

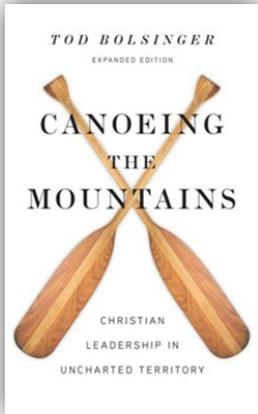


St. Paul's Epistle

"To know Christ and to make Christ known"

FROM YOUR VESTRY:

Canoeing The Mountains



The St. Paul's Vestry held their annual retreat at the Trinity Center over the last weekend in January. Fr. Murdock Smith facilitated the retreat discussions which centered around Tod Bolsinger's book "Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory." In addition to being an Episcopal priest, Fr. Murdock's background includes counseling, conflict resolution, and spiritual direction.

It is clear that our society and our community, along with the Christian Church in general and the Episcopal Church specifically, have changed drastically over the past several decades. While there will always be a need for maintaining our worship, our facilities, and the pastoral care of our congregation, we are faced with the question of how do move forward as a congregation to be faithful to the mission that Christ has given us.

Sr. Warden Joyce Kilpatrick-Jordan said, "*'Change' can be as troubling as any four-letter word in the minds of some. It seems daunting to move from familiar territory into the unknown and taking that first step can be intimidating.*

What is even scarier, however, is watching your world transform while you maintain the status quo. During our vestry retreat, we studied and discussed every aspect of implementing change. We first explored and recognized the need to adjust some elements of our ministry to better serve today's existing and potential parishioners. Then we discussed what components were working well for us, what we might consider discontinuing, and what we might be able to tweak to keep our church relevant and promote growth."

The Vestry acknowledged the numerous effective ministries that St. Paul's already carries out in the Smithfield area, but we also looked at opportunities to reach the many 'spiritual but not religious' people in the community. A key conversation for our future will be revisiting our concept of mission and identifying where we can best direct our resources.

Junior Warden John Branch said, "*The focus of my third vestry retreat was on the development of Christian Leadership.*

Society is undergoing fundamental changes and the Church needs to re-examine and update its current procedures and activities to better serve the changes taking place in the new communication oriented generation so as not to be left behind. The new mission of the church seeks to retain old members while attracting new members. This is our new challenge and the church will need to morph its image to attain these new goals."

Over the weekend, the Vestry listed ways to strengthen current ministries, opportunities for new ministries to be explored in the future, and questions to be addressed with the congregation.

Vestry member Lance Armstrong said, "*Transformation cannot and should not occur overnight. It will require trial and error, the willingness to make mistakes, and the courage to step into uncharted territory trusting in God's provision."*

Over the next several months, your Vestry will continue to discuss the ideas and questions that were raised during the retreat. There will be several times when your input as a member of St. Paul's will be requested. Just to get the ball rolling, you can consider how you would respond if a friend asked you to tell him about St. Paul's. How would you finish the statement "St. Paul's is the place where ...?"

Your Vestry will continue working to keep St. Paul's a healthy congregation representing Christ in the community today and in the future. As John Branch said of the retreat, "*It was a pleasure to meet with the new vestry members and renew friendships with the older Vestry members. It is always a pleasant experience to work with people that are trying to work together towards a common goal.*" And Joyce Kilpatrick-Jordan summed up the retreat when she said, "*Many good ideas were generated and discussed by our vestry group. All of us made suggestions, not recommending any change just for the sake of shaking things up, but truly trying to identify steps we can take to better serve our church family.*"

~ Reflections on our Vestry Retreat offered by members of your Vestry. Watch the newsletter and announcements over the coming year for our continued work in this area.

OUTREACH AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE... AND MORE...

Outreach and Social Justice Committee

March 2020

“Volunteers are a work of heart”



Mission Statement: The Outreach and Social Justice Committee of St. Paul's will identify and share with parish members opportunities to serve as Christ would serve in our community and throughout the world by promoting Christian service, programs and projects. Thank you for making our projects a success!

The Outreach and Social Justice Committee meets four times/year and is led by Diane Every and Debby Jenkins.

Contact information:

[Diane Every](#): 919-934-5080 & [Debby Jenkins](#)

Feed the Pig!



The Outreach and Social Justice Committee has announced a Lenten project in which we all can participate. We have chosen the Episcopal Relief and Development "Gifts for Life" program. We are looking to purchase a Complete Care Package, which is a variety of key items to empower a community. We will give them the means to transform their lives in lasting ways. A Complete Care Package contains three goats and one pig; clean water for a family; vitamins and preventive medicine for five children; care for four mothers and their newborns; and two micro-credit loans for women. This gift package will

help persons in need, such as in Kenya, Honduras, Myanmar (Burma) and other impoverished areas. Please check out our Piggy Bank on the Outreach table and feel free to "FEED THE PIG" with your monetary donations. The more we feed "Piggy," the more mouths we can feed in these needy areas of the world. A portion of our Lenten Dinner Love Offering will also help fund this year's "Gifts for Life." Thank you.

~ Diane Every and Debby Jenkins



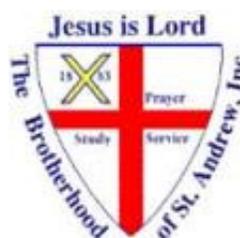
ECW is hard at work preparing for our fundraisers later this year. These include a Souper Sunday in October and our annual bake sale in December. And, we are "cooking up" a special project to be announced in a few months. It promises to be a "tasty" venture, and one I'm sure everyone will relish.

Join us for our next meeting on Saturday, March 21, at 10:00 a.m. in Lawrence Hall to get in on all the "juicy" details.

Each month ECW members gather together for fellowship and to discuss ways in which we can assist those in need in our communities. We invite all women of St. Paul's to join us. Please come and take part as we bring our projects to realization. Your input is important, plus new and fresh ideas are always welcome.

~ Pat Hovorka, President

Brotherhood of St. Andrew



The second annual St. Paul's Chili Cook-off was a rousing success! On February 2, we fed over 90 people with 12 different chili recipes, many plates of cornbread and a variety of desserts (see page 6 for photos). The Brotherhood of St. Andrew raised over \$500 to use in our continuing outreach efforts. We welcomed members of San José, who brought some delicious contributions to the dessert table. Anita Carter won the grand prize of Best Chili as well as Most Unique Chili and took home the coveted Chili crown. Jeremy Shaner won the "Hottest" chili category, and 12-year-old George Westergard was awarded a special prize as the youngest contestant. George's chili crockpot was the first one completely emptied. Thanks to all the contestants, as well as our judges: Nancy Gibbs, Pat Havorka and Sheila Stafford.

The Brotherhood is working hard on our next event: the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and fourth annual pancake race.

The Brotherhood meets at 6:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month for a sumptuous meal, fellowship, prayer and study. Our next dinner meeting is March 5. All men and older male teens are welcome to attend and encouraged to join.

Stewardship Corner

What Will I Give Up for Lent?



Ever since I was a young child the question, “What are you giving up for Lent?” reared its theological head in the days leading up to Ash Wednesday. There was an expectation that we would choose something—that we had to choose something—and it had to be something we didn’t like losing for the

season. Chocolate was always the go-to choice way back when—and it seems to still be high on the list.

But these days people come up with other options that weren’t a part of my lexicon as a child. Passing on alcohol for the season, fasting from social media, or giving up carbs seem like big choices these days. Over the past thirty-plus years of ministry I’ve often tried to talk people into a “Meet-less” Lent—curtailing unnecessary committee meetings to allow more time for spiritual practices—but that rarely works.

Jake Braithwaite, SJ (Society of Jesus), suggests an alternative to the age-old question of what we might give up for Lent. In his Jesuit blog he writes, “Rather than optimize your Lent with a waistline-conscious fast or a bold test of your willpower, simply take time each day to do nothing. Sit before the Lord, let God marvel at you as you marvel at God. Maybe even while you’re eating French fries.”

Now, I’m not suggesting everyone go out and binge on French fries, chocolate, or anything else, for that matter, during Lent. But I am suggesting that sometimes our Lenten disciplines can be just another extension of our overall busyness of life that can short circuit our relationship with the Divine.

So perhaps take the time this Lent to find 15-20 minutes to be alone with God. Meditate, pray, walk the labyrinth, listen for the “still, small voice of God.” You may just find yourself surprised by God.

~ Lenten peace, Jim+

Attendance and Pledge Obligations 2020

Last Week 2/23/2020		Year to Date	
Attendance	105	1/1/2020 – 2/23/2020	
Pledge Payments	\$2145.00	Pl. Payments \$	30,080.00
Weekly Pledge Target	\$4971.15	Pl. Budget	\$258,500.00

February Vestry Highlights

Vestry Meeting actions and updates for February:

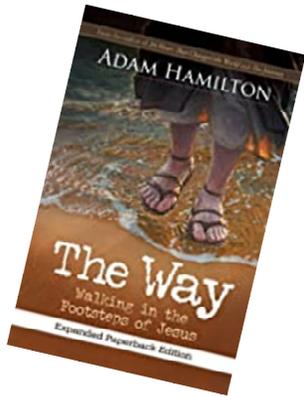
- ◆ We received the Treasurer’s report through the end of January 2020. Pledges were about \$2K below budget for the month of January, and unpledged giving was slightly above budget. Expenses were slightly above budget for the month due to some quarterly payments.
- ◆ Received a report that Church Insurance paid all but our deductible for the HVAC repairs that were necessary in December. Voted to move approximately \$775.00 from savings to the Emergency Repair Fund to bring the fund back to \$10,000.00.
- ◆ Approved our 2019 Parochial Report which will be delivered to the Diocese on time.
- ◆ Agreed to have a love offering at the Wednesday Lenten Dinners and to direct money raised beyond expenses to the Outreach and Social Justice Committee for their Gifts of Life Lenten campaign.
- ◆ Voted to use savings to cover the cost of the needed repairs on the Rectory grounds.
- ◆ Discussed the success of our live-stream TV coverage of Billie Stevens’ Memorial Service. There were twelve people watching the service on TV from the Baroody Room and 27 people watching in Lawrence Hall. The Vestry is thankful for the anonymous donation made by a parishioner that covered the purchase of the camera, small TVs in the Baroody Room and Music Director’s office, and the additional hardware needed to transmit the programing. We are also thankful for Mike Weathers’ hard work getting the system up and running.

During these days of Lent, how might God be wanting to break again and break open the hardness of your head and your heart? If we allow God to break through, we may well be surprised and delighted to discover wonderful fruits within us - fruits of gentleness and kindness, of generosity and tenderness.

~ Br. Geoffrey Tristram, SSJE

Adult Christian Formation

Linda and Lance Armstrong conclude their series “Holey” “Wholly” “Holy” on March 8th.



Greg Petty is on deck with a series called *The Way: Walking in the Footsteps* of Jesus using Adam Hamilton’s book by the same title. Greg tells us, “...other than an actual trip to the Holy Land this is the next best option. Hamilton takes us to all of the vital places Jesus taught, from gathering the disciples, baptism by John, Nazareth where he was rejected, Capernaum and Jerusalem.”

The class will run six weeks from March 15 through April 19 with bible readings and discussion.

Episcopal Church 101 will continue through March 8, meeting at 10:00 am in the Blandy Parlor.

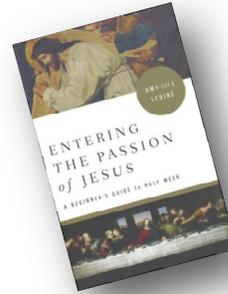
Diocesan Lenten Book Study

The Diocese is inviting all to take part in a diocesan-wide book read during Lent. We'll be reading Howard Thurman’s [Jesus and the Disinherited](#) or Debby Irving’s [Waking Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race](#) (everyone gets to choose) during the season of Lent. Both books invite self-examination and reflection about how racism continues to work against the dream of God and our call to love others and strive for justice and peace among all people. There are study and discussion guides available for both books that can easily be used to create a meaningful Lenten series. The hope is that reading these books will spark conversations within churches and local communities and create a catalyst for building deeper relationships around racial healing and reconciliation during this season of repentance. [Read more.....](#)

https://www.dionc.org/dfc/newsdetail_2/3201314

Lenten Dinners and Program Begin March 4

Join us for six weeks of food, fellowship and learning as Rabbi Raachel Jurovics and our Rector lead an interfaith study of the final week in the life and ministry of Jesus. Rabbi Jurovics has been recently named by our Bishop as “Rabbi-in-Residence” for the Diocese of North Carolina.



“Jesus’ final days were full of risk. Every move he made was filled with anticipation, danger, and the potential for great loss or great reward.

Jesus risked his reputation when he entered Jerusalem in a victory parade. He risked his life when he dared to teach in the Temple. His followers risked everything when they left behind their homes or anointed him with costly perfume. We take risks as we read and re-read these stories, finding new meanings and new challenges.

In *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner’s Guide to Holy Week*, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine explores the biblical texts surrounding the Passion story. She shows us how the text raises ethical and spiritual questions for the reader, and how we all face risk in our Christian experience.”

We have several extra copies on hand for \$8.49 each. The book also can be ordered through Amazon.

2020 Lenten Dinners

March 4: Lamb and chicken, rosemary-roasted new potatoes, spinach and artichoke casserole, yeast rolls, salad, and apple pie & ice cream

March 11: Chili, soup, grilled cheese sandwiches, cookies

March 18: Baked chicken and rice casserole, Aunt Fanny’s squash casserole, baked apples, rolls, salad, and trifle

March 25: Meat loaf with gravy, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, rolls, and apple crisp

April 1: Baked ziti, salad, garlic bread, and cookies & ice cream

April 8: Apple-stuffed pork loin, chicken, asparagus, macaroni and cheese, rolls, and trifle

NEWS AND NOTES...

Memorial Garden Maintenance

Over the past several years, the Vestry has been in conversation with the Garden Committee about needed maintenance to the Memorial Garden. Several plants are overwhelming their space, and other plants are distressed and no longer viable. The main roadblock to doing necessary maintenance has revolved around funding.

Over the past year, we have been in conversation with a former member who desired to make a gift setting up an ongoing maintenance fund for the Memorial Garden. In February, the Vestry accepted a donation of \$3,000 as seed money for a new dedicated maintenance fund for the Garden itself as well as for the courtyard around the Garden. The Page Jenkins Partin Maintenance Fund for the Memorial Garden is a fund that can receive gifts from others for ongoing maintenance of the Garden. The Jr. Warden has created a committee, which includes members of the Garden Committee, to oversee the maintenance. Mike Weathers chairs the committee.

The goal is to continue the basic uniform structure of the garden, replace damaged plants and continue the long-standing policy of having the committee approve any additional plantings by parishioners who have ashes of loved ones interred in the Memorial Garden. The current policy in operation calls for any plantings by individuals to be approved ahead of time by the Garden Committee. That policy is available in the Church Office for review whenever needed.

Brotherhood Wine Tasting Coming April 23!



Mark your calendars! The ninth annual Brotherhood Wine Tasting is scheduled for Thursday, April 23. We already have some exciting new offerings lined up to taste including Rosé, Cabernet, Chardonnay, Riesling and some new remarkable imports.

Heather will also have a table with high-end wines for us to taste—some of which sell for upwards of \$30 a glass in restaurants.

Watch for more details in the April newsletter!

Calling All Artists

As you have read in previous issues of the St. Paul's Epistle, we now have an art display system in place running down the parlor side of the long hallway. This system, made possible through outside gifts, will allow us the flexibility to have different displays throughout the year without having to damage our walls.

Our Art Committee (consisting of Jan Branch, Curtis Brookshire, Joyce Kilpatrick-Jordan and the Rector) has chosen the theme: Resurrection and Spring for artwork to be displayed during the season of Easter (approximately an eight-week run).

We are soliciting your photographs, paintings, pen & ink drawings, needlework, etc. for the Easter display. Art works should be framed if possible (we are in the process of getting a small supply of frames for those who need to borrow one or more). Frames should be no larger than 11 x 14 and no smaller than 8 x 10, which will allow some continuity in the display. Smaller pieces of artwork can be displayed with collage matting with frame sizes as listed above.

Please talk to a member of the committee if you have questions or would like to drop off artwork. If you are interested in serving on the committee, please let a member of the committee know.

**ARRIVE FOR THE PROCESSION,
NOT JUST THE RECESSION**



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

BEGINS SUNDAY MARCH 8

The Second Annual Great Chili Cook-Off



Top Left: Jeremy Shaner won the prize for the hottest chili.

Top Right: George Westergard won the prize for the youngest contestant (and oh, by the way, there wasn't a spoonful of George's chili left in the crockpot by the end of the meal).

Above: Last year's victor, Nancy Gibbs, waxes eloquently about her tenure as Chili Queen as Brotherhood of St. Andrew representative Curtis Brookshire looks on.

Right: Nancy passes the Chili Cook-Off crown to Anita Carter who sported a double victory for both the most unique chili as well as the best all-around chili. Anita gets to carry the crown until our Third Annual Chili Cook-Off next winter.



Candlelit Labyrinth Walk Spring Equinox - March 20

The Labyrinth at St. Paul's is open to the public year-round for meditative self-guided walks. On the days when the seasons change, a volunteer from the Daughters of the King places votives around the exterior to add to your experience. Everyone is welcome! Here's the 2020 schedule:

Vernal Equinox (Spring) – Friday, March 20 at 7:30 to 8 pm

Summer Solstice (Summer) – Saturday, June 20 at 8:30 to 9 pm

Autumnal Equinox (Fall) – Tuesday, September 22 at 7 to 7:30 pm

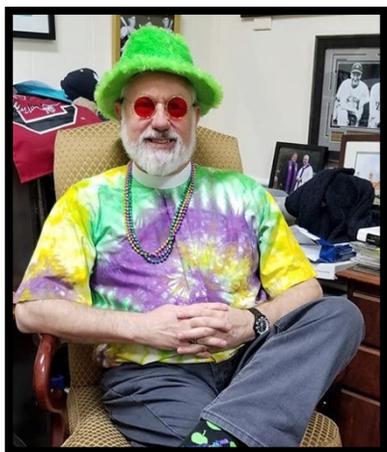
Winter Solstice (Winter) – Monday, December 21 at 5 to 5:30 pm



The Labyrinth at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 218 S 2nd Street, Smithfield, NC, is listed on the World-Wide Labyrinth Locator at <https://labyrinthlocator.com/>

NEWS AND NOTES...

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



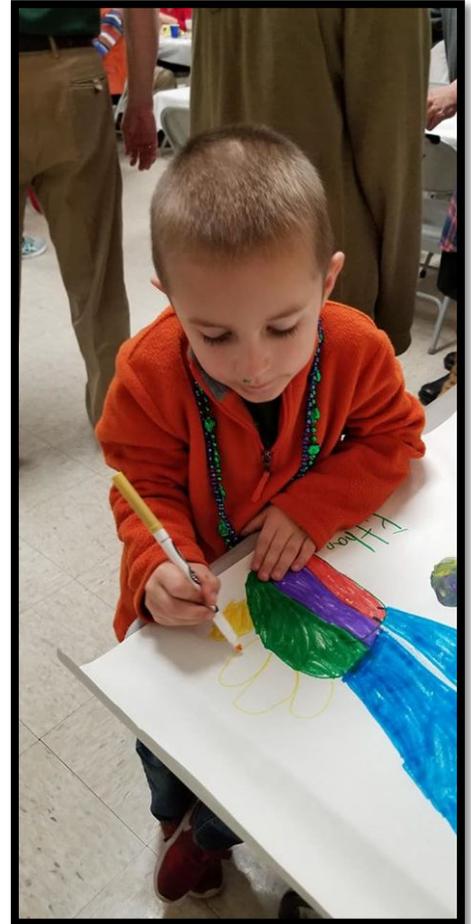
Above: Members of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew begin the work of cooking sausage patties and pancakes for the masses.

Left: Did someone say “Party?”

Below: Julia and Allison Elsee are in a festive mood as they await dinner. And who are those masked marvels playing to the camera as their pancakes and sausages await their attention?



NEWS AND NOTES...



We had a fantastic turnout, ably fed by The Brotherhood of St. Andrew. Our Alleluia Banner was decorated by young and old alike and laid to rest in the Memorial Garden after a rousing eulogy. The banner will be resurrected on Easter Day before the 11:00 service begins.



Lenten Cross

[Remarks from Artist Thomas Sayre to St. Mark's Episcopal Church, his home parish:]

The **earthcast cross series** came from a personal need to do something new, to surprise St. Mark's with a very different array of crosses. The new crosses are all variations on the "earthcasting" technique which I began a decade and a half ago as a way of creating large sculptures for public commissions across the country. Earthcasting establishes a unique balance between human control, human intention, and the grain of nature. A mold in the shape of a cross was dug by hand in the earth. Reinforced concrete was then poured into the void which cured in the ground for over a week. Once pulled out of the ground, each cross is a one-of-a-kind expression where the actions of the human hand meet the color, texture, and structure of natural soil which was formed by nature over many centuries. I hope the crosses will be useful for each of us to think about our natural world and our place in it, and how we might be renewed in that relationship through the miracle of Easter which beckons us through the preceding discipline of Lent.

~ Thomas Sayre, Artist

St. Paul's Episcopal Church



Sunday Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 10:00 a.m. Classes for Youth and Adults
- 10:00 a.m. Choir Practice
- 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist,
Sunday School for K-5th Grade
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour
(and 8:45 on March 15)

Wednesday Choir Rehearsals

- 5:15 p.m. Bell Choir
- 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Mar 04 Wednesday Bible Study, 10:30 am (Each Wed)
- Mar 04 Lenten Preaching series, 12 Noon,
First Presbyterian Church (Each Wed)
- Mar 04 First Lenten Dinner & Program, 6:00 pm**
- Mar 05 Diocesan Lenten Clergy Quiet Day
- Mar 05 Brotherhood of St. Andrew, 6:00 pm
- Mar 11 Lenten Dinner & Program, 6:00 pm**
- Mar 17 Finance, 6:00 pm
- Mar 18 Lenten Dinner & Program, 6:00 pm**
- Mar 21 ECW, 10:00 am
- Mar 24 Vestry, 7:00 pm
- Mar 25 Lenten Dinner & Program, 6:00 pm**
- Mar 28 DOK, 11:00 am
- Apr 01 Lenten Program & Dinner, 6:00 pm**