

St. John's Good News



From Rev. John...

The Feast of the Presentation
February 2nd

In the spring of 1985, my father telephoned me to inform me that he had just discovered that he had an aggressive form of pancreatic cancer, and he likely had 6 months to live. It was doubtful that he would be around for his 53rd birthday. In my grief I flew down to be with my parents. We wept, prayed, and told stories recalling those things are precious to us, though we often take them for granted.

I returned to my home in Montreal and was informed by Denise that she was expecting our second child. My grief became intertwined with my joy, and I lived through the next few days in foggy haze. We wanted to tell everyone our good news, but I could not tell anyone until I told my parents. Several times I picked up the phone and started to dial but did not have the nerve to call. I did not know how to say to my father, "Dad, we are going to have another child...but you won't see her."

I did not know how to do this over the phone, so I flew down again to Providence and pulled up a chair next to him. I took a deep breath and told him that he was going to have another grandchild, but he will not see her this side of the Kingdom. Though my eyes welled up with tears, he surprised me with the first smile I had seen since his diagnosis. He said, "This gives me a glimpse into that future I will never see." Paradoxically, at least to me, this made his dying much easier to bear.

I think of my father every February. Partly, because that is the month in which he was born. It is also the month in which the church celebrates the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. It really annoys me Ground Hog Day has displaced this Holy Day on February 2nd.

Cont'd

February
2022

Sunday worship remains at 10am, in-person and virtually on Zoom. All are welcome to participate, and seating capacity is 75. Please note: we continue to monitor community Covid cases and will keep you updated about worship. The Zoom link is shared weekly via email.

Phone: 781-233-1242

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We are invited to consider Luke 2:22-40 the strange and beautiful passage describing the lives of Simeon, Anna, Jesus, Joseph, and Mary as they meet in the temple. Simeon was a blind, old man who was “righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that we would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.” In his joy he sang his last song which we now call The Song of Simeon or Nunc Dimittis (Latin for now let us depart)

*"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."*



Simeon had had a long and hard life. He had seen his Jewish community in Jerusalem be slowly crushed by an occupying power. He had seen the prophets and scribes lose their moral compass during the reign of Caesar and the cruel policies of Herod and Pilate. He had lived his long life with Holy Hope that he would have a glimpse into a future where the Peace of God would be demonstrably more powerful than the strength of the empire. While dancing around the temple with the infant in his hand he proclaims, *"This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed!"* In his blindness, he also sees some of the danger which lies ahead for a world in which justice, truth, mercy, and holiness can be shine.

I think of my father on this Feast Day, and I think of my own life. In our Eucharistic gathering I am given a glimpse of that future. I think both future on this earth and the legacy I would like to leave. I think as well of the future where there is no hunger, and every tear is wiped away. I think of that Kingdom wherein Laura and my dad can share a joke.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who as a child wast presented in the temple and received with joy by Simeon and Anna as the Redeemer of Israel; Mercifully grant that we, like them, may be guided by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge and love thee unto our lives end; who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, livest and reignest God, world without end.

Prayer from the Church of South India

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Cathedral Church of St. Paul to host Feb. 2 celebration of the life and witness of Archbishop Desmond Tutu

The diocesan community is invited to join in giving thanks for the life and witness of the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu on Wednesday, Feb. 2, the Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas), at 6 p.m.

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The livestreamed service of Holy Eucharist will be held at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston. Bishop Alan M. Gates and Bishop Gayle E. Harris will co-preside, and a sermon will be offered by the Rev. Noble Scheepers, co-chair of the diocesan Racial Justice Commission, who was mentored by and worked with Tutu. Due to COVID-19 protocols, in-person attendance at the service will be limited to 50 people. To reserve a space, e-mail cathedral administrator Brad Rothrock at cathedral@diomass.org.

The livestream will be available to view on the cathedral's website: (<https://www.stpaulboston.org/services2020>), as well as the cathedral's YouTube channel. Those attending in person are invited to bring candles from their church or home to be blessed by the bishops during the service. Baptismal candles will also be blessed and will be available for churches to purchase from the cathedral, at cost, in the season ahead.

An offering is being invited to support the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation: <https://www.tutu.org.za>. Donations can be sent directly to the foundation online or checks can be made out to the Cathedral Church of St. Paul with "Tutu Foundation" in the memo line.

In preparation for the service, the cathedral invites people to send brief (~100 words) personal remembrances, thanksgivings and tributes to Tutu, as well as scans of photographs from encounters with him, for inclusion in a wall of tribute in the cathedral sanctuary. Please send all material to cathedral@diomass.org.

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Ministry Discernment Conference

Registration is open, for the annual Ministry Discernment Conference offered by the bishops and the Commission on Ministry, to be held on Saturday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and currently planned as an in-person event at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (138 Tremont Street) in Boston. (The snow date is Feb. 12.) The conference will provide an in-depth look at the 2022 edition of the Ministry Discernment Handbook and gives potential inquirers an opportunity to learn about the ordination process in the Diocese of Massachusetts as they consider whether their call is to ordained ministry or committed lay ministry.

Any person considering applying for admission to the ordination process in 2022 is required to attend the conference, along with a sponsoring priest and at least one member of the Parish Discernment Committee. For information: The Rev. Canon Edie Dolnikowski, Canon for Ordained Vocations (edie@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 514).

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Creation Care Annual Retreat

All are welcome to join the Creation Care Justice Network’s annual retreat on Zoom on Sat., Feb. 5, from 9a.m. to Noon. The retreat theme is “Embodying Change,” and it will start with an example of embodied practice to help participants identify and change internalized white culture habits—how we treat others, our bodies and creation. This will be followed by reflecting on ways to support and engage congregations in participating in systemic climate justice work, using or adapting a United Church of Christ tiered action tool. An afternoon session (1-2:30 p.m.) is an invitation for working group members and others to develop specific goals and timelines for the next 6-12 months. For info: The Rev. Lise Hildebrandt ~ (lise.hild@posteo.net).

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Annual Meeting Reminder

St. John’s Annual Meeting will be held next **Sunday, February 6th** after worship at 11:30am. The meeting will convene on **Zoom** – a link will be emailed to parishioners beforehand. We look forward to everyone’s participation for the review of last year’s accomplishments, our financials and budget for 2022, electing new officers and vestry members, as well as discussing other church business.

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Bishop Gates Visitation

Mark your calendars: The Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates will be visiting St. John’s on the **First Sunday of Lent, March 6th!** Details to follow....we look forward to his visit!

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Every Child Deserves to Smile



Many thanks for all the January donations of diapers and non-perishable food items! The families are primarily moms with young children and they are grateful for the generous donations received.

In February, we will continue to collect non-perishable food items, paper goods and cutlery, toiletries, baby wipes, and diapers in sizes 3, 4, 5 & 6.

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Winter Word Search

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

Arctic ~ Blustery ~ Bobsledding ~ Boots ~ Cocoa ~ Drafty ~ Flannel ~ Forecast
 Icicles ~ Muffler ~ Overcoat ~ Parka ~ Polar ~ Quilt ~ Scraper ~ Slippery
 Snowbound ~ Subzero ~ Woodstove

Officers: The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge, Daniel Casey, Sr. Warden, William St. Clair, Jr. Warden, Phil Littlehale, Treasurer, Paul Felci, Assistant Treasurer, and Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry: Rose Holt (2022), Duana LeMay (2024), Donna Manoogian (2024), Samantha Martin (2022), Kristina Palazzo (2023), Sandy St. Clair (2022), and Kenneth Webber (2023)