

Tidings

The Newsletter of St. Paul's Anglican Church

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St. Paul's Anglican Church

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A Message from Fr. Toms

February was a wonderful month at St. Paul's. Our annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper had one of the largest groups we have ever had. We also took the opportunity to celebrate our 15th anniversary as a church. We had a great time of fellowship, sharing with one another what St. Paul's means to us. At our synod meeting last week, I spoke with Fr. Brian Foos, who brought his choir to sing for us in December. He wanted to thank us for being such a welcoming and positive church. As we shared with one another what St. Paul's means to us, we heard how our people look upon St. Paul's as home. It is this atmosphere that Fr. Brian and his group experienced. Thanks to all of you who have been working so diligently to make our church a warm and caring place. After the pancake supper, we burned the palm branches to make ashes for the Ash Wednesday service. All of us were moved as we took the time to meditate on our mortality and our need for repentance.

The Ash Wednesday service was also well attended. All of the hymns, prayers, and our encounter with our blessed Lord in the Holy Sacrament of Communion, prepared our hearts and minds for the days of abstinence ahead. May God use this season of the year, as we draw away from many outward things, in order to be drawn to closer fellowship with our Savior.

In just a few weeks, we will have the opportunity to experience two of the most stirring and heart-rending services that we observe during the year—Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Let us begin even now to prepare our hearts for those services that take place during Holy Week.

To help you with your Good Friday meditations on the sufferings of Christ, I am providing you with the following excerpt from Bishop John Henry Hobart's book, *A Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (1851), along with a prayer from his book, *The Christian's Manual of Faith and Devotion* (1858):

Christ suffered, that he might teach us to expect suffering, and to afford us an example of patience and resignation; he suffered, that he might assure us of his sympathy and compassion for us under all our afflictions: he suffered, that he might admit us to a share in those everlasting glories which were the reward of his sufferings. The principal object of his sufferings was to redeem us from sin and everlasting death, by making an atonement for our sins: for remission of sin being impossible, by the inscrutable decree of God, without effusion of blood, our redemption could not be wrought but by the blood of the Redeemer: the sufferings and death of Christ, being of infinite value and efficacy, expiated the guilt of our transgressions.

Since it was necessary that the Son of God should take upon him our nature, and suffer and die to atone for our sins, we should learn the infinite evil and guilt of

sin, and should be excited sincerely and deeply to confess our unworthiness, and renounce our sins. The sufferings of Christ should impress us with a lively sense of his infinite love towards us, and excite us gratefully and zealously to serve him. The enjoyments of this life cannot be so valuable, nor its calamities so considerable, as we are apt to suppose, since the blessed Saviour himself was destitute of the common comforts and conveniences of life, and shared so largely in its afflictions and sufferings. Prosperity, therefore, is not a certain sign of God's favour, nor affliction an evidence of his displeasure. We should bear with patience and resignation the evils of this life, which we deserve to suffer, since our innocent Redeemer sustained infinitely greater sufferings on our account. The sufferings of Christ too should animate us with the joyful confidence, that we have an almighty Intercessor and Guide, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and who will, therefore, be always as ready as he is able to support and succour us under all our trials. The contemplation of the sufferings of the Son of God for us, who were his enemies, is one of the most powerful means of subduing in our hearts the emotions of malice and revenge, and of cherishing the sentiments of benevolence and charity.

A Prayer for Good Friday

I come before thee, O Lord, in the lowest prostration of soul and body, with a heart full of grief and sorrow for those sins of mine, which crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to open, shame. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. But my consolation is, that my Saviour shed his precious blood for me, that I might not suffer the pains of eternal death, but be advanced to honour, glory, and immortality with him. Henceforth I desire not to live but unto Christ, who died for me. Assist me, O blessed Spirit, to purify myself, and to tread in the steps of this humble, meek, and patient Sufferer. Keep me in such a lively sense of my Saviour's agony and bloody sweat, that I may bitterly hate sin, the cause of his torments; and teach me the value of my immortal soul, for which he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Confirm my courage in the Christian warfare, that as a good soldier I may fight manfully under the banner of my crucified Saviour, that nothing either in life or death may ever separate me from the love of my glorious Redeemer, who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth one God, blessed forever. Amen.

Important Events This Month

Women's Bible Study (Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 P.M.)

The Women's Bible Study is becoming one of the strongest activities of our church. At the present time, the ladies are studying *Resurrection*, by Kristie Berglund. The Women's Bible Study is not only a time of learning the Scriptures, but a means of enriching the fellowship of our church and sharing our prayer concerns. Come be a part of this growing ministry of our church.

A Quick Look at This Month's Calendar

March 6, 7:00 P.M.—Women's Bible Study

March 13, 7:00 P.M.—Women's Bible Study

March 20, 7:00 P.M.—Women's Bible Study

March 29, 7:00 P.M.—Maundy Thursday Service

March 30, 6:00 P.M.—Good Friday Service

Happy Birthday!

Harwood Leonard

Lance Goodson

Cynthia Gordon

Julia Achord

Happy Anniversary!

Christopher and Madeline Velasquez

Around the Parish



