

THE PIEDMONT EPISTLE

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS BY WORD AND DEED

February/March 2019

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,



In the past decade or so, I've come across some curious comments made by fellow Episcopalians about our denomination:

"The Episcopal Church is the 'thinking person's church'."

"At our church, you don't have to check your brain at the door."

"Episcopalians tend to be better-educated."

As a priest and an Episcopalian, I've found such boasts rather troubling. For one, they are uncharitable to fellow Christians, implying—or outright claiming—that they are intellectually inferior to us. But it's more than just that the claim is elitist; it is also plainly inaccurate. It is true that our clergy are educated and most have Master's Degrees from three-year seminaries, but Lutherans and Roman Catholic ministers are in seminary longer than we are (four years for both), and Reformed Christians and Roman Catholic Christians have a much more rigorous and disciplined tradition of thought and theology than we do. At the same time, in numerous polls, lay Episcopalians, folks like you and particularly our teenagers, are consistently ranked among the lowest denominations in terms of biblical knowledge and understanding of the basics of the Christian faith. It's been said that most of our adults have the theological maturity of a 12-year-old—because the last time they engaged in theological education was in their confirmation class!

To be fair, I blame my fellow brothers and sisters of the cloth, who, whether overworked or uninterested or just lazy, have not done their job in educating their congregations. I believe you deserve better. I want you to be *educated* members of the church, as opposed to members who know only the opinions and assumptions of others.

And so, as I indicated in my Priest's Report at the Annual Meeting, I will be offering this year several adult formation courses to provide you with a multitude of opportunities to deepen your faith. I invite, challenge, everyone at Piedmont to take part in at least one of the courses I'll be offering this year.

And what would be a more fitting time to begin than during Lent, the time when new converts to Christianity were traditionally taught and formed in the faith prior to their baptism at Easter?

In keeping with that tradition, on Wednesday nights during Lent, I will be leading a six-part course entitled, *Finding God in the Bible*. Now, this is not a traditional “Bible study”; we won’t be looking at a book or a theological theme in the Bible. Rather, we will be considering different ways that Christians have found God in the Bible, different ways of approaching Holy Scripture to encounter God and receive from that encounter all we can. So, if a “Bible Study” has never seemed to excite you, I invite you to take part in this course, which begins the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday. I hope that it will serve you as a rich and rewarding way to live deeper into Lent!

Yours in Christ,

W Terry Miller

Lenten Series

Finding God in the Bible

Wednesdays, 6:30pm, March 13-April 21 in the Parish House

Studying Scripture, being immersed in God’s Word, is an essential spiritual practice for Christians and is indispensable for understanding the Christian faith. Yet, too often Bible studies tend to focus on learning things *about God*, as opposed to *encountering God*. And as a result, too often Christians feel intimidated and do not study Scripture. In this class, intended as a “beginners Bible study,” we will be approaching the Bible with the specific aim of meeting God and engaging with Him through Scripture. This class will engage your heart and mind, and enlarge your vision of the God we worship and serve. All are welcome! Led by The Rev. Terry Miller.



- Mar 13 The Bible as a Book of Meeting
- Mar 20 *Lectio Divina*: Sacred Reading
- Mar 27 The Four-fold Sense of Scripture
- Apr 3 Were You There...?: Putting Ourselves Into the Story
- Apr 10 A Word for Us Today: Bringing the Story into Our World
- Apr 17 Illustrating the Bible: The Bible and Creative Response

A Journey Through Lent

Shrove Tuesday

Tuesday, March 5, 6pm

Join us at the parish house for the burning of the palms and the feasting on pancakes and other goodies, as we "clean out" space in our hearts for the season of Lent!



Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 6, 12 noon & 7pm

In keeping with the ancient tradition of beginning the season of Lent with the Imposition of Ashes, Piedmont will hold two Ash Wednesday services this month—a solemn service at 12 noon and choral service at 7:00pm. Invite and encourage your friends and family to participate.

Looking Ahead...

HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY, April 14, 10 a.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 18, 7 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE, April 19, 12 noon

EASTER SUNDAY, April 21, 10 a.m.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday 9:45 a.m. Shepherd's Way (Sunday School)
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour in the parish house
Monday 7:00 p.m. Adult study group at the McDowell's home
Wednesday 10:00 a.m. Community Book Discussion
Thursday 7:00 p.m. Bible Fellowship – parish house

If you know of someone who is unable to get to church, but would like to receive communion, please let Father Terry or Deacon Kathryn know and they will arrange for a visitation.

MESA food donations - Please bring a can, bag, bottle, or box of non-perishable food item. Thanks for your generosity.

PRAYER JOYS & CONCERNS

We offer prayers of healing for friends and family:

Sarah Aloumouati	Lisa Gardner	Susan Muston
Melvin Amos	Cynthia Gerstner	Donna Nettles
Corey Barker	Carrie Gilles	Amanda Paff
The Barksdale Family	Jacob Good	Sara Parmenter
Emily Begovitch (Kathy Henken's niece)	Griff & Vera Griffin	Maria Rosenberg
Nicky Bourgeois (Doris Lackey's friend)	Stanley Griffin (Vera & Griff's son)	Doreen Russell
Fran Bowers	Mary Haley	Myia MacKenzie Shifflett
Jean Brashears	Reggie Hall (Barbara Straightiff's brother-in- law)	Ann Skidmore
Max Brown (Sue Burnett's friend, 4-y.o.)	Chloe Hammer (Jean Kane's sister)	Lorraine Sandifer
Lanee Butler	Luke Harbert, Sue Lam	Jacqueline Smith
Jane Cameer	Ted and Rene Hinds	Judy Taylor (friend of Kathy Henken)
Doris & Roland Chapman	Skip McDanolds	Betty Thomas (friend of Barbara Straightiff)
Sandra Clore (Waltine Robinson's niece)	The Hitt family	Matt Tsun
Heather Comer	Tammy Kelliher	Robert Ulrich
The Cox family	Ren LeVally (Dink's son)	Bernie Valdez
Harley Cronk	Ruby Minick (grandmother of a friend of Kay John)	Donna Whitman (friend of the Griffiths)
David Cronk	Rosalie Mow (Doug's mother)	Augusta Woodward
Sara DeLaurentis (Sue Burnett's niece)	Susan Mowchan	Kimberley Yarbrough (friend of Sherry Spencer with an auto- immune disease)
The Filmore Family	Dorothy Mudd	Alex Yowell
Patrick & Sean Fohner		Jeff Yowel
James Gardiner		

We offer prayers of healing and God's loving presence for friends living in nursing home care: Barbara Kiley, and Jane Chapman.

We pray for peace and the restoration of people's safety and dignity in Philippines, Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Iran, Sudan, West Africa, and the Congo. We pray for the victims of violence in Beirut, Baghdad, Kenya, Paris, and San Bernardino.

We pray for the men and women in the armed services, especially Mike Butterworth, Patrick DaSilva, Graham Davidson, Sean Hegg, R.E. Hutton, Nathan Kinkey, Brian Mainwaring, Jeffery Mainwaring, Todd Mainwaring, Anthony Mark, and Clay Puryear, and for our first responders. We pray for our presiding bishop, Michael Curry; our bishops, Susan Goff and Bob Ihloff, the churches of the Diocese of Virginia, and for our 70 million brothers and sisters in the Anglican Communion.

We pray for the families in Barbara's House; for the work of Madison Emergency Services Association, Habitat for Humanity, Madison Free Clinic, Literacy Council of Madison County, Boy's and Girl's Club of Madison, Senior Nutrition Site, Madison County Education Foundation, Boy Scout Troop 116, Madison Strong, and Madison Community Outreach Works.

We pray for our youth in college: Nick Bader, Izzy Hansen, Sam Landolt, Paul Jackson, and Jacob Young.

We give thanks to God for all the families in this blessed Piedmont Church, and especially for the work God has done in the life of Peter Bank, in his recovery from surgery. Gracious Lord, guide, preserve and protect your servants as they create for your glory a holy family of love. May their love for each other be a sign of your tender care.

Graves Chapel News

Our next *Evening Prayer Service*, at Graves Chapel, will be Sunday February 24, 2019--at 4:00pm. So please mark your calendars!

Graves Chapel is located at 104 Bluff Mountain Road Madison (Graves Mill), Virginia.

Everyone is welcome! Bring your neighbors, and any additional friends and/or guests.

Should you have special prayer requests or needs, please feel free to contact our Lay Preacher Susan Bagby. Additionally, Susan can offer you spiritual direction. She is a counselor and is certified as a spiritual director. There are no fees associated with her professional services however she does request a tax deductible donation be made directly to Graves Chapel. Please feel free to contact Susan at: Susanhbagby@gmail.com or Telephone--434.978.1627

Our next *movie night* with dinner, at Graves Chapel is on Saturday March 9, 2019 at 5:00pm.

Our Lay Preacher Susan Bagby, has provided the following narrative of the film being shown:

"Following supper at 5:00, we will screen Martin Scorsese's film *Kundun*, a biopic about the current Dalai Lama. This is the middle of three films Scorsese made that differ distinctly from our usual expectation of a film by

this great American director; the other two were *The Last Temptation of Christ* and *Silence*, also movies with spiritual or religious themes.

Released in December of 1997, *Kundun* was nominated for four Academy Awards. It does indeed tell the life story of the 14th Dalai Lama, a Tibetan Buddhist leader. Since it was during his lifetime that China invaded and took over Tibet, there is some violence in the film, accounting for its PG-13 rating. The Chinese government was not at all happy with the Disney studios for releasing *Kundun*.

As a reviewer said of the film, “Ultimately, *Kundun* takes its subject seriously and on his own terms. It is one of Martin Scorsese’s most beautiful films which, following two decades of neglect, deserves to be seen again.”

We hope you can join us for this cinematic treat!"