



Saint John's

Inter Change

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The parish newsletter for the people of God called to the Christian community of Saint John's Episcopal Church, Quarrier at Leon Sullivan Way, Charleston, West Virginia

Our Mission: We reach out to the world in Christ's name in the hope that all might find a home in God's healing love.

SUNDAYS FEBRUARY 10 AND 17, 2008 FIRST AND SECOND SUNDAYS IN LENT

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 8:45 a.m. Lectionary Study and Group Discussion, library
- 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum, Feb. 10, David Vick, vestry member and former Gazette columnist, will read and discuss passages from the poetry of e.e. Cummings, W.H. Auden, Edna St. Vincent Millay and others; Feb. 17, Gov. Joe Manchin will tell us how his faith informs his life and/or his profession, Room 109.
- 10:10 a.m. Parents' Fellowship, Room 208
- 10:10 a.m. Chapel for Older Children, Room 225
- 10:30 a.m. Classes for toddlers through Grade 5: Toddlers, Room 298; Godly Play, 4 to 8 years old, Room 299; St. John's Eagles, 3rd to 5th Grades, Room 221.
- 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, with choir
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour, Hunter Hall
- 5:00 p.m. Feb. 10, Taize service

Learn What Outreach Is All About at Open House

Make sure to join us for our Outreach Open House on Sunday, Feb. 17, at noon in the Molly Warwick Room. The event will be similar to last year's successful Meet 'n' Greet and will introduce parishioners to Outreach for an inside look at the many projects, past and future. All parishioners are invited as well as friends outside of St. John's as you don't have to be a member of this church to help with Outreach efforts. The event will begin with refreshments and socializing.

Lenten Events at St. John's

Ash Wednesday was observed Feb. 6.

Lenten Series, Created and Called: Discovering Our Gifts, will be held on five Tuesday nights beginning Feb. 12 at 5:30 p.m. (See page 4 for more details.)

Evensong will take place March 3 at 5 p.m.

Holy Week is March 16 to 22, beginning with **Palm Sunday** services at 8 and 10:30 a.m. with Liturgy of Palms and Eucharist. Monday through Wednesday there will be Morning Prayer at 8:30 a.m. and Evening Prayer at 5:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday service is 7 p.m. with Holy Eucharist and Foot Washing.

Good Friday Liturgy will be at noon, followed by Stations of the Cross at 1 p.m. and Reconciliation of a Penitent at 2 p.m.

The Great Vigil of Easter begins at 6 a.m. March 23.

WIFFF to Meet on Valentine's Day

Women In Faith, Fun and Fellowship are invited to bring their husbands, partners or friends to the next luncheon meeting at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 14 in the Molly Warwick Room and Room 209. Parishioner Zeb Wright will speak on getting ready for spring gardening. A light lunch will be served before the program and reservations are to be made with the church office, 346-0359. The Shawl Ministry will follow and is open to all who enjoy needlework.

Prayers for Peace

The Saints of John penned 231 prayers for peace during the Advent Season.

Interchange Deadline

The next issue of Interchange will be for the weeks of Feb. 24 and March 2.

Please submit items to:

julkemp@verizon.net

or bdearien@stjohnswv.org

by Tuesday, Feb. 12, at 4 p.m.

Nicene Creed Class to Continue

Reflections on the Nicene Creed is being offered on Sunday evenings Feb. 10, 17 and 24 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 209. We'll consider The Creator, The Christ and The Holy Spirit through scripture, art and other contemporary sources. While an offshoot of the Nicene Creed class offered on Sunday mornings in January, attendance at that course is not a prerequisite to participation -- anyone is welcome to attend. A simple dinner will be provided at 6 p.m. Please RSVP your attendance at the Feb. 10 meeting to Beth Marquart, 382-3109, so she can plan accordingly.

Armbrechts Receive Award

Ted and Calvert Armbrecht, members of St. John's, and their family received the West Virginia Land Trust's Special Places Award given annually to individuals whose actions benefit the trust's long-range vision for land protection in the state. In addition to placing virtually all of a

tract of land they own atop North Fork Mountain under conservation easements managed by a nature preserve, they serve in a variety of conservation-oriented leadership roles.

What every parishioner needs to know about the search process at Saint John's

by Bob Rosier

We are family!

Your vestry took on the tedious task of selecting 13 parishioners to represent the vast diversity of St. John's, and their result is quite remarkable. The theme of a series of parish meetings that preceded formation of the committee was aptly titled "We are family," and your input in those meetings has been used to shape our parish profile, now published as well as posted to our Web site.

The family theme quite aptly describes the dynamics of the committee, as well. I have served on previous search committees, vestries, government focus groups and association boards, and never before have I been part of a group whose mutual respect, collegiality and focus on mission were more impressive.

Each member of your search committee continues to make vital contributions to the discernment process, and not one has presumed her or his superior intellect to the discredit of others. *We are* family.

Why the secrecy?

While diocesan policy-following a national trend and contrary to what veteran Saints of John are accustomed to-prohibits us from disclosing candidates' names or anything that might reveal their identity, it is not the committee's intention to withhold any information that can be shared. I should add that our prospective rectors themselves are not prohibited from disclosing their own candidacy if they choose, as some may have done.

The major factor causing very little information to be released in the first few months of our search is the vast number of candidates we had to consider. At one time or another, some 40-plus names have been given to us. Evaluating that many priests' profiles and determining how well they match ours has been an enormous, time-consuming task, and we have been quite deliberate in carefully "weeding out" those whom we feel would not meet the present needs of the parish.

What is our 'agenda?'

We are not searching for a gay priest. Such a thought is preposterous. Our sole "agenda" is to find the candidate who most closely fits the parish profile that each of you were invited to help create. We are, by canon law, prohibited from discriminating in regard to gender, race, sexual orientation, or any other factor that places a person in a certain "class."

As you must certainly be aware, St. John's is very much unlike most congregations in The Episcopal Church. It should therefore not surprise you that, based on information that our diocese provided to both the national church's computer-based matching program and to a meeting of deployment officers of other dioceses-in addition to our self-described diversity and inclusivity as portrayed in our profile those prospects who have been attracted to us might include priests who happen to be lesbian or gay.

In fact, each of our candidates, regardless of their own sexual orientation, has expressed a desire to become our next rector based in large part on the inclusive nature of our parish. Each of these priests comes from a place where sexual orientation is a "non-issue," just as we believe it is here at St. John's.

Where will our new rector come from?

We have considered candidates from as far away as the west coast of both the U.S. and Canada. Each of the eight who made it to the "semifinals" currently serves The Episcopal Church within the eastern half of the U.S. Some are more familiar with our state and diocese than are others; none is a current resident of West Virginia.

We did not limit our search geographically, nor did we favor any location as the best place to find a good priest. The Holy Spirit is very much a part of our discernment process, and the Holy Spirit is everywhere!

When will this person arrive?

This process is quite intentionally not on the "fast track." We are more concerned about finding the right person. And we have an excellent interim rector who will remain with us until we find our next rector.

The committee's tasks this January and February are focused on traveling to visit our candidates. This includes attending worship and hearing them preach, meeting their spouse or partner as appropriate, having a face-to-face chat with the priest, and also interviewing in person at least one member of the candidate's parish who has agreed to do so with the priest's permission.

Following those visits, it will become our task to narrow the field from eight to probably three or four, each of whom will come to Charleston for further conversation with both the search committee and vestry. The final duty of the committee will be to recommend to the vestry our first choice to be called as the next rector of St. John's. The vestry is charged with making the call.

We welcome your questions

As a professional communicator, which is what I was paid for doing before I retired, it is my intention to share with the congregation all of the information allowable, and I believe it is best to do so in writing,

so that every one of you receives the same reply. If you have questions, please address them to a member of the search committee. You can most easily reach me by e-mail atbobrosier@gmail.com.

Watch for replies in future editions of the Interchange.

Consider the Gifts That God Has Given You

By Kitty Byus

Take some time for yourself and consider the gifts that God has given you. During Lent seems like an appropriate time to do this. Because I have less self-discipline than I'd like, I enjoy working with others in a safe, trust-filled environment. That is the reason I have participated in Created and Called: Discovering Our Gifts Workshop – not once but 3 times -- and brought the workshop to my own church, St. Timothy's-in-the-Valley, Hurricane.

Our gifts encompass more than our talents. Other aspects of our giftedness include our interests, motivations, styles, values, passions, hopes, dreams and life journeys. This workshop provides time for talking, listening, praying and sharing meals. Always I had a sense of God being present with us as we listened to His voice through Bible study, journaling and reflection time.

I realized how much God has already given me. The workshop's small group helped me discern how I might continue to use these blessings to help others and to build up the body of Christ in my own parish and in my community. It was a privilege to join briefly with others on each one's individual spiritual journey and to have them join my walk.

I encourage you to take part in this five-week Tuesday evening program Feb. 12 through March 11. The evening begins with a prayer service at 5:30 p.m. followed by a light supper at 6 p.m. with the program beginning at 6:30 p.m. I was glad that I did (times 3) and I think that you will be also.