

**Notes to Parish**

**Holy Week and Easter**

We hope you will be able to journey with us through the next few days. On Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, we will remember Jesus' Jewish heritage with a Seder supper, after which we will share bread and wine as Jesus did with his disciples, as we celebrate the Eucharist at our tables. Following that, we will move upstairs to the Church, where while we strip the Altar. The light of Jesus' presence (the red light that hangs over the Altar) will be extinguished, symbolically representing his death. With the altar area still without any symbols or decorations, we will, on Good Friday, have a prayer service and hear the story of the Crucifixion.

All that changes on Easter Sunday as we celebrate the Resurrection. Come at 6:45 to watch the sun come up (weather permitting) at our sunrise service or join us in a beautifully decorated church for Eucharist at the usual time of 9:30.

**Worship**

Following recent discussion with the parish, we have experimented with some changes to our worship services, including:

- Using Videos occasionally to tell the Gospel story
- Using sermon time for a Lenten study on Mark's account of the Last week of Jesus' life
- Less formality in worship, including the Priest sitting to give the Lenten Study talk and less use of Vestments

At a recent Parish Meeting, Nigel asked the parishioners attending for feedback on these changes. We were asked to consider not only our own preferences, but how these changes might be viewed by visitors (and hopefully new parishioners) who come to St George's. Here is a summary of the points discussed:

- Generally, people like occasional videos, where the Gospel lends itself to them
- Most people enjoyed having the Lenten study as part of a sermon series: puts the Gospel in perspective; provides more detail. But others prefer education sessions on a different day when there is more time for discussion, like to hear a homily, not study, during Sunday worship
- Even those who liked having the Lenten study during the homily tie were unanimous in wanting this only occasionally, not every week.
- Parishioners liked informality in the service occasionally, but identified a need for formality, too, so that our younger parishioners get a sense of historicity and mystique. Vestments give a sense of the holy.
- Visitors need to be advised that when we are doing something outside the norm, like a study series or informality, this is not the way our services are every week.
- One suggestion discussed was having an "interactive homily" say 5 minutes homily and 5 minutes discussion

In summary: there is good acceptance for these changes, provided they are used occasionally to provide variety and freshness to our worship. But we still need the stability of the regular way of worship. Both and ... not either or.

This is just the start of this discussion. If you have further thoughts, or suggestions for what you'd like to see in our Sunday services, please let Nigel, Jan or one of the Wardens know.

### **Worship Committee**

Nigel asked if any parishioners would be interested in forming a Liturgy committee, to meet about every 6 to 8 weeks to discuss readings, choose hymns and decide on other areas of our worship. Training in Liturgy would be provided, and before each meeting, members would receive details of the Lectionary readings, so that they could come prepared to discuss which readings to use in Worship and suggest hymns that fit with the readings. If you would be interested, please tell Nigel or Jan

### **Farewell to Bishop Michael and welcome to Bishop-elect Susan**

As you may know, Bishop Michael is retiring at the end of May. Our New Bishop-elect Susan Bell will be consecrated on May 5 at the Cathedral. The diocese is hosting a reception on April 21<sup>st</sup> from 1 to 4 pm to celebrate and give thanks to God for Bishop Michael's 10 years of episcopal ministry in Niagara. All Parishes are invited to send in photographs, stories and remembrances of Bishop Michael and his interaction with the Parish. Nigel is preparing a "photo essay" from St George's and is looking for your contributions to include. Please send him your photos and memories.

### **Maintenance**

We are continuing with our journey of "greening" the Church – and saving on hydro and gas bills. Some of our activities in this area:

- All the pot light in the building have been replaced with LEDs. A few of the other lights still have high wattage bulbs and plans are in place to replace these. We are investigating whether we can get LED bulbs to replace the very bright ones in the parking lot.
- The insulation around the furnaces has been replaced and we have received several estimates for repairs and addition to the insulation in the attic above the parish hall and office area. We expect this work to be completed soon.

### **Clean up day**

A tentative date is proposed of April 28<sup>th</sup> (9 am to 12 noon only) for cleaning up the grounds. This will depend on the weather and how soon spring comes!

### **Position Descriptions**

Every three years, we are required to review and re-sign our position descriptions. This is a diocesan requirement and needed to validate our insurance policy. If you volunteer in any capacity, you will be hearing from Jenn Lukawecky asking you to sign. Please return your signatures to her promptly. Thank you.

**Next Parish Meeting** will be on Sunday April 29<sup>th</sup>, after worship