

St. John's Good News



From Rev. John...

Lent 2021

Dear Friends,

The season of Lent provides us with an opportunity to examine our lives and our priorities. This is particularly true during this year of Covid where we are forced to become monastic. For these 40 days, we consider the time Jesus spent in the wilderness trying to find out what it means to be Jesus. We are invited to spend this time figuring out what it means to be ourselves.

Though this is sometimes an unsettling proposition (for there is much about ourselves which frightens and disturbs us) we do so with the knowledge that our lives are holy. There are several opportunities to offer mutual support this season at Emmanuel. I list a few below for your prayerful consideration:

- **Zoom Ash Wednesday service:** February 17th at 7:30 p.m. You are all invited to join me in fasting that day. If any among you would like to receive a packet of ashes to impose upon yourself, please contact the church office and we will be happy to send them to you.
- **Discussion on the book *The Second Mountain* by David Brooks** (see announcement in this newsletter) this a discussion group sponsored by the Saugus Public led by me. We are invited the people of this community to discuss with their neighbors those things which matter most to us. We will be gathering on Tuesday evenings starting on Feb. 16th.
- **Tuesday Night Prayers on Zoom each Tuesday at 8:45.**
- **Tuesday morning Zoom Bible Study at 10 a.m.** We shall be discussing the book of Exodus – exploring the question, “What does it mean to be free?”

Though I realize that many of you have heavy demands upon your time, I invite you to make some space in your consciousness to listen to the voice of God. In the process, you will re-discover your own true voice.

I pray you have a blessed and Holy Lent.

Peace on all of your house,

John+

February 2021

**Sunday at 10am,
online through Zoom**

All are welcome to participate ~ please contact us for more information about online worship.

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:
@StJohnsSaugus

Facebook: St. John's
Episcopal Church
Saugus

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Lent

IN MANY CULTURES there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves.

If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get your money and why?

When you look at your face in the mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see in it that you most deplore?

If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?

Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo? Which is the one that makes you happiest to remember?

Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?

If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sack-cloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end.

- Originally published in *Wishful Thinking* by Frederick Buechner

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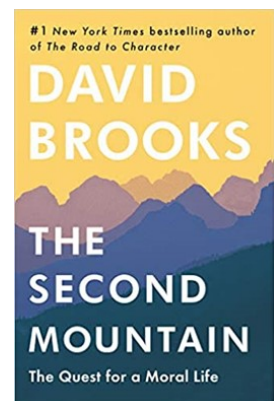
**Tuesday Evenings ~ 7:30-8:30**

**February 16<sup>th</sup> – March 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Led by The Rev. John Beach ~ St. John's Church, Saugus**

To register or to receive more information, please email Rev. John at:  
revjbeach(at)gmail(dot)com

**“Deeply moving, frequently eloquent and extraordinarily incisive.”**  
– *The Washington Post*



How can we come together in with our neighbors and discuss those things that matter to us?  
Come join our book discussion group!

Cont'd.

In *The Second Mountain*, New York Times commentator David Brooks explores the four commitments that define a life of meaning and purpose: to family, to a vocation, to a philosophy or faith, and to a community. Our personal fulfillment depends on how well we choose and execute these commitments. Brooks looks at a range of people who have lived joyous, committed lives, and who have embraced the necessity and beauty of dependence. He gathers their wisdom on how to choose a partner, how to pick a vocation, how to live out a philosophy, and how we can begin to integrate our commitments into one overriding purpose.

In short, this book is meant to help us all lead more meaningful lives. But it's also a provocative social commentary. We have taken individualism to the extreme—and in the process we have torn the social fabric in a thousand different ways. The path to repair is through making deeper commitments. In *The Second Mountain*, Brooks shows what can happen when we put commitment-making at the center of our lives.

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**From the Senior Warden...**

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone is enjoying the new year. The mild January has finally transformed in to what we expect a New England January to be – cold! Despite the cold and the pandemic, I find it nice to get outside every day for a walk and as we move into February, we can see the daylight increasing noticeably with each day. All signs of the cycle of life.

And part of the cycle of St. John's life is our Annual Meeting, which this year will be held via Zoom after Sunday service on **February 7<sup>th</sup>**. I hope you can join us as it is an important time of the year in the life of St. John's and the meeting is an opportunity to learn about our accomplishments in 2020, and our plans for 2021.

This will be my final contribution to the newsletter as Senior Warden. We are still searching for a new Senior Warden, but I hope by the time you are reading this we will have a candidate as it is time for someone new to work with Rev. John on leading us and bring a new perspective to how we can continue to be a reflection of Christ's presence in our community.

Thank you for all your support these past four years.

T.J. Martin  
Senior Warden

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**Annual Meeting Report**

If you wish to receive a copy of the annual report before the meeting Feb. 7th, please email or call the office no later than **Wednesday, February 3rd**. Printed copies will be available or if you prefer, we can email the pdf document. Thank you.

## Bishop's Lenten Letter

We approach Lent once again with a determination to observe this season as a time for self-examination, repentance, and the renewal of our relationships with one another and with the God who yearns for our deepest love and most authentic service.

For many of us, the ashes of Ash Wednesday are a tangible sign of our mortality and penitence, and a powerful sign of our entry into the spirit of Lent. We know, however, the ashes merely point towards the deeper signs of repentance, renewal, and reconciliation. These yield the fruits of the Spirit in our life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Even while advancing our spiritual health, this year's Ash Wednesday observances must also safeguard our physical well-being and that of those in our communities. The coronavirus pandemic is in the midst of a dramatic surge. At this writing, we are warned of a new more virulent strain on its way, while our health care facilities and providers are already stretched to their limits. The imposition of ashes presents a grave challenge to public health guidelines regarding physical distancing and physical touch.

Accordingly, guidelines for Ash Wednesday are offered below. May we find this Lenten season a time to bend the knee of our heart, praying with the psalmist: *Give me the joy of your saving help again, and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.* [Ps 51:13]

The Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates

The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris

### A PRAYER FOR ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these familiar (and not so familiar) Bay State cities and towns?

G E W Q U I N C Y E T F P U J X S E  
 T P I H E A T H C H I C O P E E A L  
 F W E L N B M O N T G O M E R Y V L  
 X T Y R I N G H A M F K M M M G U C  
 U W L Z U E I P S W I C H X N V P Y  
 P D B T Q M H W F A D Q M S T R F K  
 T H F R A N K L I N D A J Y V L S Y  
 O R B H Z P H K B P H O E S W E G G  
 N C K U P T V L R G D I M M F Y Z Q  
 G A J A B B Y Z N R G A G Z K D O T  
 O D B O Y C L I T T P O L B H E Q T  
 F Q E W G C L R O Y A L S T O N E T  
 J L R C X L L S A V O Y E H O U E K  
 I R V F E V F N E W B U R Y E N O U  
 D V I B F D W O O E U Z Y E Z N Y Y  
 K X N H H Y C G L R D M Y X K U T R  
 C A G A W A M N X V A A A G M L N U  
 D S W E N D E L L Q N K E R B T I T

Agawam ~ Bellingham ~ Chicopee ~ Dalton ~ Erving ~ Franklin ~ Goshen ~ Heath  
 Ipswich ~ Leyden ~ Montgomery ~ Newbury ~ Oakham ~ Peru ~ Quincy ~ Royalston  
 Savoy ~ Tyringham ~ Upton ~ Wendell

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Officers: The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge ~ T. J. Martin, Sr. Warden ~ Daniel Casey, Jr. Warden ~ Phil Littlehale, Treasurer ~ Paul Felci, Asst. Treasurer ~ Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry: Dale Coogan (2021) ~ Rose Holt (2022) ~ Samantha Martin (2023) ~ Kristina Palazzo (2023) ~ Sandy St. Clair (2022) ~ William St. Clair (2021) ~ Kenneth Webber (2023) ~ Diana White (2021)