



THE BANNER

Saint Barnabas's Episcopal Church, Falmouth, Massachusetts 02540
508.548.3863, www.stbfalmouth.org, office@stbfalmouth.org

In this Issue

- Confessions** p2 by Rev. W. (Will) H. Mebane, Jr.
- Joy**, p3 by Martha Warner-Ross
- ECW Update/Lenten Series** p4
- Bathed in Peace and Joy** p5 by Rev. "Perry" Perine & Lenten Services
- The Bright Sadness of Lent** p6 by David P. Forsberg
- Keep Faith and Joy** p7 by Noah Schmidt
- Reconnecting with God** p8 by Lisa Willow Dunne
- Give, Giving, and Giving Up** p9 by Heather Grey and the Joyful Kids
- Finding Joy in Lent** p10 by Deborah Gemma
- Newly Elected to Serve** p11



THE JOY OF LENT

A month ago, I became an "official" member of Saint Barnabas's after attending the church for several years. With that, I finally felt truly anchored in the church and knew that it was time to be of service to the ministry. When Reverend Will and I talked about how I could do that, shepherding *The Banner*, something Sheryl Seyfert had devoted 10 years to, felt just right.

My service begins with the creation of this Lenten issue. In it, we explore the meaning of Lent in ways that bring us back to J.O.Y. beginning with Reverend Will's perspective on Confession and ending with the simple truths as delivered by the Joyful Kids of Saint Barnabas's.

What struck me about the thread that connects our writing in this issue is that there is such joy and optimism, in a season that can sometimes feel a little heavy. Is it the times we're in? Are we looking to the light any time we can find it? I hope you'll take a moment to read this issue and find the spirit that is just right for you during this wondrous season.

Beth Bullock-McGrail (bethbullock36@gmail.com)



"FOR DUST YOU ARE
AND TO DUST YOU
WILL RETURN."
GENESIS 3:19



Confessions by The Rev. W. (Will) H. Mebane, Jr.

The first time I made Confession was one of the most anxiety provoking experiences I have ever had. How could I...how would I...confess to this person "all serious sins troubling the conscience?" (The Book of Common Prayer, 446) . There were a lot of "sins troubling my conscience" when I entered the room on July 28, 2005, with my palms sweaty, heart racing, perspiration on my forehead, and nearly unable to speak.

My Confessor was a 90-year-old monk that had been a priest for longer than many lived, It did not take long, though, for the apprehension I felt to be replaced with pure joy. Brother Paul reminded me that in The Episcopal Church "all may...none must...some should" make private Confession and seek Absolution from a priest. [NOTE: This is distinct from the General Confession made with others during Eucharist. BCP, 360 or 331]. Knowing that I didn't have to be there offered a sense of relief. Brother Paul assured me of G_D'S love regardless.

Joy flowed through my whole being as we proceeded with the brief liturgy for the Reconciliation of a Penitent. (Form Two, BCP, 449) Emphasis in this Sacramental Rite on reconciliation was in and of itself comforting. Confession wasn't just about listing all the things "I had done wrong." Rather, the focus was on repentance of harm done to my neighbors and repairing damage for which I was responsible. The Rite of Reconciliation was a step towards turning away from thoughts and behaviors that separate me from G_D, which according to our Catechism, is the definition of sin. (BCP, 848)

Confession is about J.O.Y...loving Jesus, Others, and Yourself. The priest says to the penitent at the end of Form One in the Rite of Reconciliation, "Go in peace, and pray for me, a sinner." (BCP, 448) Strangely, knowing that a priest, even one 90 years old, also needs repentance, returning, and repair brought me joy. That was perhaps the beginning of my understanding that "we really are all in this together." Seeking and participating for the first time in the Rite of Reconciliation was the most liberating moment in my life. The joy I felt was unlike anything I had ever experienced. It's an emotion I still remember today and have each time I go for Confession.

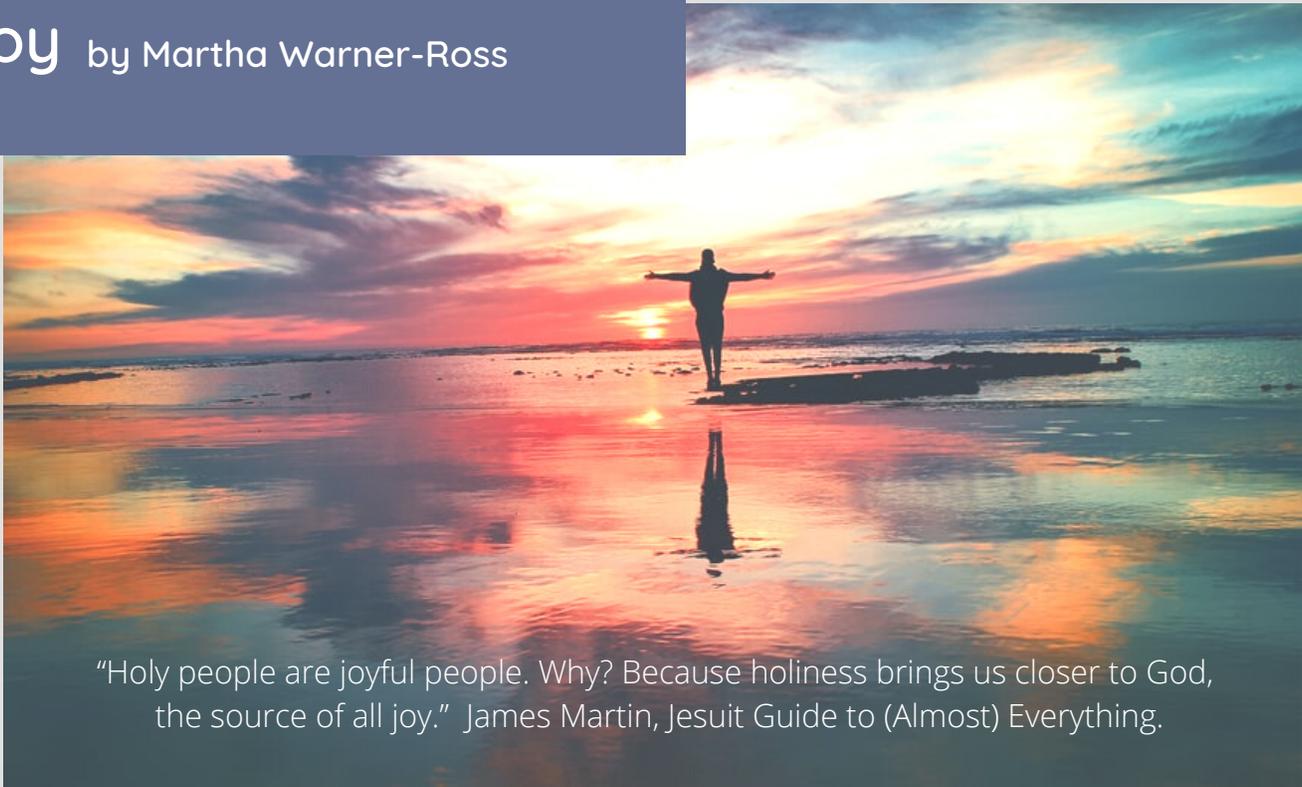
The Season of Lent is an especially appropriate time in the Church year when the sinful (that's ALL of us) are "reconciled by penitence and forgiveness" and renew their faith. (BCP, 265) To that end, the opportunity for making private Confession will be offered throughout the day on Good Friday (April 15) by appointment with a priest at Saint Barnabas's. However, "Confessions may be heard anytime and anywhere." (BCP, 446)

The Sacramental Rite of Reconciliation of the Penitent was the beginning of true repentance, returning and repair in my life. It led me to a deeper understanding, appreciation, and love of and for J.O.Y...Jesus, Others, and Yourself. It may do the same for you. Even if at first you might be anxious! Joyfully, Will+

Finding J.O.Y. in repentance, returning, and repair.



Joy by Martha Warner-Ross



"Holy people are joyful people. Why? Because holiness brings us closer to God, the source of all joy." James Martin, Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything.

I wish holiness were easier to achieve. And joy, for that matter.

In Fr. Martin's thesis, we would then be more joyful, and closer to God. Amen.

However, I must admit that I can be unusually joyful without being very holy. I find that my most happy times come when I am hand-rolling delicious meatballs, patting rich soil around a bed of hostas, or reading about the state of our efforts to embrace each other as equals in reconciliation, and what we can do to make that happen.

I am joyful in settling down to a small fire, a glass of wine, two lazy, happy dogs on the carpet, and my husband holding my hand.

Is that holiness? Maybe.

I know I am as complete as I ever will be in this temporal plain when I am quiet, still, accepting, not driven by ego and intentions; when I am in a state of contemplation in which I envision myself embraced by the warm and deeply devoted Spirit of God. This is holy joy for me, even if it only lasts as long as I can discipline my mind to remain clear, and still.

I embrace the prayer of Richard Rohr as he bids us to create the contemplative (joyful) space of being present:

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am.

Be still and know.

Be still.

Be.

This brings me joy. And, perhaps, even moments of holiness.



**Joyous greetings from the
Episcopal Church Women (ECW) of
Saint Barnabas's!**

We would like to send out a special hello to one of our board members, Cyndy Ogden, who had an unfortunate fall during the Christmas holidays and is now rehabbing in Connecticut near her family. We miss her and hope that she will be back with us in the very near future!

Each year, in June, the ECW awards scholarship money to deserving high school seniors who are pursuing higher education.

In order to be considered for a scholarship we ask that the candidate submit an essay telling us about you, your connection with St. Barnabas's Church, and your post high school plans.

The deadline for submission is Friday, May 20th. Essays should be sent to: Saint Barnabas's Episcopal Church, P O Box 203, Falmouth 02540 Attn: ECW

-Submitted by Lynn Morse
Co-Chair of the ECW

**What is Truth:
Repentance,
Reconciliation
and Accountability**



Submitted by Ellie Shaver (seen with her grandson, Theo)

In this New Year 2022, Saint Barnabas's is offering a Lenten study series developed by the Massachusetts Diocesan Racial Justice Commission.

This study, titled *What is Truth*, is the beginning of a long journey to explore and really experience the practice of truth-telling, however uncomfortable that may seem. All voices are welcome to the group.

Hearing each other's stories and learning the history of our diocese involvement in and derived wealth from forced labor, we will come to an understanding of the truth and need for repentance, reconciliation, and accountability to the descendants of enslaved Africans.

Perhaps we will come to know Martin Luther King's Beloved Community.
Surely a joyful thought.

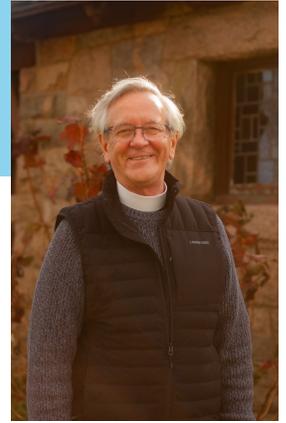


Be joyful in hope,, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12

Bathed in Peace and Joy

by The Rev. Everett "Perry" Perine



It was Christmas morning 2014. I was lying on a gurney in the emergency room of Windham Hospital when the doctor proclaimed the "good news" in a curiously joyful tone: "Merry Christmas! You're having a heart attack!" What followed came in a flurry of activity beyond my control: an ambulance ride to Hartford Hospital, immediate angioplasty surgery and a month later a quadruple by-pass.

But as I look back on that time of my life, I remember the faces of the hospital staff in whose hands I placed my recovery and my life. I remember my loved ones who nurtured me in their love and filled me with hope. What I remember most about that Christmas Day in the ER and the ensuing 40 days was the peace that enveloped me from the moment I received the "good news" and remained with me throughout my ordeal. I still have a difficult time explaining exactly what I experienced. I simply let go! I let go of trying to control my situation. I let go of any expectation. I let go of my fear! And in that void, God bathed me in a state of peace and joy that, even today, is beyond my comprehension.

I call this My Lenten Experience for it represents what I believe Lent, and indeed all of spiritual life, is about. Lent is a time to let go of aspects of my life that hold me back or weigh me down. It's a time to remember those 40 days and similar days since then, when I did let go, and remember the peace and joy that came to me in those moments by God's grace. In those memories, I find renewed courage to let go once again and trust God's love to fill the void, to fill me with peace.

My Lenten prayer: "God, what is it that you want me to let go of this Lent? Give me courage to trust you to fill the void."

Saint Barnabas's 2022 Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday (March 2): 7:30am, 12noon, 6:00pm

Palm Sunday (April 10): 8:00am & 10:00am

Maundy Thursday (April 14): 7:00pm

Good Friday (April 15): 12noon, 7:00pm

Easter Vigil (April 16): 7:00pm

Easter Sunday (April 17): 7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am



The Bright Sadness of Lent

by David P. Forsberg

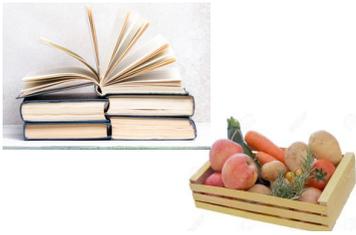
When I first heard Rev. Will say that his favorite season of the church year was Lent, I was a bit taken aback. Then I became intrigued. Why favor a season that begins with sooty foreheads and reminds us that we are and will return to dust? Can we really find joy in the solemnity of Lent? Here is my attempt at an answer.

I grew up in predominantly Roman Catholic Worcester. The Lutheran Church of my youth did not impose ashes on Ash Wednesday. It was considered much too Catholic. Fortunately, that has changed, but the memories linger. Classrooms with students checking out foreheads to see who was what and endless discussions about who was going to give up what for Lent. Candy for kids and liquor for grownups. It seemed to me that Lent divided and deprived. Not my idea of religious best practices.

I shared my impressions with my pastor, and he taught me some valuable lessons. He reminded me that the ashes on my classmates' foreheads were in the shape of a cross, a symbol that unites Christians around the globe. Yes, they are a reminder of our mortality, but they are also a promise that Easter will come. Just as Advent is a preparation for Christmas and the birth of the Christ child, Lent is a preparation for Good Friday and Easter and Christ's death and resurrection.

Giving up candy and liquor (and dare I say social media) for forty days would no doubt be a good thing, but Lent is not a self-help program. Rather than giving up something trivial for Lent, why not focus on what we can do for Lent. Tradition suggests prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. I am struck by how these suggestions intersect with Saint Barnabas's theme of J.O.Y. Prayer for Jesus. Almsgiving for Others. Fasting for Yourself (Okay I know this one's a reach).

Solemnity, even sadness and joy can coexist. The Eastern Orthodox tradition captures this truth by calling Lent the season of Bright Sadness. The good news is that the brightness overcomes the sadness. Jesus bests Satan in the wilderness and He bests death on the cross, securing our salvation. Life is not always easy. We each have to navigate our own wilderness. Lent offers a pathway. Let's follow it joyfully.



Keep Faith and Joy

by Noah Schmidt



As we await this holy season of Lent with great anticipation and still some challenges with the various pandemics facing our world, I am writing about Joy and Challenges in my freshman year at Cape Cod Community College. I knew last Fall when I started at the 4 C's, it was going to be a completely different world than what I was used to for the last four years at Falmouth High School. I knew that I was going to be on my own as an adult, after being in school with my mom to guide me for four years. I also knew it would be different with academics and socializing. I was starting college right after the most unprecedented and craziest school year for K-12 School and I knew it would be a challenge.

Through my first semester, I was in person for two cooking classes with labs and remote for two other academic classes. I struggled remotely because it is much harder to build connections online, with both peers and professors. However, in this current spring semester, I am in person with all my professors at least once a week and after the challenge I had with being online for my academics, luckily now I get the face to face interactions with my classmates and professors.

For me, the big challenges through this year have been being away from my friends that I grew up with while they are in different parts of the world for their school. We can keep up on social media, but it isn't quite the same as seeing them in passing between classes or in the cafeteria. I was gratefully able to see a few close friends while we all were on break at Christmas and much of January.

My greatest joy so far this semester has been meeting people in person that I had only met on Zoom. I now have met all the people I really wanted to meet whom I had connected with on Zoom in person and it has felt great. My "College Experience" professor owed me a prize from winning Jeopardy in class and she also agreed to be my advisor. A guy I met near the start of the pandemic in an online autism support group is on campus as well and we discovered that our classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays are next door to each other on the campus, so we were thrilled to recognize each other in the hallway. I also have met a few new people in person and have gotten along great with them and connected socially. My first partner in English class is named Abigail and she takes care of her brother who has autism, and so we have hit it off well.

In addition to meeting people in my classes, I have been able to form friendships with people from the Student Government Association and from the Orchard Club. Joyfully for the Orchard Club, we are cultivating a garden, our own small orchard on the campus. It will be exciting to see what the fruits (and vegetables) of our labor are when the season is right! Keep faith and JOY that we will all be able to celebrate Easter when this Lent season comes to an end in the resurrection Joy of Jesus and a healthier spring.





Reconnecting with God

by Lisa Willow Dunne

Lent is to Easter similar to what Advent is to Christmas. The difference being is that Advent is a time to wait in the coldness of winter for the rebirth and light of the Sun. Lent is a time to feel the warmth of spring, and to witness the joyous sprouting of flowers to welcome the Son of God.

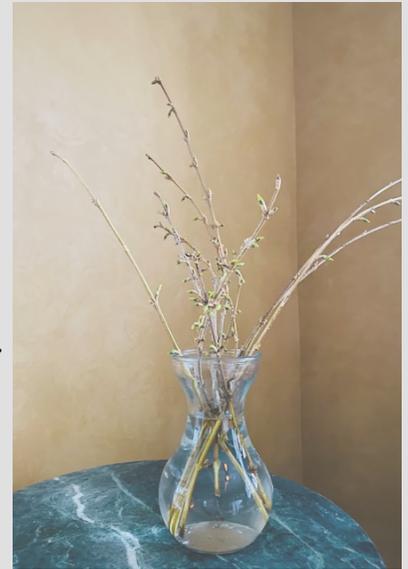
For me, I don't sacrifice at Lent, not in the traditional way. I donate to others. I do this anonymously to keep my ego in check. It makes me smile.

Doing penance is often done during Lent. For the past few years, I felt that penance has been inflicted on me. My husband has been struggling with Alzheimer's. Although he's still alive, I've lost my partner and best friend.

To keep me spiritually anchored during this time of Lent, I pick an Angel Card each day and I focus on this word for 24 hours. I am thrilled to receive words such as "delight" or "beauty", but not so much when I get "responsibility" or "obedience." Sometimes I am tempted to cheat but then I get words like "integrity" and "surrender".

For this year's Lent, I am going on a retreat. I shall be entering one of God's temples-the woods. The more I go into the forest, the stronger the connection I'll have with the Holy One. I'll empty the darkness of my heart and make room to welcome God. (Isn't that what Lent is really about?)

I shall walk silently, breathe deeply and take in the scent of Mayflowers, and listen to the bird's song. I will finally be home in God's love and joy, being ready to sincerely celebrate Easter.



"Think of Lent as a musical prelude to the joyful symphony of Easter"
- Father John Catsil



I've never been one for New Year's resolutions. Making resolutions seems pointless and self-defeating, since they are usually all or nothing propositions: one slip from the exercise regimen or lapse into a bad habit and the resolution ends in failure. Where is the inspiration in that? Sometimes, Lent is viewed in the same way: a grim season where we vow to give up something that gives us joy because...why? Or we take on a project because we feel we should. If this is all there is, Lent is bound to leave us feeling empty.

I've come to understand intellectually that God loves me, and every person with no exceptions. God desires deeply to be in relationship with me, with us. In light of this awesome truth, I should live in a constant state of joy! But, while I accept this truth in my mind, it is much more difficult to experience it in my heart and soul, and I need help sustaining an awareness of God's love in daily living. I look forward to the season of Lent as an invitation to grow closer to God, to nurture the awareness of God's love, to make space for relationship with God.

Christians throughout the ages have learned that the way to foster intimacy with God is through the practice of spiritual disciplines: such activities as prayer, fasting, reading Scripture and sacrificial giving. This is where the idea of promising to read the Bible from cover to cover or giving up chocolate for Lent comes from. Such practices become most helpful when they are understood as a means to the end of growing closer to God rather than an end in themselves.

One spiritual discipline that has helped me experience God's love is the practice of self-examination, sometimes culminating in the rite of The Reconciliation of a Penitent. You might wonder how "sacramental confession" is joyful! I understand "sin" to be anything that separates me from God and God's love. Taking time to reflect on my life, not only my actions, but my inactions, motivations and thoughts, brings all those barriers between me and God to light. There are many ways to approach this work; I find reflecting on the Litany for Penitence in our Ash Wednesday liturgy one useful tool. Once sin is recognized, I can work to turn away from it, let it go, and accept God's forgiveness. This is not an easy practice, but when I have truly engaged in it, I have found great joy.

I try to practice my vocation as a church musician as a spiritual discipline. One way I do that is taking great care in selecting hymns for our communal worship. I know that words matter, and that those set to music lodge deep within and shape us. During Lent, I try to highlight God's call to relationship with us rather than songs proclaiming punitive notions of sin. Yes, there will be calls to penitence, and beautiful, poignant minor key melodies, but always pointing us to God. Listen for "Bless now, O God, the Journey," "What Wondrous Love is This," "Eternal Lord of Love," and "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy," among others. I look forward to seeing you for in-person worship and hearing your voices raised in song as we journey joyfully through Lent to Easter!



Giving, Giving Up and Praying

by Heather Grey, Director of Family Ministries



Lent is hard for younger kids to understand. Without going into huge detail, in class we discuss the journey that Jesus took, both physically and spiritually, and we concentrate on three things that he made a priority: Giving, Giving up, and Praying.

Recently I asked the kids some questions about Lent.

“What are some things you can give up for Lent?”

Jake (5): I’m going to give up worrying about making mistakes.

Freya (8): I can give up stress about things outside of my control.

Tori (7): I can give up some of my toys to people who don’t have any.

Vaughn (6): I can give up chocolate.

Hadley (9): I can donate clothes and books for kids who need them.

Willow (3): I’ll give up cookies

“How can you give more during Lent?”

Grady (5): Give more hugs and make sure people have water.

Vaughn: Give chocolate to others, dark chocolate!

Freya: I can smile at people whenever I see them. If I see someone alone on the playground, I ask if something is wrong and if they would like to play.

Daphne (5): I give people kindness and respect.

CJ (9): Love more.

Katie (7): We can make and give friendship bracelets.

Tori: Give extra love to your family. If someone falls, pick them up. Ask if they are all right.

Make sure your family is okay.

“What do you pray for during Lent?”

Daphne: For Nana to feel better.

CJ: Uncle Eddie had trouble with his heart and lungs. Nana broke her wrist and Papa had surgery on his knee. Daddy needs extra love and prayers because he’s helping them all.

Vaughn: I can pray for my Grandfathers who passed away. And that I can spend time with my grandmothers that are here.

Aimee (14): Peace

“Any other thoughts about Lent that you want to share?”

Freya: It is easy to spread JOY. Small acts of kindness can improve the world. How it works is you are kind to someone and then they are kind to someone, and they are kind to someone until the whole world is kind.

Vaughn: Lent is about Jesus dying and coming back to life. But life is not usually like that. You die forever, for infinity. You don’t just die for three days. Jesus was a miracle!

Daphne: God is always with us. God is kind and respectful and knows what to do.

Newly Elected to Serve

"No joy can equal the joy of serving others." - Sai Baba



David Forsberg
Warden



Kate Kristenson
Warden



Karl Loos
Treasurer



Kathy Mulligan
Clerk



George Liles
Vestry - 3 yrs



Sandy Good
Vestry - 3 yrs



Helen Malina
Vestry - 3 yrs



Alan McCoy
Vestry - 3 yrs



Ben Lea
HS Representative



Kirsten Meyer-Keyser
Deanery Delegate



Beth Bullock-McGrail
Deanery Delegate



Martha Warner-Ross
Dioceosan Delegate



Jessica Whritenour
Diocesan Delegate





Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
Paid
Falmouth, MA
Permit No. 24

Saint Barnabas's Episcopal Church
91 Main Street
P.O. Box 203
Falmouth, MA 02540

An Episcopal Parish in the
Cape & Islands Deanery
of the Diocese of Massachusetts



"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the
new creation has come;
The old has gone, the new is here!"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17