

# The Messenger

2014, ISSUE 2

MAR – APR 2014

## Rector's Corner:



Lent is now upon us. It is a time for us to reflect on our daily progress of making a vital “re-connection” with God. I speak of reconnection because of my own faith experience: a series of lost and regained connections that started when I was a child. It’s part of the package that comes along with being part of one of the “catholic” churches — usually baptized as infants, we grow in fits and starts, go through stages, and develop (one hopes) into a mature adult. Our relationship with God is no different than any other longstanding relationship in our lives. As we are ever-changing, so is the way in which we relate to others. Sometimes we are successful in negotiating all those changes — and sometimes not. I am amazed at the number of “reconnections”

I have made with friends through the internet magic that is Facebook. People I have not spoken with since high school, college and my early adult years are often eager to hear what’s been going on in my life almost as eagerly as I seek out the path they have walked over the same period of time. Of course, when the photos start coming, the stark realization of change is manifest! Pounds gained/lost, wrinkles where none were seen, and hair (well, that’s best left unaddressed). One thing comes clear in all this reconnecting, however, no one is the same as when we last spoke.

Time takes its toll on our relationships. Why do we expect it to be different with God? We might believe that in his eternal nature, God doesn’t change. But, the unavoidable fact is that *we do*. Consequently, we cannot expect our relationship with God to be the same as it was when we were children, or even teens, or young adults (for those of us now advancing in years). Reconnecting with God is a constant spiritual task. Such

*(Continued on page 3)*

### *A Lenten Message from the Presiding Bishop*

The reality is that the season of Lent, which Christians have practiced for so many centuries, is about the same kind of yearning for greater light in the world, whether you live in the Northern Hemisphere or the Southern Hemisphere.

The word “Lent” means “lengthen” and it’s about the days getting longer. The early Church began to practice a season of preparation for those who would be baptized at Easter, and before too long other members of the Christian community joined those candidates for baptism as an act of solidarity.

It was a season during which Christians and future Christians learned about the disciplines of the faith – prayer and study and fasting and giving alms, sharing what they have.

But the reality is that, particularly in the Northern Hemisphere, the lengthening days were often times of famine and hunger, when people had used up their winter food stores and the spring had not yet produced more food to feed people. Acting in solidarity with those who go hungry is a piece of what it means to be a Christian. To be a follower of Jesus is to seek the healing of the whole world.

And Lent is a time when we practice those disciplines as acts of solidarity with the broken and hungry and ill and despised parts of the world.

I would invite you this Lent to think about your Lenten practice as an exercise in solidarity with all that is – with other human beings and with all of creation. That is most fundamentally what Jesus is about. He is about healing and restoring that broken world.

So as you enter Lent, consider how you will live in solidarity with those who are hungry, or broken, or ill in one way or another.

May you have a blessed Lent this year, and may it yield greater light in the world.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori  
Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church

## PARISH EVENTS

Diocesan Listening Session—Bishop Selection Committee  
Mar 1, 10 AM– 12 PM  
Parish Hall

Soup Sale  
Vegetable Beef  
Mar 14  
Parish Hall

Diocesan Council of Trustees Meeting  
Mar 15, 10 AM– 2 PM  
Parish Hall

Celtic Worship  
Mar 16, 5 PM  
Church

Vestry Meeting  
Mar 18, 5:30 PM  
Parish Library

Breaking Bread Together  
Dinner  
Mar 27, 5:30-6:30 PM

Yard Sale  
Apr 5, 8 AM– 2PM  
Parish Hall

Vestry Meeting  
Apr 15, 5:30 PM  
Parish House Library

Folks of A seasoned Age  
“Growing Your Own Herbs”  
Apr 23  
Parish Hall

Breaking Bread Together  
Dinner  
Apr 24 5:30-6:30 PM

*Please see inside for a full schedule of Lenten and Holy Week activities as well as our Easter Schedule!*



## The Jubilee Ministry Center at St Mark's

### Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and Food Security



Food security is defined as existing "when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life." Commonly, the concept of food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. In many places, health problems related to a lack of appropriate access and knowledge provide are an ever increasing threat to basic food security.

Food security is built on three pillars:

- ⇒ Food availability: sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis.
- ⇒ Food access: having sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.
- ⇒ Food use: appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care.

### Christian Formation at St. Mark's — What is Lent?

The traditions of Lent are derived from the season's origin as a time when the church prepared candidates, or "catechumens," for their baptism into the Body of Christ. It eventually became a season of preparation not only for catechumens but also for the whole congregation. Self-examination, study, fasting, prayer and works of love are disciplines historically associated with Lent. Conversion – literally, the "turning around" or reorientation of our lives towards God – is the theme of Lent. Both as individuals and as a community, we look inward and reflect on our readiness to follow Jesus in his journey towards the cross. The forty days of Lent (Sundays are not included) correspond to the forty-day temptation of Jesus in the wilderness and the forty-year journey of Israel from slavery to a new community. Lent gives us a marvelous opportunity to take the next step forward in our spiritual life. *The Book of Common Prayer* designates the weekdays of Lent and



**To Know,  
To Show,  
To Grow  
in Christ**

Holy Week, along with all Fridays of the year as days of "special devotion" with "special acts of discipline and self-denial," which would normally include fasting (p. 17). Some form of fasting is one of the central ways that Christians have done this. Jesus began his ministry by fasting (Mat. 4:1-11) and teaches about it in the Sermon on the Mount, just after discussing repentance and forgiveness, saying, "When you fast..." (Mat. 6:16). Fasting can be either a whole or partial abstinence from food and its purpose as a Christian discipline is always spiritual: to learn the most difficult spiritual truth, that "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Mat. 4:4).

What is most helpful is to think first about your Lenten fast, and second about what discipline you might take on. Here are some of the traditional methods of fasting:

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is more than a "food pantry." A pantry is a room in our home where we store food we acquire until we need it. While The Cupboard may appear to be a pantry for many of us ( a storage place) it represent access to a level of food security to many of our clients.

Issues such as whether households get enough food, how it is distributed within the household and whether that food fulfils the nutrition needs of all members of the household show how food security is closely linked to health. The Cupboard seeks to address every aspect of food security from simple access to basic knowledge for good nutrition and care. In doing so, it seeks to improve the health of our community.

### Breaking Bread Together Dinner



Our monthly Breaking Bread Together Dinner for January and February will be held on Thursday, **March 27 and April 24** from 5:30 to 6:30 PM.

### Folks of Seasoned Age

Folks of a Seasoned Age continues its weekly exercise program on **Tuesdays at 3:30 PM** in the Parish Hall. The good weather is bringing people out in our best attendance yet!

**Mark your calendar!** April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Master Gardner Tony Hatfield-Nicholson will present on growing fresh herbs for the kitchen and, as time permits, discuss the virtues of raised bed gardening. On May 21st, we are planning a game night. St. Mark's will provide basic board games (e.g. checkers) or you can B.Y.O.G. (Bring Your Own Game) to play with your friends and neighbors. Light refreshments will be served.



- a) forgoing meat during the weekdays of Lent;
- b) fasting from one or two meals a day (Wednesdays & Friday are the traditional days);
- c) considering what practices serve as a spiritual or emotional "crutch" in your life (extended periods of TV, desserts, internet usage) and "fasting" from them (with the intention of continuing the fast even after Lent);
- d) beginning to fast before receiving Communion on Sundays as a way to spiritually prepare.

When looking to take on a discipline, take an inventory of your spiritual life and prayerfully ask what the next small step might be:

- a) begin praying Morning or Evening Prayer each day
- b) pray Compline (BCP p. 147) together as a family or couple at night
- c) make an examination of conscience at the end of each day and keep track in preparation for a personal Confession
- d) give part of the money you would spend on entertainment to the Church or the poor.

Ash Wednesday is one of the two days of the Church's year — the other being Good Friday — when all Christians who are physically able to do so are urged to engage in a total fast: abstaining from all food (solid or liquid, but **not** from water) during the day, eating only a simple, meatless meal sometime late in the day (after receiving Holy Communion, if possible).

## Lenten Schedule

### Ash Wednesday, March 5

7:30 AM Word & Ash  
 12:05 PM Holy Eucharist with Distribution of Ashes  
 7:00 PM Vespers with Distribution of Ashes

### Sundays in Lent

8:45 AM Church School for All Ages  
 9:30 AM Worship  
 5:00 PM Alternative Worship  
*An exploration of different ways to worship. Watch the bulletin and our website for details each Sunday.*

### Wednesdays in Lent

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with Prayers for Healing  
 5:00-6:00 PM "Just for Women Study Group" discussing the "Prayer of Jabez" led by Deacon Loretta Collins. Includes simple soup supper.

### Thursdays in Lent

12:05 PM – 1:00 PM Brown Bag Study Group – "Embracing the Prophets"  
*A multi-media discussion featuring biblical scholar Walter Bruggeman and led by Father David Zwifka.*

### Fridays in Lent

12:05- 12:30 PM Stations of the Cross

### Monday thru Thursday in Lent

12:05 – 12:20 PM Mid-day Prayers

## Holy Week Schedule

### Palm Sunday, April 13

10:00 AM

*No Church School on Palm Sunday  
 Solemn Eucharist with  
 Blessing, Distribution and Procession with Palms  
 Recitation of the Passion*

### Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of Holy Week

April 14-16

11:00 AM

*Sacrament of Individual Reconciliation*

12:05 PM

*Holy Eucharist*

### Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM

*Solemn Eucharist with Washing of Feet  
 Procession to Chapel of Repose to follow.*

### Good Friday

*12 Noon—Ecumenical Services*

*7:00 PM Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion*

### Holy Saturday

*Church remains open for prayer and meditation  
 3:00 PM Blessing of Easter Foods*

## Easter Schedule

### THE GREAT VIGIL of EASTER

Saturday, April 19, 7:30 PM

*Blessing of Easter Fire  
 Proclamation of Easter Joy  
 Readings about the history of salvation  
 Solemn Eucharist*

### EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, April 20, 10:00 AM

**Festival Eucharist**

*Services will be broadcast live on the internet  
 Find the link on our home page at  
 www.stmark-lewistown.org*

*"Rector's Corner" (continued from page 1)*

things take spiritual discipline. That makes them perfect objects for consideration in our Lenten lives. Lent becomes a time for us to "catch up" with God if our daily hurriedness has helped us lose touch. We reconnect with God in many of the same ways as we do with our Facebook friends—through conversation (prayer), shared memories (Bible study), and simply being together (worship). During this Lenten season, all three are available to us at St. Mark's. No matter that we are already into the season. No matter when we get 'round to it, God is always ready to "friend" us, to reconnect, to catch up and rediscover our deep and abiding love for one another.

Regrettably, we can't do this with the simple click of a computer mouse, but have a perfect vehicle in our own parish community. Within our parish family, we can pray, enter into deep study of God's Word, and worship in the fellowship of disciples. What's really cool about that is that it's not a merely virtual world, but a world of flesh and blood reality—a place where we can touch and are touched by the divine through the love and service of others.

Reconnect with God. You'll be glad that you did!

With an abiding wish for a blessed and holy Lent, I remain,



### What is the Blessing of Easter Foods??

"The blessing of Easter baskets," is one of the most enduring and beloved of eastern European Easter traditions. The tradition of food blessing at Easter, has early-medieval roots in Christian society, dating from the 7th century in its basic form. The more modern form containing bread and eggs (symbols of resurrection and Christ) dates from approximately the 12th century.

Baskets containing a sampling of Easter foods are brought to church to be blessed on Holy Saturday. The basket is traditionally lined with a white linen or lace napkin and decorated with sprigs of boxwood, a typical Easter evergreen. Even though it takes place in the quiet spirit of Holy Saturday when we remember the Lord's burial, the Blessing of the Food is, however, a festive occasion. The three-part blessing prayers specifically address the various contents of the baskets, with special prayers for the

*(Continued on page 4)*

## STEWARDSHIP—A PROGRESS REPORT



At right is a summary of parish finances for the first two months of 2014 as compared to the first two months of 2013. a few notes of explanation: "Investment Income" represents the income generated from our investments; "Donations" includes pledges and loose plate collections and other special offerings; "Personnel" includes *all* expenses related to clergy and lay staff. "Property expenses" includes all expenses related to the daily maintenance and upkeep of the parish's buildings; "Operations" include all other usual expenses. "Investment withdrawals"

	Jan - Feb 2014	Jan - Feb 2013	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
<b>INVESTMENT INCOME</b>	4,094.80	3,515.87	578.93	16.47%
<b>DONATIONS</b>	7,661.52	8,787.50	-1,125.98	-12.81%
<b>Total Income</b>	11,756.32	12,303.37	-547.05	-4.45%
<b>Expense</b>				
<b>OPERATIONS EXPENSE</b>	6,449.72	7,914.65	-1,464.93	-18.51%
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	20,515.97	10,554.74	9,961.23	94.38%
<b>PROPERTY EXPENSES</b>	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.0%
<b>Total Expense</b>	27,065.69	18,469.39	8,596.30	46.54%
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-15,309.37	-6,166.02	-9,143.35	148.29%
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Other Income</b>				
<b>INVESTMENT WITHDRAWALS</b>	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	100.0%
<b>Total Other Income</b>	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	100.0%
<b>Net Other Income</b>	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	100.0%
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-5,309.37</b>	<b>-6,166.02</b>	<b>856.65</b>	<b>-13.89%</b>

are funds taken out of the *principal* of our investment accounts. So far this year, it is clear that our biggest financial obligation is to our staff. The dramatic change from 2013 is due for the most part to the change in our rector's status from half-time to full-time. Vestry knew last summer that this would be a heavy financial burden for the parish when it made its decision. The changes were reflected in the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget presented at the Annual Meeting in January. All indications are that we are on track with that budget. Vestry continues to monitor our financial situation closely and will make any necessary and possible adjustments during the course of the year.

As was pointed out in budget discussions at the Annual Meeting, the largest "hole" in our income development is external fundraising. Vestry will be considering several projects that will meet that challenge. Currently, we hope to expand our GIANT Foodstore CASH for Causes program to include the cash card program at Weis Markets. The Amazon Associates program is another painless effort to raise funds. We hope that these programs grow and develop at least a part of our funding lack. If any parishioner or friend of St. Mark's knows of creative ways of raising funds in and from the community, please speak with a member of Vestry or with Fr. Zwifka.

### Coming Soon!

### Yard Sale

April 5<sup>th</sup>  
8am -2pm

St. Mark's Parish Hall

If you have new or "gently used" merchandise to donate to the sale, please contact Cynthia McKinley or Deb Vaughn through the parish office (717 248-8327 or info@stmark-lewistown.org)

Set-up will be April 4, 10 AM  
Volunteers welcome!!



(Continued from page 3) Easter Foods

meats, eggs, cakes and breads. More recently, Easter candies and sweets have been included!

The foods in the baskets have a symbolic meaning:

- eggs - symbolize life and Christ's resurrection
- bread - symbolic of Jesus
- lamb - represents Christ
- salt - represents purification
- horseradish - symbolic of the bitter sacrifice of Christ
- ham - symbolic of great joy and abundance.

The food blessed in the church remains untouched according to local traditions until breakfast on Easter Sunday morning.

All are invited to experience this family oriented tradition!

## Retirement Assets Can Be a Tax Burden

A retirement account, such as an IRA, 401(k), or 403(b), often comprises a large portion of a person's wealth. Yet did you know they are the most heavily taxed — and a perfect instrument for making a charitable gift at death?

The way in which you distribute the assets in your retirement accounts can reflect your faith and values. By naming St. Mark's Episcopal Church as beneficiary of your retirement account, you can pass on assets you no longer can use, and spare your estate the tax burden affiliated with these plans.

Simply ask the manager of your account to send you a beneficiary designation form, and complete it with the parish's proper legal name, "St. Mark's Episcopal Church." Doing so allows the funds to pass tax-free.

Remember to consult your financial advisors on the ramifications of this decision since individual circumstances vary.

If you'd like to learn more about how you can help our church *Share the Vision* through retirement plan assets, contact Father Zwifka.



As you probably note, we list parishioners' birthday each week both as a recognition and as

**Birthdays are good for you. Statistics show that people who have the most live the longest!**

(Larry Lorenson)

a motive for prayer. Every now and then, we need to update our parish lists to be sure we have everybody and that we have the right day!

If you have recently joined our parish or you have not seen your name or someone you know in the birthday lists, please let us know.

Also, please be sure to let us know of any changes in your physical, mailing, or e-mail addresses, your phone numbers, etc., so we can be up to date in our parish records!

## An Attitude of Gratitude

"No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude."

*— Alfred North Whitehead*

Each time I take time to assess where we are as a parish, I am struck by the immense generosity of our members in every area of stewardship. As individuals and as a community, we are always ready to give of our financial resources, our time, and our skills. Take, for instance, the recent effort led by Deacon Loretta to help some of our Cupboard clients learn to use crockpots to increase their efficiency, minimize food costs, and create healthy meals for their families. Parishioners and non-parish vol-

unteers worked together with great success.

Even though we are pressed financially, when critical needs arise, resources are made available.

I cannot express the depth of my gratitude to all who assist in moving our parish mission and ministry forward. Each time I go to prayer I remember each an every contributor—whether the contribution is in time, talent or treasure—and give thanks to God.

To you, I can only say, "Thank you!"

— Fr. Zwifka



## Daytrips in Planning Stages



The Jubilee Ministry Center's *Folks of A Seasoned Age* is beginning to plan future daytrips to such destinations as The National Cathedral,



and the famed Longwood Gardens, to name a couple. More information will soon be available about these opportunities on our website

and in *The Messenger*. If you are interested in this effort, please contact Jackie Leight or Father Zwifka with your ideas or your willingness to help plan and participate in these or other destinations of interest.

## Don't forget Church School!

Church School meets every Sunday at 8:45 (except Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday). Bad weather difficult schedules, illness and daylight savings time all got us a bit of track since the beginning of the year. Let's resolve to return to a study of God's Word for all ages in our weekly Church School. 8:45 AM—9:20 AM every Sunday!



## Scripture Readings for the months of March & April

<b>Mar 2—Last Sunday after Epiphany</b> Exodus 24:12-18 Psalm 2 2 Peter 1:16-21 Matthew 17:1-9	<b>Mar 9—First Sunday in Lent</b> Genesis 2:15-17;3:1-7 Psalm 32 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11	<b>Mar 16—Second Sunday in Lent</b> Genesis 12:1-4a Psalm 121 Romans 4:1-5;13-17 John 3:1-17	<b>Mar 23—Third Sunday in Lent</b> Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 95 Romans 5:1-11 John 4:5-32	<b>Mar 30—Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> 1 Samuel 16:1-13 Psalm 23 Ephesians 5:8-14 John 9:1-41
<b>April 6—Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45	<b>April 13—Passion (Palm) Sunday</b> Isaiah 50:4-9 Psalm 31:9-16 Philippians 2:5-11 Matthew 26:14-27:66	<b>April 20—Easter Sunday</b> Acts 10:34-43 Psalm 118:1-2;18-24 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-18	<b>April 27—First Sunday After Easter</b> Acts 2:14; 22-32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31	



*Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Year A in a Revised Common Lectionary Cycle focuses primarily on the Gospel of Matthew.*



# MARCH—2014

# ROTA



DATE	SERVICE	PRESIDER	HOMILIST	USHERS	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	CHALICE BEARER
03/02/2014 Last Sunday after Epiphany	9:30 A.M. H. E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	Nancy Laub & Elta Lanver	Deb Vaughn	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky Crucifer: Mark Kaler	Phyllis Sikorsky
03/09/2014 Lent I	9:30 A.M. H. E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Robin Szoke TBD	Jeff and Maggie Wilson	Robin Wilson	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Colby Hagan Crucifer: Michael Aitkin	Deb Vaughn
03/16/2014 Lent II Healing Service	9:30 A.M. H.E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Deacon Loretta Collins	Fred McKinley Ralph Aitkin	Cynthia McKinley	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Mi- chael Aitkin Crucifer: Lexie Kuhns	Phyllis Sikorsky
03/23/2014 Lent III	9:30 A.M. H.E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	William Wilson Robert Wilson	Deb Vaughn	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Colby Hagan Crucifer: Mark Kaler	Phyllis Sikorsky
03/30/2014	9:30 A.M. H. E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	Nancy Laub Elta Lanver	Cynthia McKinley	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Mark Kaler Crucifer: Michael Aitkin	Deb Vaughn



# APRIL—2014

## ROTA



DATE	SERVICE	PRESIDER	HOMILIST	USHERS	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	CHALICE BEARER
04/06/14 Lent 5	9:30 A.M. H. E. Rite I	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	Nancy Laub & Elta Lauver	Deb Vaughn	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Colby Hagan Crucifer: Mark Kaler	Phyllis Sikorsky
04/13/14 Palm Sunday	10:00 A.M. H. E. Rite I	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	Tony Hatfield- Nicholson Ralph Aitkin	Deb Vaughn	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Mark Kaler Crucifer: Michael Aitkin	Phyllis Sikorsky
04/20/14 Easter	10:00 A.M. H.E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	Maggie and Jeff Wilson	Robin Wilson	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Lexie Kuhns Crucifer: Michael Aitkin	Deb Vaughn
04/27/14 Easter 1	9:30 A.M. H.E. Rite II	Fr. Zwifka	Fr. Zwifka	William Wilson Robert Wilson	Cynthia McKinley	SD: Blair Hannon Acolyte: Phyllis Sikorsky & Colby Hagan Crucifer: Mark Kaler	Phyllis Sikorsky

## St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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*A Spirit-filled  
Multi-generational  
Community-oriented  
parish in the Episcopal  
tradition.*

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