

ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ALL SAINTS' E-LETTER

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APRIL 2017

RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Living in the Northern Hemisphere lends itself to some terrific imagery when it comes to the faith. In particular, Christmas around the Winter solstice gives us a visual in which we live that makes powerful the fact that the Light has come into the world, as the Gospel according to John has it. We get that. After Christmas, sunshine replaces darkness initially at a rate of only a fraction of a minute a day, but as Christmas gives into Epiphany, a time in which we mark his manifestation among us, the sentence of his presence and ministry seems to grow with the coinciding increase of daylight hours.

And now, as we approach Easter, we have another rite that fits into Spring which reminds us of the resurrection. As the snow subsides, we see two things. The first is decay. My lawn is a thatched mess of it. Leaves that escaped being collected in the fall only accentuate the need to get out with a rake once the ground dries out. But if you really look close, right now as I write this the third week of March, and similarly look beyond the predictable crocuses that are beginning to come up, you can just make out the tiny beginnings of new grass. And if you have a very limited knowledge of plant biology, as I do, in fact claiming it is even a "limited knowledge" exaggerates what I know, you cannot help but believe that you see life rising out of death. Despite the fact that all this means yard work awaits, I so look forward to this moment, every year, because it gives me hope. It also means we made it through another dark northern winter.

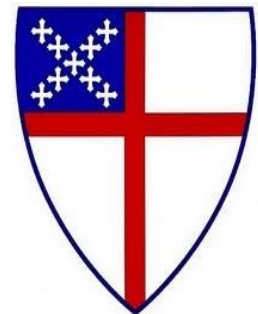
Yes, I know, the grass was just dormant. And yes, I equally know, that life emerging from an empty tomb is changed life, not just the old life running a course again kind of like in the movie, *Groundhog Day*. But just as the grass climbs out of the muck on the ground and serves as a reminder of life refusing to be halted, so too does Easter come our way to remind us that we live anew, all the time, as well.

Here is where the analogy needs to be tweaked. Unlike the grass fading away in the Fall, Jesus never returns to the tomb. And because of that, we live, and move, and have our being, to borrow St. Paul's words from the Acts of the Apostles, in eternal life, the Kingdom of God, reigning now. Easter Day on April 16th doesn't create that new life every year. Instead, it reminds us of this truth that envelopes each and every one of us, and all of creation, all of the time. Now all we are called to do is live in celebration of it.

I hope that the joy of this season overwhelms you and that the blessings of God drench you like the rain we come to expect at this time of year. May you have a very heartfelt Holy Week and an exuberant Easter.

Faithfully yours,

Bradley



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EASTER WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday, April 13th

Holy Communion - noon

Holy Communion and the Stripping of the Altar - 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday focuses around two great moments in the life of the church, the first being the institution of the Holy Eucharist and the second being the giving of the new commandment that we love one another. (The service gets its name from the Latin, *mandatum novum*, meaning “new commandment.”) At both services, which date back to the 4th Century, we will observe the commemoration of this Lord’s Supper and, at the evening service, we will strip and wash the altar and then remove the consecrated bread to the Altar of Repose. There is a tradition that people observe a vigil at that altar. Some churches carry the vigil all throughout the night. At All Saints’ we will have time for people to remain for a while, if they would like, for silent prayer and meditation. It is a lovely service that centers around one of the two great sacraments of the church.

Good Friday, April 14th

The Good Friday Liturgy

Noon and 6:00 pm at All Saints’

3:00 pm at The Springs in Whitefish

Good Friday centers around the Passion as recorded in the Gospel according to John and the Solemn Collects. As well, we will have communion from reserve sacrament. We distribute the consecrated bread from that remaining from the Maundy Thursday service of the night before as Good Friday is the only day in the year in which the Holy Eucharist is not celebrated. While the service is indeed solemn, it is not grim. Instead it reminds us of the depth of the love of Christ and how he still lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Good Friday does much to make Easter full.

Good Friday, April 14th

The Stations of the Cross

5:30 pm at the path next to the church.

The Stations of the Cross mirror the last hours of the life of Jesus, from his being condemned to die on the cross, which took place outside the home of Pilate, to his entombment at a place upon which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands in Jerusalem. The practice probably began in Jerusalem to help pilgrims remember not just the actual walk of Christ but also the spirituality and story behind it. And then in the Middle Ages, it found its way into a service that was practiced all over Christendom. At All Saints’ we wind our way on our path through the woods, stopping at 14 “stations” for a very brief meditation and prayer. The walk takes about 20 - 25 minutes and then we enter the church for the Good Friday Liturgy and Communion from the Reserve Sacrament.

Easter Eve, Saturday Evening, April 15th

The Great Vigil of Easter, Baptism and the Reaffirmation of our Baptismal

Vows, and the First Eucharist of Easter. 7:00 pm at All Saints’

This service is one of the most ancient services observed in the Christian Church. Accounts of it go back to the middle of the second century and what we do here at All Saints’ on Saturday evening would look very familiar to Christians of primitive times.

EASTER WEEK SERVICES (cont'd)

One of the oldest traditions in the church is the lighting of the first flame of Easter and then bringing it into a darkened church chanting "The Light of Christ. Thanks be to God." The light is then passed to all. Following that, the *Exsultet* is similarly chanted and then there are a series of readings followed by baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows. It is the service that concludes Lent and it is also the occasion in which we resume the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. In some traditions, it is to Easter what the Midnight Mass is to Christmas Day with many calling it their Easter service and observance.

The Sunday of the Resurrection - Easter Day, April 16th

Festival Eucharist

9:00 am and 11:00 am at All Saints'

The worship for this day is familiar because every Sunday the Holy Eucharist or Holy Communion celebrates the resurrection of Christ and his love for us. This service goes back to when Jesus and his friends gathered in the upper room and had that remarkable meal the night before he died for us. In it, we join our Lord and "the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven" in celebrating the vanquishing of the power of sin and the sting of death.

2017 CHILI OPEN

Thanks to all who helped make the Tenth Annual Chili Open a wonderful success. Over \$5,000 was raised to help homeless dogs and cats as well as spay and neutering efforts in the Flathead Valley and on the Blackfeet Reservation. To see what the Spay & Neuter clinic posted about the Chili Open, please see this link: <http://flatheadspayneuter.org/newsandevents.html>



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

By Vera Smith


It is without a doubt my pleasure to bring to your attention another opportunity in which you are able help our community and its new homeowners!

I know you are all familiar with this productive non-profit organization and the great work they do. As Bradley once reminded us, this group was one of Bob Blickenstaff's favorite ways to assist the community. We've seen pictures of him with hardhat and hammer happy to do the real work!

I'm not asking you to don a hardhat and grab a hammer. Whew! I'm asking if you or you and a few others would like to provide lunch once or twice during this particular build! The flyer included in this article provides details.

Of course, I am delighted to answer any questions: 471-9157. I just signed up for lunch on Friday, March 1st. Lately I've been buying the lunch at Costco, so know that you can buy lunch if you like. And, of course, a monetary donation will get it done as well!

Thank you for reading this and the flyer! And thank you for your participation in any way you are able!



Help Support Habitat for Humanity as a Lunch Provider!

WHAT: Provide lunch for the hard-working volunteers on the build site. Groups average around 15 people. We encourage you to join us for the lunch break, tour the homes and to meet the volunteers and partner families!

WHEN: Build days are every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and we break for lunch at noon. The commitment is up to you – once a month, every other month, a one-time donation, etc. Delivery is preferred but pick-up is an option if you can't make it out to the site.

**Lunch providers especially needed during busy summer months (May-Oct)*


WHERE: Our build site is located 330 Westland Drive in Spring Creek Estates neighborhood off of Three Mile Dr.

HOW: Contact us at: 257-8800 or outreach@habitatflathead.org

Typical Lunches May Include:

- Crack pot creations
- Pre-made sandwiches
- Soup, chili
- Pizza delivery
- Restaurant catering
- Store-bought platters
- Hot dogs, hamburgers
- Lasagnas, pasta dishes

...whatever will fill the hearts and stomachs of our amazing volunteers!



Help us keep our volunteers happy and well-fed!

YOU'VE GOT A NAME (TAG, THAT IS)

And all these years you thought our motto was, "Badges...we don't need no stinking badges."

Until we figure out a way to display and store them, name badges will be set out on a table under the portico prior to the services. Pick yours up before the service and please WEAR it. After the service, please drop it in a designated basket in either the church or Memorial Hall and it will magically be ready for you the following Sunday prior to the service. We are a full service church.



If you were not at the March 26th services for the surprise badge reveal, here's what you need to know. You will need to choose a way to fasten your badge, either a magnet or a pin. Let Shawn know and she will attach the appropriate fastening mechanism for you. **(Please be aware that anyone with a pacemaker can NOT use the magnetic fasteners.)**

Some people may not yet have badges ready for them. We deeply apologize for that, more badges are on order and we expect their arrival any day now. So if you don't have one on the table waiting for you, do not despair, you have not been forgotten. If your name is spelled wrong or if you prefer a shorter version of your name or a nickname (i.e., you'd rather have Liz than Elizabeth or you go by your middle name etc.), please let Shawn know. However, please be aware that the nickname "Mistress of the Universe" is already taken...and apparently "editor extraordinaire" cannot be added to mine.

CHURCH EXPANSION

Recently, via e-mail, everyone was sent a letter from Bradley as well as three conceptual drawings which show the possible expansion of the All Saints' sacristy. If you did not receive these documents by way of e-mail (or if you don't have e-mail and are thus reading this letter by means of a hard copy), please let Shawn know and she will be happy to mail a hard copy of the letter and drawings to you. As well, sets will be available in the church and Memorial Hall. Shawn's phone number and e-mail are found on the last page of this e-letter.



IT IS A SMALL, SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

On a walk one evening while at the week-long meeting of the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons, held at the Maritime Institute Conference Center in Linthicum Heights, Maryland, just outside of Baltimore, Bradley met a woman from the marketing department who arranged their being able to play in the simulator. As a child, this woman played at the Kootenai Lodge where her aunt and uncle were the caretakers. The Kootenai Lodge 500 feet from where he lives in Bigfork.

Let's hope Bradley isn't considering turning in his clerical collar for a captain's hat!



APRIL 2017

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ASH WEDNESDAY FOR ALL SAINTS' YOUTH

By Cynthia Benkelman

All Saints' youth and children met after school on Ash Wednesday for a brief service and the imposition of ashes. Since the regular service is during school hours, Bradley and I decided to have an alternative service for youth, children and their families so that they could participate in this important first day of Lent.



ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

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E-mail: allsaintsmt@gmail.com

Bradley's E-mail: canonwirth@gmail.com
Cell phone: 406-250-1690

Christian Formation Minister/Children and Youth: Cynthia Benkelman
cgraine@montanasky.us
406-261-9636

Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the church, and in Christ Jesus forever.

Find us here:
Just click on the link!

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsmt>

YouTube link: http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPZ_oAI6n1GwSPS5dIAkzdA

Webpage link: <http://www.allsaintsmt.org>

Vestry members:
Rector: Reverend Canon Bradley Wirth
Senior Warden: Heidi Sobczak
Junior Warden: Judi Williams
Treasurer: Carl Thomas
Clerk: Kathy Thomas
Cynthia Benkelman
Ben Bushnell
Jan Rayford
Shawn Sloan

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