

St. John's Good News



From Reverend Sarah...

Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time. (Luke 4:12-13)

Dear Friends,

On the first Sunday in Lent we will hear the story of the Devil testing and tempting Jesus. The Devil has two goals with his tests: for Jesus to turn away from God and for Jesus to reveal his identity as the Son of God. Each time, Jesus deflects the Devil's challenge by responding with a quotation from scripture. After the last temptation Jesus responds, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" He says these words with such authority and power that the Devil has no choice but to run away.

It's appropriate that we begin Lent with this passage because this season can often feel full of testing or temptation. We give up treats, take on a new way of prayer, write daily meditations, engage the rite of reconciliation, etc. For forty days we struggle with the new routine. We long to be in a deeper relationship with God but the temptations and tests can wear us down. Maybe we give in and eat that sweet treat, we stop praying, we stop attending church. Burdened with these failures we disappear from our community, even from God.

As I pray for our community members who are fighting illnesses, struggling with finances, worrying about heat, I recognize that some of us live in a Lent that lasts more than 40 days, even more than 365 days. For them the temptations and tests of Lent don't vanish when the church calendar moves on to the joy of Easter and later Pentecost. How do you give up a favorite food when you don't have enough food to eat? How do you provide a story for the study the Bible when your mind is distracted with worries? How do you try a new form of prayer when you don't feel worthy to approach God? How do you experience the joy of Easter when stuck in a permanent Lent?

Our church fathers and mothers were wise to limit Lent to short season of the year. Like us, they experienced deep pain and suffering—hunger, poverty, persecution, martyrdom—AND they knew that this was only a part of God's story. God forcefully ends Lent with the resurrection. And so Lent is only a part of God's story which means it is only a part of our story as well.

Cont'd.

March 2019

March Worship Schedule

**Sunday Morning
8am Rite II
10am Rite II**

Phone: 781-233-1242

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During Lent we acknowledge the pain and suffering of Jesus so that we who are well and able-bodied can provide a balm for the pain and suffering of our neighbors. As we resist temptations and try on new ways of meeting God we discover the strength and the courage to stand against the social injustice that surrounds us.

When the Devil tested and tempted Jesus, Jesus wasn't interested in proving his worth. Instead it was a moment of preparation for greater tests and temptations that would soon follow. Lent is our moment of preparation.

How will this Lent prepare you to fight against oppression, injustice, and scarcity?
How will this Lent prepare you for all the tests and temptations to come?

Peace,

Sarah

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### **ST. JOHN'S MARCH HAPPENINGS!**

**GOODBYE ALLELUIAS, HELLO HOT DOGS!** On March 3, the last Sunday before Lent, we will shout our last Alleluias until the Easter Vigil. During Lent, we leave out all Alleluias as we observe this season of penitence. After the Dismissal Rev. Sarah will invite the children and youth to the chancel to help put the Alleluia's to bed for the next 6 weeks. Then we will enjoy Hot Dog Sunday!

**YOUTH GROUP MEETS SUNDAY, MARCH 3.** Youth in grades 6-12 are welcome to a planning meeting for the Youth Worship Service which will be in May. We'll start with some warm-up games to get our brains and bodies ready to work. We need all hands on deck to put together an amazing worship service for our faith community. Bring the lyrics and music of your favorite song!

**SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER!** On Tuesday, March 5, (the day before Ash Wednesday) from 5-7pm St. John's will offer a community pancake supper in honor of Shrove Tuesday. The word "shrove" comes from the root word "shrive" which means to absolve, so Shrove Tuesday was the day Christians would go to their confessor to be "shriven." Traditionally it's celebrated with indulgent foods like pancakes and other delicious fatty treats. This community supper will be free of charge and we welcome donations to the food program, Healthy Students, Healthy Saugus. The supper will conclude with the burning of the last year's palms. We need volunteers so please talk to Fritz today!

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES AT NOON & 7PM.** On Wednesday, March 6, St. John's will offer two services in observance of Ash Wednesday. Named for the custom of placing blessed ashes on the foreheads of worshipers, Ash Wednesday signals the beginning of the 40 days of Lent. The ashes are a sign of penitence and are imposed on the forehead in the sign of the cross. Both services will include a short sermon, imposition of ashes and end with Holy Communion. \*\*Please note that office hours at Dunks will end at 11:30, not at noon.

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**HEALTHY STUDENTS, HEALTHY SAUGUS MARCH 7 AT 7PM.** The first Thursday of every month St. John's is responsible for transporting food from the schools to the church in order to pack bags to give out to hungry children in Saugus. The packing takes about 15 minutes and is a great opportunity to talk about St. John's to community volunteers. Remember to drop off any donated peanut butter before Thursday and in March St. John's will be collecting granola bars!

**DIOCESAN YOUTH LENT LOCK-IN AT TRINITY CHURCH, COPLEY SQUARE.** From Saturday, March 9 to Sunday, March 10 the Diocese will offer an overnight Lent lock-in to explore with the potentials and the promise of this holy season. This year our work will be nurtured by stage director and teaching artist Kristen Cairns. The retreat culminates by participating in the 9am service and presenting their work to the congregation. For more information speak with Rev. Sarah.

**OFFICE HOURS TUESDAY EVENINGS DURING LENT.** In lieu of offering a formal Lenten adult series, Rev. Sarah will hold offices hours every Tuesday, 5-7pm, (except March 19) at Panera Bread in Saugus. Hopefully this will allow people who work during the day the chance to stop by for coffee and conversation. Also, there are copies of *The Book of Forgiving* by Desmond and Mpho Tutu for informal discussions at coffee hour or office hours. **There will still be office hours on Wednesdays, 10-noon at Dunks' on Hamilton Street (except March 20).**

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDY BEGINS TUESDAY MARCH 12, 10-NOON.** Using the book *The Gift of the New Creation* by Thomas L. Ehrich we will study the bible readings from the Old Testament, the Gospels, and the Epistles chosen for each Sunday in Lent. Through these readings we will prepare and pray for the new life and new creation offered through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The book also provides different ways of praying and meditating as we slowly move toward Easter. Books are free of charge, although donations are always welcome, and will be available in Ashworth Hall.

**DEANERY ASSEMBLY, THURSDAY, MARCH 14 AT 7PM.** At St. Paul's in Lynnfield, Deanery delegates as well as Vestry wardens are invited to attend this year's first Deanery assembly. Our new Regional Canon, The Reverend Canon Martha Hubbard, will lead conversations based on last year's meeting about parish collaboration. Rev. Martha brings extensive knowledge to this topic from her experience in creating and leading the Lower Merrimack Valley Collaboration. Please speak to Rev. Sarah about attending the meeting which will include a potluck dinner.

**GUEST PREACHER AND CELEBRANT ON SUNDAY, MARCH 24 AT 8AM AND 10AM.** Our Regional Canon, The Reverend Martha Hubbard, will lead worship on March 24 while Rev. Sarah is away on vacation. Rev. Martha will share her how this new position supports clergy and parish during time of transitions. Please welcome her with the usual St. John's hospitality!

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**HOW YOU WILL OBSERVE A HOLY LENT?** During Lent we "repent" or "turn back" to God. This is not because we are bad people, but because we are easily distracted by the busy-ness of the world. So Lent is as time to turn back to God through prayer, study and rest. St. John's will offer the following to help you do just that:

- Tuesdays, 10:30-noon, Bible Study with *The Gift of New Creation*
- Read *The Book of Forgiving* by Desmond and Mpho Tutu
- Join "Lent Madness" and vote for your favorite Saint
- Follow "The Way of Love" calendar with daily Bible verses and practices
- Pray with the Episcopal Relief and Development 2019 Lent Daily Devotional

All these items can be found in Ashworth Hall but please contact the church office if items need to be replaced.

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From the Sr. Warden...

I'd like to welcome our new vestry members – Brenda Caggiano, as Secretary; Rose Holt, Kieron Sharwood, and Sandy St. Clair – and thank those who just finished serving – Fritz White, Al Coppola, Sandy Mears, and Sandy St. Clair. Being a member of vestry is an opportunity to participate at a deeper level in the life of St. John's, and giving of one's time is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making our annual meeting a success. The comments and suggestions everyone provided on how St. John's can serve our community will be part of vestry discussions in the coming months, as well as being a focal point of the vestry annual retreat.

~ T. J. Martin

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**Every Child Deserves to Smile**



**Thank you! Your continued support of this ministry brings great comfort to those in need in our community. During the month of March** we will be collecting non-perishable food items, snacks, pasta, sauce, large bowls, and metal utensils along with everyday needs (paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, baggies, toiletries etc.). Donations may be left in the Every Child Deserves to Smile collection container in the vestibule.

Our next quarterly meeting will be March 7, 9:30AM in the Hurll Room. If the spirit moves you, please join us!



**St. Patrick's Day Sale:**

Chocolate Shamrock Pops, St. Pat's Treats and Handmade Cards. Two Sundays: March 10th and 17th. After 8 am and 10 am services—all proceeds go to the church.  
~ Jeannine, Julia and Elizabeth



**Reminder:**

Spring is coming, so please be sure to adjust your clock **March 10th** for daylight saving time!

## WORD SEARCH

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Ashes ~ Birds ~ Blessings ~ Budding ~ Crocus ~ Chirping  
 Green ~ Ireland ~ Lent ~ Patrick ~ Praying ~ Raincoat ~ Reflection  
 Renewal ~ Sacrifice ~ Umbrella ~ Vernal ~ Warming

Visually, this one is a little tougher—use a ruler to help you :)

**Officers:** The Rev. Sarah van Gulden, Priest-in-Charge ~ T. J. Martin, Sr. Warden ~ Daniel Casey, Jr. Warden ~ Phil Littlehale, Treasurer ~ Janet Lancaster, Asst. Treasurer ~ Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

**Vestry:** Dale Coogan (2021) ~ Paul Felci (2020) ~ Rose Holt (2022) ~ Kieron Sharwood (2020) ~ Sandy St. Clair (2020) ~ William 'Bill' St. Clair (2021) ~ Jeanne Seaboyer (2020) ~ Jenna Sharwood (2020) ~ Diana White (2021)