about how information is communicated through our monthly newsletter, we are pleased to share that we will continue to provide a monthly newsletter which includes important dates and information about parish life, but will also include a more focused theme each month lifting up a particular aspect of our common life.

Some months will focus on a liturgical season- the particular time of year we find ourselves in as a church, such as this month with a focus on Lent. Other issues will be more thematic.

We are always looking for contributions and writers to assist in putting together these publications, so if you are interested in any of these topics, or have information or announcements you would like us to include please email Sue Booth at sbooth@stjohnsplymouth.org.



- April: Christian Formation**
(Children, Youth and Adults)
- May: Mission Outreach**
(Focus on 3 Mission Partnerships for 2014)
- June: Convergence Model**
(Commissions & Parish Council update)
- July: Summer Reflections**
(1 year into our life together)
- Aug.: Church Music**
(Exploring the wide range of music we make together at SJP)

We will continue to publish this newsletter in paper form and distribute in your church mailbox, as well as make available each month through both our website and our parish email list.



Upcoming Baptism Dates

- April 20, 2014Easter
- June 8, 2014..... Pentecost
- November 2, 2014..... All Saints Sunday
- January 11, 2015..... Baptism of our Lord

Baptism Registration Forms are on the bulletin board outside the church office next to the "Sign Me Up" board. If you are interested in talking to Priest Lisa about baptism please contact her via email: priestlisa@stjohnsplymouth.org to schedule a meeting.



Leaning On God

by Joyce Rupp

Some people lean against fence posts when their bodies ache from toil.

Some people lean on oak trees, seeking cool shade on hot, humid days.

Some people lean on crutches when their limbs won't work for them; and some people lean on each other when their hearts can't stand alone.

How long it takes to lean upon you, God of shelter and of strength; how long it takes to recognize the truth of where my inner power has its source.

All my independence, with its arrogance, stands up and stretches within me, trying to convince my trembling soul that I can conquer troubles on my own.

But the day of truth always comes when I finally yield to you, God, knowing you are a steady stronghold, a refuge when times are tough.

Thank you for offering me strength, for being the oak tree of comfort; thank you for being the sturdy support when the limbs of my life are weak.

Praise to you, Eternal Lean-to, for always being there for me. Continue to transform me with the power of your love.

Leaning On God—an invitation to a Holy Lent

In the front yard of the house I grew up in there was a giant oak tree. My brothers and sister and I climbed that tree so often over the years that we wore grooves into certain limbs marking our passageway up to our favorite branches. Whether we climbed that tree during hide-n-seek, or to take refuge from each other, or simply for the sheer delight of being up high and hiding in plain sight, that tree was as known and trusted as we were to each other. I drive by that house every once and awhile now as an adult and that tree is still there— still standing tall and I like to think still able to offer comfort and support for another generation.

As we turn our collective energy towards the season of Lent, I recognize the import of the underlying themes of our tradition calling us to a penitential time; a chance to remember with great humility the need for self-examination and reflection. At the same time I am also aware of our need to seek refuge and solace in places that give us strength and comfort during the fallow and challenging times in our lives— individually and as a community. Our culture seems to have an aversion to recognizing this need. The ancient tradition of fasting and extended periods of silence are two of the greatest gifts offering a counter-culture invitation into a time of refuge leaning on God alone. I encourage each of us to experiment with both and notice the results. I have found that both silence and fasting offer glimpses and experiences of peace and clarity that otherwise lie just below the surface and out of reach.

Along with silence and fasting we are also poised to remember how our individual stories are collected and woven together into a greater narrative with deep meaning and purpose. Our meta-narrative, the great story of our faith tradition that scoops us up and binds us together to one another is a

story of movement and meaning.

We are people always on a journey, always called to move. Transformation requires that we show up as we are, fully present and fully human, but that we resist the temptation to be stuck or frozen in fear, anger, guilt or regret. From the time of our most ancient bearers of our tradition to now, our story is about traveling and discovery, forgiveness and healing. We travel together and depend on the kindness of strangers as well as the respect of our fellow companions. We trust what we cannot see and believe in what cannot be proven. We cling to the mystery that when we lose our way, we will be found. We trust God's promise that when we make mistakes or take a wrong turn, we will be offered unearned second and third and fourth chances. When we are alone or feeling weak, suddenly comfort will appear— sometimes in the form of a familiar oak tree to lean in or climb, and more often than not in the eyes of someone Jesus has sent to be our companion on the way.

May this Lent be one in which you find places to lean, times of silence and fasting and a season of renewed hope for everything in your life that is waiting to be made new. As we pray the prayers of the ancient church adding our hearts and voices breathing life and meaning into each word, each prayer, each hymn and movement may we journey together, closer into the heart of God. May this time be for us one in which we dare to journey with Jesus as well, embracing an unguarded sense of ourselves and stirring up an awareness of the needs of this world. We will be marked with ashes of the earth reminding us of the fragility, brilliance, utter dependency of our lives on the One who calls us, sends us and loves us more than we can ever ask or imagine.

You are loved,



Priest Lisa

Parish Council

This past December, the vestry passed a resolution to move into a new structure of organizing their work for the church. It is called the “Convergence Model” and has been implemented by numerous Episcopal churches in this diocese and beyond in order to focus the work entrusted to them. Three new “Commissions” have been formed to this end; **Property, Finance and Administration**. Four members of the vestry have been assigned to each of these commissions and they will meet monthly in addition to the vestry meeting. This will allow the work of the commissions to move forward while using the first hour of the vestry meeting to report out on recommendations and receive approval for actions items needed by the commissions from the whole of vestry. In the coming days, the commissions will also be seeking additional parish members to join them on these commissions matching people’s interests and expertise expanding and sharing the work we have before us.

The June issue of The Journey will focus on this model and give an update and greater detail of the membership, projects and scope of each commission.

In addition to the creation of these 3 commissions, the Convergence Model also outlines a structure to deepen the connection among and between all ministries, small

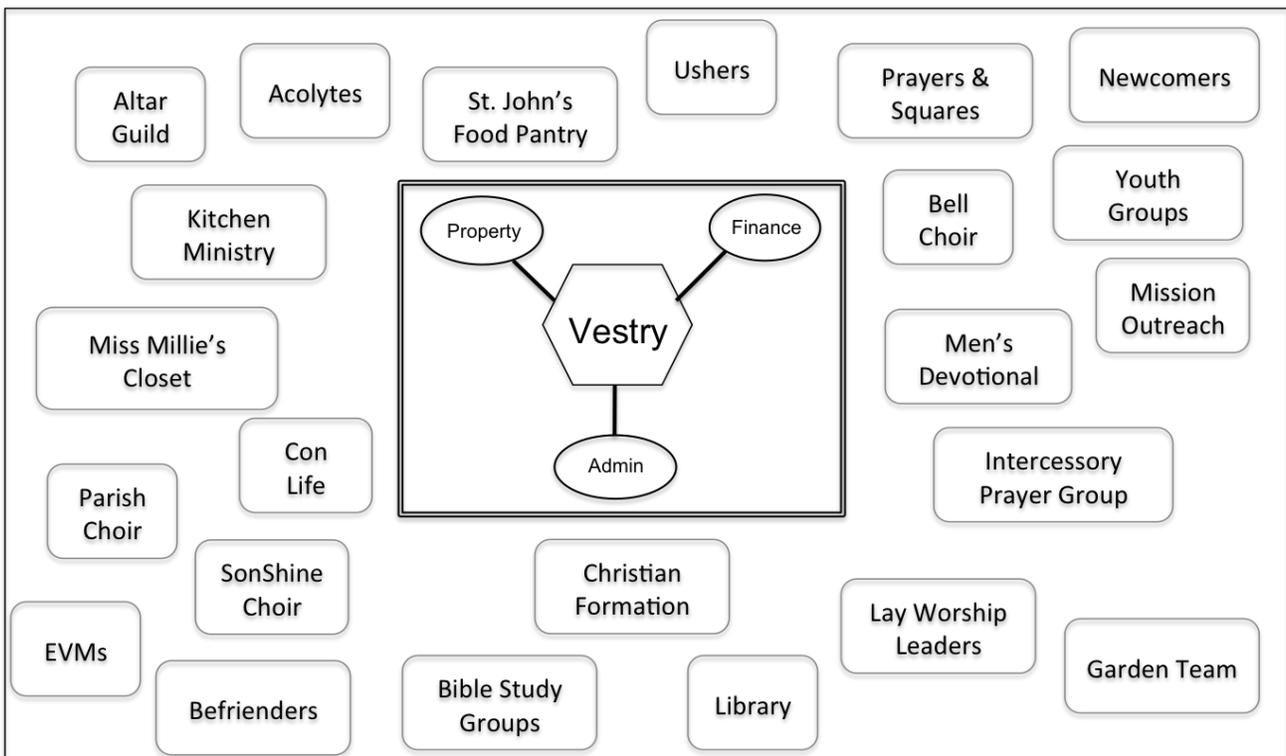
groups and other committees of the parish. This forum is called **Parish Council**.

Parish Council will be comprised of representatives of all the ministries of St. John’s as diagrammed below, and will meet at intervals throughout the year in order to coordinate calendars, share resources, ask for assistance or collaboration, solicit ideas, provide feedback and to celebrate the ministry we have achieved together with God’s grace and anticipate what is on the horizon. We anticipate that this format to share and receive more information and intentional planning together will be welcomed by all. These meetings will be open to all and would be a wonderful opportunity to learn first hand about a different aspect of our common life.

We anticipate that this gathering will be a joyful, helpful and celebratory time.

First round of 2014 Parish Council Meetings

April 1	Tuesday	7:00-8:30 p.m.
June 3	Tuesday	7:00-8:30 p.m.
September 9	Tuesday	7:00-8:30 p.m.



40 Ideas for Keeping a Holy Lent



Here are forty ways to zero in on the heart of Lent.

Thanks to Lutheran ELCA pastor, The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber and “House for All Sinners and Saints” (www.HFASS Home.org) in Denver, CO for offering this list. This congregation is a fresh expression of God’s love in an urban, gritty, young, cutting-edge community seeking new and vibrant ways to reclaim and express our ancient traditions and practices. Read through this wonderful list and see if you could challenge yourself to try a few or make your own list. What is most important is that you take this opportunity to think about a change of heart; a new way of looking into your soul and discovering what God is ready to heal, forgive and make whole.

Day 1: Pray for your enemies

Day 2: Walk, carpool, bike or bus it.

Day 3: Don’t turn on the car radio

Day 4: Give \$20 to a non-profit of your choosing

(Sunday)

Day 5: Take 5 minutes of silence at noon

Day 6: Look out the window until you find something of beauty you had not noticed before

Day 7: Give 5 items of clothing to Goodwill

Day 8: No complaining day

Day 9: Do someone else’s chore

Day 10: Buy a few \$5 food gift cards to give to homeless people you encounter

(Sunday)

Day 11: Call an old friend

Day 12: Pray the Paper (pray for people and situations in today’s news)

Day 13: Read Psalm 139 <http://bible.oremus.org/>

Day 14: Pay a few sincere compliments

Day 15: Bring your own mug

Day 16: Educate yourself about human trafficking www.praxus.org

(Sunday)

Day 17: Forgive someone

Day 18: Internet diet

Day 19: Change one light in your house to an energy efficient bulb

Day 20: Check out morning and evening prayer at <http://dailyoffice.wordpress.com/>

Day 21: Ask for help

Day 22: Tell someone what you are grateful for

(Sunday)

Day 23: Introduce yourself to a neighbor

Day 24: Read Psalm 121 <http://bible.oremus.org/>

Day 25: Bake a cake

Day 26: No shopping day

Day 27: Light a virtual candle http://rejesus.co.uk/spirituality/post_prayer/

Day 28: Light an actual candle

(Sunday)

Day 29: Write a thank you note to your favorite teacher

Day 30: Invest in canvas shopping bags

Day 31: Use Freecycle www.freecycle.org

Day 32: Donate art supplies to your local elementary school

Day 33: Read John 8:1-11 <http://bible.oremus.org/>

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40 Ideas for Keeping a Holy Lent *(continued)*

Day 34: Worship at a friend’s mosque, synagogue or church and look for the beauty

(Sunday)

Day 35: Confess a secret

Day 36: No sugar day - where else is there sweetness in your life?

Day 37: Give \$20 to a local non-profit

Day 38: Educate yourself about a saint www.catholic.org/saints

Day 39: Pray for peace

Day 40: Pray for your enemies (you probably have new ones by now) then decide which of these exercises you’ll keep for good.



Vestry Meeting Schedule

March 25	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
April 29	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
May 27	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
June 24	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
July TBD	Vestry BBQ (social)	
August 26	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
September 30	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
October 28	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
November 4	Tuesday	7:00-8:30 p.m.
	Vestry & Ministry Chair Budget Conversation	
December 2	Tuesday	7:00-9:00 p.m.
January 18	Sunday	10:00-10:50 a.m.
January 25	Sunday	11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
	Annual Meeting & Potluck—Parish Hall	

Vestry meetings take place at St. John’s in the Gathering unless otherwise noted. Meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.

The vestry is a group of 12 lay members of the church elected by the congregation as a whole at the annual meeting. The vestry, along with the Priest-In-Charge, Treasurer, and Secretary meet at least 10 times per year to take care of the parish buildings, the parish finances, scheduling, and to engage in visioning for the parish at large. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings of the vestry are open to the congregation and the membership is welcome to attend.

THE VESTRY OF ST. JOHN’S

Beth Frolick-Rapson	<i>Warden</i>
Lynn Rison	<i>Warden</i>
Ted Barnhart	John Buehner
Krista Dessin	Michelle Gray
Joe Heston	Tim Hubbard
Donna King	Suzie Pederson
Patricia Ponte	John Woodard
<i>Youth Representative:</i>	Valerie Sanders
<i>Acting Treasurer</i>	Teresa Wakeen
<i>Secretary</i>	Sherry Bass

Diocesan Deanery Confirmation Service at St. John's

June 7, 2014 11:00

We will be honored to host the area diocesan Confirmation Service at St. John's in June. If you have not been Confirmed or Received into the Episcopal Church or are interested in Reaffirmation, this could be a wonderful opportunity. There are often questions that arise about what these rites of the Church. What is the difference between them and which one might be right for you. Following is a quick overview of the differences.

Those interested in signing up for one of these three possibilities should email Priest Lisa so that she can determine what kind of preparation we can do prior to the June 7th service.

Frequently Asked Questions...

Understanding Confirmation, Reaffirmation and Reception in the Episcopal Church

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is a pastoral rite in The Episcopal Church, which means it is not a rite that notes some fuller initiation into the Church, the Body of Christ. A person is a full member of the Church through Baptism. *Confirmation*, as defined in The Book of Common Prayer is "a mature public affirmation of faith and commitment to the responsibilities of Baptism." At *Confirmation*, an individual receives the laying on of hands by the bishop, thereby affirming their own faith and visibly connecting to the broader Body of Christ.

What is the difference between Confirmation, Reaffirmation, and Reception?

Confirmation is "a mature and public affirmation of faith and commitment to the responsibilities of Baptism" (BCP). *Reaffirmation* means that you choose to re-state your commitment to Christ in The Episcopal Church, honoring your growth in faith throughout your spiritual journey. For many people, their path has wandered in and out of various denominations. *Reaffirmation* is a way to honor their journey and their previous public commitment as an adult while also making this definitive sacramental gesture. *Reception* is common for people who have been active throughout their lives in other denominations. Often, individuals who made a public profession of faith in a faith tradition such as the Baptist Church will choose to be received into The Episcopal Church.

"I was baptized as an infant in another denomination, and then my family stopped attending Church. I only began attending again as an adult with my family. I want to join The Episcopal Church, but I don't know if I need to be confirmed, reaffirmed, or received."

We would suggest that you be confirmed, because you have not made a "mature affirmation of the faith." Your Baptism, once registered in the church records, makes you a full member of The Episcopal Church. In terms of the sacraments, *Confirmation* is a way for you to reaffirm your faith and remain deeply connected to the Baptism of your childhood.

"I was baptized as an adult in another denomination. Should I be confirmed in The Episcopal Church?"

We would recommend that you be received into The Episcopal Church. Since Confirmation is a "mature and public affirmation," it would be redundant for you to make another mature and public affirmation; you made that affirmation at your Baptism. And, The Episcopal Church honors your commitment to faith. Reception would mean that the bishop publicly recognizes the faith that has been present in your life, and you would be formally welcomed into The Episcopal Church through the laying on of hands. You may want to consider *Reaffirmation* if you feel your faith has grown substantially in the past few years. Remember that *Confirmation* is a pastoral rite of the Church, so its sacramental nature should connect with your present relationship with God.

What is the meaning of the bishop laying hands on those who are confirmed, reaffirmed, or received?

The bishop is the individual who, symbolically, represents the unity of the entire diocese. The basic "unit" of The Episcopal Church is the diocese, and the bishop as a person is a visible means of reminding us of our common bond in Christ within The Episcopal Church. When the bishop lays hands on your head during the service, it is a very tangible way for you to experience your own faith journey being welcomed into the larger journey of the Body of Christ.

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Food for the Journey



Food For the Journey Returns! Lenten Series

"What's Sin Got To Do With It?"

Wednesdays, March 12, 19 & 26

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Based on reflections and insights posed by Barbara Brown Taylor in her wonderfully powerful book, *Speaking of Sin*.

Our evenings together will be combined with good food and good conversation. No need to read the book ahead, Priest Lisa will offer reflections and questions for table discussions. All are welcome!

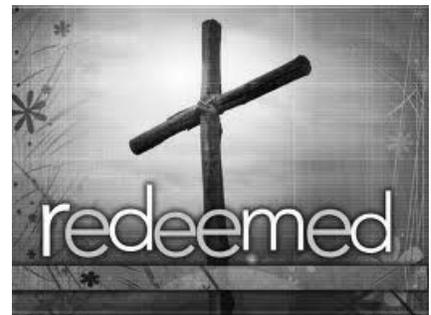
Book Review: **Speaking of Sin**, by Barbara Brown Taylor

In *Speaking of Sin*, Barbara Brown Taylor brings her fresh perspective to a cluster of words that often cause us discomfort and have widely fallen into neglect: sin, damnation, repentance, penance, and salvation. She asks, "Why, then, should we speak of sin anymore? The only reason I can think of is because we believe that God means to redeem the world through us. Abandoning the language of sin will not make sin go away. Human beings will continue to experience alienation, deformation, damnation and death no matter what we call them.

Abandoning the language will simply leave us speechless before them, and increase our denial of their presence in our lives. Ironically, it will also weaken the language of grace, since the full impact of forgiveness cannot be felt apart from the full impact of what has been forgiven."

Contrary to the prevailing view, Taylor calls sin a helpful, hopeful word. Naming our sins, she contends, enables us to move from guilt to grace. In recovering this lost language of salvation in our worship and in the fabric of

our individual lives, we have an opportunity to take part in the divine work of redemption.



Confirmation FAQ's *continued from page 6*

For many people, this portion of the sacramental service is very meaningful. A sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace." In this way, the touch experienced in the laying on of hands forever remains in your memory as an experience of grace through the Church.

Am I a "full member" of The Episcopal Church without being confirmed?

Yes. The Book of Common Prayer defines Baptism as "full initiation

by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble." Confirmation is a pastoral rite not in an initiatory rite. This means that the sacramental nature of confirmation connects with our growth in faith and in relationship with God. Through Holy Baptism, we join Christ's Body, either as infants or adults.

Is confirmation ever required to participate in certain aspects of the Episcopal Church?

Yes. God may call some individuals, through the Church,

into positions of guidance and leadership. For example, The Canons of The Episcopal Church state that Confirmation is required for certain leadership positions, such as Vestry members, and for some service positions such as Eucharistic Visitors, but this in no way precludes an unconfirmed individual from being considered a full member of the Body of Christ. Confirmation, in cases of leadership and guidance, emphasizes one's public affirmation of faith within the tradition of The Episcopal Church.

Inquirer's Class—Open to all who want to learn more about the Episcopal Church

For anyone who is interested in confirmation, reception, reaffirmation, or simply learning more about our tradition, denomination and our church, come join Priest Lisa for a series of presentations and discussions about the Episcopal Church!

All are welcome.

These will be 4 different sessions; all 4 are recommended for those wishing to be confirmed or received June 7th by Bishop Gibbs. We will talk about our history, our Anglican roots, our relationship to scripture, our liturgy and also make time for asking any questions you may have.

To sign up simply add your name to the Sign-Up Sheet on the "Sign Me Up Board" outside the church office or send Priest Lisa an email.

priestlisa@stjohnsplymouth.org

When: Between 9:00 & 11:00 services (10:05-10:50)

Sunday, March 23

Sunday, April 6

Sunday, April 27

Sunday, May 4

Where: In the Library



Youth Choir Discovery Day— Wednesday March 26, 5:00 - 6:00 pm



Do you know a child or youth in grades 2 through 6? Youth Choir Discovery Day is a chance for youth who are eligible for St. John's Youth Choir - any youth who will be in grades 3 through 7 in the 2014-15 academic year to come and see what Youth Choir is all about.

Our current Youth Choir members will be designing the lesson plan for Youth Choir Discovery Day, following our regular rehearsal routine and choosing from elements we have used in our rehearsals throughout the year.

New this year, participants in the Discovery Day are invited to continue

in Youth Choir through April and sing with us on Palm Sunday, April 13.

So why should you enroll your child in St. John's Youth Choir?

Consider this:

Youth Choir provides its members with **free music lessons**. We not only sing songs, but we also learn the basics of music reading. The curriculum we use, "Voice for Life", gives choristers skills they can use for a lifetime. The concepts we study will help them to excel in other music activities.

Youth Choir provides its members with **Bible lessons** to supplement their Sunday School lessons.

Youth Choir members learn a lot about **worship**. They learn to be active participants in worship.

Youth Choir members **have fun** in weekly rehearsals, and form **friendships** with other choir members.

Chorus America's 2009 Chorus Impact Study indicates that singing in a chorus has a positive impact on **school grades**. They found that the positive benefits of chorus participation for children are even greater than the positive benefits for adults.

They found that singing in a chorus improved children's memory, homework habits, and creativity. It also helps children to develop teamwork and social skills.

For more information please feel free to contact our Director of Music Julie Ford by email at jford@stjohnsplymouth.org, or by phone or in person at the church.

If you know your child will be attending that day an RSVP by email, phone, or in person is helpful, but not necessary.

Spring Calendar Highlights

March	Wednesdays, 12, 19, 26- Food for the Journey Lenten Series Sunday, 23- Crossroads Soup Kitchen 8:30 a.m. Sunday, 23- 1st of 4 Inquirer’s Class Tuesday, 25- Vestry Meeting 7:00 p.m.
April	Tuesday, 1- First Parish Council Meeting Sunday, 6- 2nd of 4 Inquirer’s Class Friday, 11-Palm Cross making and continental brunch 9a.m. Sunday, 13- Palm Sunday Monday, 14-Red Cross Blood Drive 1:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, 17- Maundy Thursday service 6:30 p.m. Friday, 18- Good Friday service 12:00 p.m. Saturday, 19- Potluck (5:30) & Easter Vigil at the Cathedral Church in Detroit (6:30) Sunday, 20– Easter Sunday services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. (Baptism at 11:00!) Sunday, 27- 3rd of 4 Inquirer’s Class Tuesday, 29- Vestry Mtg
May	Sunday, 4- Sunday School Parent Forum Sunday, 4– 4th of 4 Inquirer’s Class Sunday4- Priest Lisa with Youth Groups Sunday evening

Crossroads Soup Kitchen Sunday March 23rd



Once again, we are pleased to partner with St David’s of Southfield as we prepare to feed 700 guests with a meal of hot soup, sandwiches, cookies, bananas and hot coffee or lemonade. Your help is needed in the following areas:

- Prayers
- Volunteers: (Sign-up sheets are available in the Hallway across from the mailboxes.)
- Soup preparers to cut up vegetables and meat for our famous Ham and Bean Soup.
- Sandwich makers to man our mustard and mayo sandwich assembly lines.

- Cookie Stuffers to bag our cookie donations in small sandwich bags - and perhaps sample a cookie or two!
- Coffee & lemonade makers, dish washers, table wipers, etc. Every job, big or small, is important to a successful soup kitchen!
- Servers to serve our Guests and if time permits, joining our guests for a cup of coffee or soup
- We need Cookies – The Cookie Bin will be placed across from the coat room in the west hallway.

We will depart from St John’s at 8:30 on Sunday, March 23rd or you may drive down separately.

Crossroads Soup Kitchen is the only facility of its kind in the Detroit area that offers a hot meal on Sunday to our brothers and sisters who may not otherwise have a meal on that day. Come and experience the love of Christ as we serve our fellow man.

If you have any questions about the Crossroads Soup Ministry – please see Mission Outreach members Becky Nickels, Suzie Pedersen, David Vaughn, Michelle Gray, Kristen Farmer, Judithanne Smith, Irene Jarrell and/or Lynn Rison.

Catch Me in My Scurrying– by Ted Loder (from *Guerillas of Grace*)

Catch me in my anxious scurrying, Lord,
and hold me in this Lenten season:
hold my feet to the fire of your grace
and make me attentive to my mortality
that I may begin to die now
to those things that keep me from living with you
and with my neighbors of this earth;
to grudges and indifference,
to certainties that smother possibilities,
to my fascination with false securities,
to my addiction to sweatless dreams,
to my arrogant insistence on how it has to be;
to my corrosive fear of dying someday
which eats away the wonder of living this day,
and the adventure of losing my life in order to find it in you.
And somehow,
during this season of sacrifice, enable me to sacrifice time
and possessions and securities,
to do something...
something about what I see,
something to turn the water of my words
into the wine of will and risk,
into the bread of blood and blisters,
into the blessedness of deed,
of a cross picked up; a savior followed.

Catch me in my mindless scurrying, Lord,
and hold me in this Lenten season:
hold my spirit to the beacon of your grace
and grant me light enough to walk boldly,
to feel passionately,
to love aggressively;
grant me peace enough to want more,
to work for more
and to submit to nothing less,
and to fear only you...
Bequeath me not calmed seas,
slack sails and premature benedictions,
But breathe into me a torment,
storm enough to make within myself
And from myself, something...

something new,
something saving
something true,
a gladness of heart,
a pitch for a song in the storm,
a word of praise lived,
a gratitude shared, a cross dared,
a joy received.



SUNDAYS

7:45am Holy Eucharist (spoken, no music)
9:00am Holy Eucharist (contemporary music)
10:10-10:50am Children's Sunday School
11:00am Holy Eucharist (traditional music)
Nursery Care (8:45am -12:15pm)

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