



THE KEY

ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH

BEDFORD N.Y.



March

P A R I S H N E W S

2020

A Thought from the Rector

People tend to assume one of two things about Lent. Either they think of Lent as being morbid (and therefore somewhat counterproductive), or they associate it with the “giving up” of things. Everywhere one goes in the church, the question is, “What are you giving up for Lent?” Here is my answer: nothing. I’m not giving up anything for Lent.

I say this because, contrary to popular opinion, Christianity is not really about the cultivation of personal holiness. It’s actually about acknowledging the reality of daily existential need, and from that place, looking beyond ourselves, to Jesus. The old-fashioned word for this is: repentance. When we turn Lent into a self-improvement regimen, we shift the focus away from the one we are meant precisely to be thinking about during Lent. It’s just New Year’s resolutions all over again, but this time baptized in Christian terminology.

In a very odd, but unshakable passage from a little book called Fear, Love, & Worship, Fitz Allison writes along similar lines:

“A sergeant told a grim joke to his trainees during the Second World War, which shows the real flaw in the Pharisaic understanding of Christianity. A man stopped on a dirt road to help get another man’s car out of the ditch. The latter was beginning to harness two small furry kittens to the bumper of this huge car when he was asked, ‘Mister, you aren’t going to try to get those kittens to pull that car out of the ditch, are you?’ His reply was, ‘Why not? I’ve got a whip.’ The lash of the Law is used in similar spiritual situations. Without the principle of forgiveness our conscience acquires a quality of cruelty that makes the Gospel of Christ anything but the Good News.”

Hope for the human race is never going to be found in an enterprise derived from will power, or in the pursuit of greater self-discipline. Those ideas are as old as the first Adam, and they’re everywhere. What we find in church is different.

The Gospel message proclaims a hope that is found outside of the self (beyond our best efforts and worst failings), in the person of Christ. We find hope in His grace, and Lent is when we specifically reflect upon what He did on our behalf. We ponder the fathomless depths of the cross, only then to discover to our amazement the eternal joy of Easter morning. And from that place our lives are indeed transformed. But growth in holiness is always a fruit of grace, rather than a means for finding it.

As long as you think you can simply whip yourself into shape and have not yet experienced otherwise – you will, by the way, and probably sooner rather than later – then you’re not going to think much of Lent. On the other hand, if you suspect that you might never, on this side of Heaven, become your best self, and wish to be loved in spite of that fact (which is faith, in a nutshell), then you’re going to love Lent at St. Matthew’s. Come dig deep with us this March.

Grace & Peace,

Spring is here and St. Matthew’s is SPRINGing out of the winter months with a wide variety of programs and events. One thing blooming forth soon – and make sure you mark your calendars – is the wonderful evening of Daffodils & Dancing on Fri., Apr. 17 – a warm and friendly event that starts with cocktails at the Rectory. But that is only one thing among the many activities coming up. Our youth are invited to Nightwatch at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Mar. 13-14, and on Mar. 15 our pilgrimage group heads off to Turkey and Greece. And the Bedford Concert Series is Mar. 18, and then we flow into April with Good Friday and Easter ... yes, it is a blooming time for our parish!



SAVE THE DATE
Daffodils & Dancing
FRIDAY, APRIL 17TH

AN EVENING OF FRIENDSHIP & FUNDRAISING
AT ST. MATTHEW'S

*Cocktails in the Rectory • Seated candlelit dinner
Music by our own JAZ and DJ PAK*

Invitation to Follow



Children's Ministry

In February, Church School students started learning about the beginning of Jesus' ministry and how He chose His disciples and started preaching and performing miracles. We learned that we are all called to be His followers and can witness the power of Jesus every day in our lives when we choose to see it. Not only can we witness Jesus in our own lives, but we can also show Jesus to others by creating holy moments each day with acts of kindness and love.

March is all about Lent and it is the tradition of Church School to use Mite Boxes as a way for our children to be actively involved in the season. Lent for the children can be about doing small things with great love. For example, giving up a little pocket money or doing odd jobs/chores for loose change to go into their little coin boxes. The boxes will be collected on Palm Sunday and all proceeds will go to the Hour Children charity at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. Thank you for encouraging your children to participate and please take time to explain to the children that their small sacrifices can all add up to make a big difference to other less fortunate children. Incidentally, there is a large Mite Box in the Parish House for parishioners to help our Church School with their gift to Hour Children.

New Vestry Elected at Annual Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting of St. Matthew's Church was held on Feb. 9 following the 10 a.m. service. The Wardens' Report and Treasurer's Report were presented. Suzanne Bowers, the retiring Junior Warden, and Paul Sturz and Lorraine Reeder, retiring Vestry Members, were acknowledged. John Zahl awarded Suzanne with the Rector's Key for her outstanding and exceptional service to the family of St. Matthew's Church (see picture above). Meredith Pakman was elected to her first two-year term as Junior Warden. Douglas Kim was elected to his second three-year term as Vestry member, and Kathleen Brenner, William Fagan, and David McCree were each elected to a first three-year term as Vestry members. The materials prepared for the Annual Parish Meeting are posted on the St. Matthew's website (www.stmatthewsbedford.org).

Super Bowl Bake Sale

Every year just before the Super Bowl, the Church School holds a bake sale. One of the surprises each year is seeing what Connie Combes will bring. Proceeds from the sale are given to Hour Children.



Art Show: Bedford

The organizing committee for Art Show: Bedford 2020 would like to thank the parish for its huge support of the event. We are delighted to announce that the Women of St. Matthew's will be able to distribute approximately \$34,000 to local charities as a result of the show. A Sunday dedicated to outreach is being planned for April and we will be inviting leaders from some of the charities to come to our 10 a.m. service to be presented with our donation checks.



Bedford Chamber Concert, Mar. 18

The spring season of the Bedford Chamber Concerts opens on Mar. 18 with an evening of piano masterpieces performed by Andrius Zlabys. Born in 1977 in Vilnius, Lithuania, Andrius Zlabys has found great success in the United States. He has played with the most renowned orchestras in the country including the New York Philharmonic, The Boston Symphony Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra, as well as with Hillary Hahn and Gidon Kremer. He recorded the Enescu Quintet with Mr. Kremer on Nonesuch for which they were nominated for a Grammy in 2003. That year he was also a prize winner at the Cleveland International Piano Competition. This exciting young pianist will be playing works by Bach, Chopin, Franck and Weinberg



Mieczyslaw Weinberg, though far from a household name, is greatly admired by those who know his work. He was born in Poland in 1919 where he attended the Warsaw Conservatory at the age of 12. He graduated in 1939 but fled soon after for Russia at the outbreak of WWII. He composed "Children's Notebooks" in 1944-45, but the title is deceptive as these pieces are dramatic and demanding. They were in fact criticized in the Soviet state for "inappropriate sophistication." In 1948, several of his works were banned, and then in 1953, Weinberg was arrested for "Jewish bourgeois nationalism." It is said that his dear friend Dmitri Shostakovich interceded for him, but in any case, Stalin died a month later and he was freed.

Certainly the other composers on the program, unlike Weinberg, need no introduction. Mr. Zlabys will be playing J.S. Bach's English Suite No. 5 in E Minor. The English Suites are thought to be the earliest set Bach composed for keyboard. Edvard Grieg's Holberg Suite is often heard played by a string orchestra, however Grieg originally composed it for piano.

The Mar. 18 concert is presented in the Fellowship Room. Tickets may be purchased online at www.bedfordchamberconcerts.org or reserved at (914) 522-5150. As usual, intermission will feature a splendid assortment of refreshing food and drink.

St. Matthew's 101

SUNDAY, MARCH 1
11:00-11:45 A.M.
VESTRY ROOM

Would you like to learn more about St. Matthew's, the Episcopal Church, or find out how you can get more involved in the life of our parish? This new class is designed to provide our parishioners with a comprehensive view of our vision for ministry and the nuts and bolts of our operations. All are welcome!

A Random Act of Kindness

It is a beautiful thing when you come to school and find a treasure! A few weeks ago, prior to entering my office I found a shopping bag of beautiful paper, some shiny, some see through, and others textured. The teachers were so excited to find this treasure as they realized what beautiful art creations the children can make. The three-year-old's class teacher put scraps of paper out for the children with scissors and glue and a beautiful creation in the shape of a heart was made for Connie Combes. Connie visited the three-year-old classroom and the children proudly presented her with the heart they had made from the beautiful paper she had given them. Connie was so touched by this gesture that she took a picture of the heart hanging on her refrigerator and wrote the children a lovely note. Upon seeing the picture and hearing Connie's kind words the children smiled, said that was great, asked if they could visit Connie at her house, and one had tears in his eyes. Mr. Rogers said in one of his many quotes, "There are three ways to success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind." Thank you, Connie Combes, for your kindness!



A Special Preacher is Coming on Sun., Mar. 8

We will be welcoming The Very Rev. James Munroe to deliver the sermon at both the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services. Known as the "King of the Sermon Illustration," he is the former Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Springfield, MA. Rev. Munroe attended Phillips Academy, Williams College, Wycliffe Hall (Oxford) and Virginia Theological Seminary – with brief stints along the way for hockey and the Marine Corps. Early on, he served for four years as Curate at Grace Church in NYC, along with Paul Zahl (who taught him how to disco). For the past 30 years, Jim has served Episcopal churches in Massachusetts, and now Calvary-St. George's in Manhattan.

St. Matthew's Youth are invited to:

NIGHTWATCH

6:30pm Fri. March 13-
12:00pm Sat. March 14
CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, NYC
\$95.00 (scholarships available)

Contact Rev. Drew Courtright for details



MARDIGRAS



Midweek Holy Eucharist and Bible Study on Wednesday at 10:15 a.m. through June 10.

March Church Calendar



St. Matthew's Church
John A. Zahl, Rector
382 Canittoe Street P.O. Box 293
Bedford, N.Y. 10506
(914) 234-9636
www.stmathewsbedford.org

First Sunday in Lent, Mar. 1

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II**
Altar Guild: Ms. Morella and Mrs. Joyce
Ushers: Messrs. Bowers and Joyce
Lay Reader: Mrs. Reeder
Lector: Mr. Bolen
- 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I and Church School**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Borner and Brenner
Ushers: Messrs. Burdick, de Menocal, Eshoo and Fooshee
Lay Reader: Mr. Jackson
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Meyer

Second Sunday in Lent, Mar. 8

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Reed and MacDonald
Ushers: Messrs. MacDonald and Reed
- 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer and Church School**
Ushers: Messrs. Lovering, MacLean and Maybank
Lay Reader: Mr. Brown
Lector: Mr. Peacock
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Walker

Third Sunday in Lent, Mar. 15

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Fagan and Tilt
Ushers: Mr. & Mrs. Fagan
Lector: Ms. Fogarty
- 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II and Church School**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Pinckney and Sturz
Ushers: Messrs. Mockridge, Moore, Robinson and Struble
Lay Reader: Mrs. Thompson
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Meyer

Fourth Sunday in Lent, Mar. 22

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Meyer and Scott
Ushers: Mr. & Mrs. Reeder
Lay Reader: Mrs. Fagan
Lector: Mr. Vincent
- 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer and Church School**
Ushers: Messrs. Gaynor, Hancock, Hancock and Kim
Lay Reader: Mrs. Akinla
Lector: Mrs. Finn
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Meyer

Fifth Sunday in Lent, Mar. 29

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Boe
Ushers: Messrs. Bolen and Fagan
Lay Reader: Mr. Jackson
Lector: Mrs. Tilt
- 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I and Church School**
Altar Guild: Ms. Kernan
Ushers: Messrs. Akinla, Brown, Belknap and Borner
Lay Reader: Mrs. Brenner
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Walker

Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday, April 5

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I**
Altar Guild: Ms. Morella and Mrs. Joyce
Ushers: Messrs. Foster and Vincent
Lay Reader: Mrs. Foster
Lector: Mr. Freeman
- 10:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist, Rite II**
Altar Guild: Mesdames Borner and Brenner
Ushers: Messrs. Burdick, de Menocal, Eshoo and Fooshee
Lay Reader: Mrs. Thompson
- 5:00 p.m. Come As You Are Eucharist, Children's Chapel**
Altar Guild: Mrs. Borner

Comings & Goings

New or Returning Parishioners

Mr. & Mrs. Terry Betteridge
94 Doubling Road
Greenwich, CT 06830

Dr. Gladys Cardenas
14 Lowell Court
Goldens Bridge, NY 10526

Holy Baptism

Received into Christ's Holy Church
Caroline Meyer Tilt – February 23, 2020

In Memoriam

In sure and certain hope
Jane Perry Hollyday – January 8, 2020
Helen Walker Parker – February 14, 2020