



St. David's Episcopal Church

FEBRUARY DOVETALE

2024

MISSION STATEMENT:

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to love and serve God and community, committing ourselves to lives of joyful worship, prayer, and the teaching of Scripture.

INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT:

This year, Lent begins on February 14 (aka Valentines Day!). To kick off the Lenten season, we'll have our traditional Ash Wednesday service at 5:30 pm. And at that service, I will invite you, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent.

Lent is one of the most important seasons of the Christian year. It is a time of preparation that gets us ready to acknowledge the brutal events of Holy Week, particularly Christ's death on the cross, and then to celebrate the incredibly good news of Easter, that Christ is raised.

Those events stand at the very heart of our faith. And yet they can become so familiar that they cease to shock and amaze us. We begin to take them for granted. Lent is the antidote for this attitude.

We will have many opportunities to gather during Lent. But important as gathering for worship is, Lent is largely a season that you observe at home.

One of the duties of Lent is self-examination and repentance. We pause to acknowledge the ways we have turned away from God, and to commit ourselves to turning back. The Ash Wednesday service is a good way to begin that process, but it should continue throughout the season.

A second duty is fasting and self-denial. What that means in practice will vary from person to person, but all of us should give something up or take something on. The point is not suffering for its own sake. The point is to act in such a way that our attention is drawn back to God. So, for example, I will once again give up sweets. Ideally, every time I crave sweets, I will pause to remember what Christ has done for me. Then, come Easter, I can eat sweets again, and generally celebrate God's abundance with renewed gratitude!

A third duty is reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. Join one of our Bible studies or contemplative prayer. Participate in our Lent formation program. Say Morning Prayer (a Lent form will be available in the narthex) or use one of our Lenten devotionals. Again, the point is to take some time to come to know God better.

If you take Lent seriously, if you strive to have a Holy Lent, you will not enjoy every minute of it. But you will grow a little closer to God. You will know a little more joy. You will experience a little bit of new life. And that is a very good reason to give it a try!!

In the name of the One who lived and died among us,

Fr. Harvey

TIME AND TALENT PLEDGE AT ST. DAVID'S (by Ted Zern)

We have all heard the adage that it takes a village to raise a child. It also could be said that it takes a congregation to raise a church. So don't hesitate to step forward for the second phase of the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. While giving of time and talent does not have a particular deadline, the annual stewardship campaign marks February 11 as the date for a formal blessing of each person feeling called to participate.

Everything we have is a gift from God and thus we are indeed "Rooted in Abundance". All good things are gifts from God (1 Timothy 6:17). The gifts we have received are not ours alone. God gave them to us for the purpose of serving Him and serving other people.

The apostle Paul phrased it this way: *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:5-8)*

The various ministries at St. David's await your commitment. Declaration forms for the purpose of submission can be found in the Narthex and are included in the worship bulletin leading up to Commitment Sunday. If you wish to receive a copy in the mail, simply call the Office or ask for one to be emailed to you by contacting the Pledge Secretary at tzern@comcast.net

ANNUAL MEETING COFFEE HOUR: Great job ladies. Thank you, and Marcel you make great coffee.



SHROVE TUESDAY:

On Ash Wednesday Eve (aka Shrove Tuesday), we'll have our traditional Pancake Supper, complete with King Cake! It's February 13. Join us at 5:30. Mardi Gras beads optional!

ASH WEDNESDAY :

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14. I strongly encourage everyone to join us or watch the service from home. Ash Wednesday is one of the most solemn and holy services of the entire Christian year, and the best way to kick off a holy Lent. We will probably also offer "Ashes to Go" from 7:00-8:00 AM and again from 4:00 to 5:00 PM for those who can't join us in person for the service.

Safe Church Trainings:

The Rev. Tanya Wallace, our Diocesan Safe Church Officer, will be leading Safe Church training on the following dates via Zoom. You can *register by clicking on the date* of your choice below. There is no cost to you; Saint David's will be billed. Thank you for helping to keep our churches safe!

Saturday, February 10 - 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Clergy, Staff, Lay leaders

Tuesday, March 5 - 5:00-8:00 p.m., Volunteers

Thursday, March 21 - 5:00-8:00 p.m., Volunteers

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: by Fr. Harvey

The Men's Bible Study continues to meet in person on Mondays at 7:00, with a zoom option. If you would like to join them by Zoom, please contact me, and I'll give you the link. Thanks!

FLOWERS AND THE ALTAR CANDLE: by Fr. Harvey

Most weeks, the flowers and/or the altar candles are given to the glory of God and in honor of someone important to us. If you would like to remember, honor, or give thanks for someone, please complete the form (available in the narthex), attach a check for the relevant amount, and return it to the office or put it in the collection plate. You can make your dedication anytime, but I like to do this once at the beginning of the year for all the people I memorialize. That way I don't forget.

THE CHOSEN: by Fr. Harvey

The Chosen is an ongoing series telling the story of Jesus and his disciples available for free on YouTube. The series aims to stay close to Scripture as much as possible, while also offering a considerably expanded back-story for the disciples and many of the people healed by Jesus. The result is a fresh telling of the story. So far the series has run three seasons of something like eight episodes each, with four more seasons to come. We'll continue to work our way through season one at our next watch party on Tuesday February 27 at 6:00. Please join us!

ANNUAL MEETING:

Our Annual meeting was held on January 28th, following our 11o'clock service. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend.

The Executive Team of Bev Lawson, Bob Rendrick, Helene Robbins, Penny Miller, and Mary Moore were elected to one-year terms in their current positions. Valerie Clapp and Steve Willis were elected to three-year terms as regular members of the vestry. Thanks to outgoing Linda Seabury and Renee Sprinthall!! And Beth Kronlund was elected as delegate to Diocesan Convention, with Kathy Glista as the alternate. Copies of the Annual Reports are available in the narthex, including the 2023 financial statements and the 2024 budget. Those last will also be posted on our bulletin board. Thanks to everyone who was part of our one business meeting of the year!

LENT MADNESS:

Based loosely on the NCAA basketball tournament, this online devotion pits saints against one another in a bracket as voters choose their favorites throughout the penitential season of Lent. Here's how to participate: on the weekdays of Lent, beginning on February 15, information is posted at www.lentmadness.org about two different saints. Each pairing remains open for 24 hours as participants read about and then vote to determine which saint moves on to the next round. If you're looking for a Lenten discipline that is fun, educational, occasionally goofy, and always joyful, join the Lent Madness journey. Lent needn't be all doom and gloom. After all, what could be more joyful than a season specifically set aside to get closer to Jesus Christ?

LENT PRAYER PARTNERS:

Participants pray for their partner every day during Lent, and then send an Easter Card to their partner offering God's blessings on that person. This is a great way to support each other as a community of faith. If you would like to participate, please let Fr. Harvey know.

LENT FORMATION PROGRAM:

Our Lent formation program is based on the Stations of the Cross. During Lent, we walk the Stations every Friday, using the very attractive, hand-carved Stations we inherited from Saint Christopher's. On Sundays at 11:30, we'll gather to discuss two of the Stations. We'll look at the Biblical passage and prayer associated with each Station, as well an image of it. Then we'll discuss how it connects to our lives and what it can teach us about keeping a holy Lent. Please join us for any or all of the sessions!

COMPLAINT-FREE LENT:

This is another wonderful Lent option. The basic idea is to wear a purple bracelet that reminds us not to complain. Every time we do complain despite the reminder, we put aside a little money. At the end of Lent, we donate the collected money to a good cause. Those who have participated in past years will remember how helpful this practice can be. But I warn anyone who hasn't participated before: don't commit to putting aside much money for each complaint. It can really add up!! The purple bracelets are throughout Lent (while supplies last). Please join the "fun"!

Stations of the Cross

Beginning on Friday, February 16, we'll walk the Stations of the Cross every Friday at 11:15. The service takes about thirty minutes, and is a wonderful way to focus your Lenten journey. Please join us!

TUESDAY CONVERSATIONS: by Fr. Harvey

A group of us meet roughly every other Tuesday at 4:15 on Zoom to discuss a chapter of Richard Rohr's *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality*.

Our next date will be Tuesday, February 20, when we'll continue with chapter eight. Please talk to me if you would like more information about the book or our sessions. We'd love to have you!

CAREGIVERS: by Fr. Harvey

The people of Saint David's have a long tradition of supporting each other in times of need. Now we have organized this generosity into a more regular ministry. If you are willing to offer fellow parishioners occasional help, please let Susan Amabile know. Carol Fabrycki and Paul Fontaine are also part of this ministry. Our goal is to have a handful of names of people who are willing to offer rides, run local errands, and/or provide meals when people need that. If we get several volunteers for each kind of help, no helper will be overburdened and people who can use a little help will get the help they need. Thanks!!

PRISON BIBLE STUDY: by Fr. Harvey

This ministry continues to go well. Deacon Terry and friends lead it on the first Mondays of the month. Penny Miller, Mary Moore, and I lead it on the fourth Mondays—the 26th this month. Other Churches and even a Jewish Cantor lead the sessions on the remaining Mondays.

We are not allowed to give gifts to the inmates, but please let me know if you can think of ways to involve people from the parish in this ministry. One possibility is sending cards or letters. If anyone is interested, I'll check with the prison administration to figure out how that could work. Thanks!

FRIDAY EVENTS: by Fr. Harvey

On Fridays we have a Healing Eucharist at noon, Bible Study at 1:00, and Contemplative Prayer at 2:30. All three are in person, but you can also join the last two by Zoom. All three will meet every Friday in February. Please join us!

PRAYER CYCLES: by Fr. Harvey

The 2024 prayer cycles are available in the narthex near the mail slots. The list of nations did not change, and is already there. I updated the Parish Prayer Cycle, and it's there, too. My goal is to include every parishioner and ministry at Saint David's. If you use it, please let me know if I have missed anyone or anything!! If you are not already doing so, I encourage you to give one or both of the prayer cycles a try. We can all use more prayers on our behalf!!!!

INVITATION TO LECTORS: by Fr. Harvey

It occurred to me that lectors (aka readers) might enjoy a chance to talk together about the readings for the following Sunday. Something like that would hopefully make the experience of reading more meaningful. If you are interested, please let me know. If there is interest, we'll find a convenient time to make it happen. I should perhaps add that, if we do go forward with a lectionary-based Bible Study, others would be welcome to join, of course.

BEMENT/WATERFIELD EDUCATIONAL GRANTS:

Our Diocese offers a small College Scholarship for students who are active in an Episcopal Church in the Diocese. If you know someone who is qualified, please make them aware of this excellent opportunity. For more information, see <https://www.diocesewma.org/grant-opportunities/bement-grants-bement-waterfield-educational-grants/>. The applications are due on March 1.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE PLANNING WORKSHEET:

This is just a reminder that we have forms in the narthex for planning a celebration of life (aka funeral). It can be really helpful to family members if you plan your service in advance. And the conversation can be surprisingly rewarding! Please speak to Fr. Harvey if you would like any help. We also have available Health Care Proxy Forms and Power of Attorney Forms.

PRAYER SHAWLS:

This is a great time to make, use, or give someone a prayer shawl. If you have one to be dedicated, let Father Harvey know, and he can include a prayer of dedication as part of our Sunday service. If you would like to pick one up from the Church, please let the office know, and we'll try to make appropriate arrangements. Prayer shawls can be a great comfort to people who need a little boost. Thanks to everyone who participates in this wonderful ministry!!!

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS:

If you or someone you know in the parish is not receiving a birthday card, please fill out a birthday greetings form found on the back table in the narthex, and deposit it in the Birthday Registry Box. Same for anniversaries! Thanks to Pat Wolos for her work sending birthday greetings on behalf of all of us!

SAINT DAVID'S CALENDAR: by Fr. Harvey

You can now find every event scheduled at Saint David's, as well as every Saint David's event scheduled other places, on the calendar on our webpage. Take a look at it if you haven't already done so (<https://www.stdavidsagawam.org/calendar.html>). It's impressive! To add something to the calendar, please first check if the space and time you want are open. Then email our calendar keepers at saintdavidsMA@gmail.com to make your request. It will be official when you hear back from them.

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: by Fr. Harvey

Our January Church without Walls was snowed out! But we'll be back at it, weather permitting!, on February 4. Thanks as always to everyone who makes this ministry possible!

Be Still, and know that I am God

Psalm 46:10

THE JOHN O'HARE VETERANS LUNCHEES: by Fr. Harvey

I had to miss our January meal, but I heard it was a great success. We consistently have something like forty people. The Lions put on an excellent meal, and the veterans enjoyed our warm hospitality as well as companionship with each other.

Our February meal will be the sixth, beginning at 11:30. All veterans eat free. Everyone else is welcome to come help. Please help spread the word! Thanks!

I also want to let folks know that we are inviting people to sponsor veterans. The idea is that people donate the cost of a year's worth of lunches for one veteran (\$75). If you would like to contribute, please make a donation clearly indicating that it is for the Veterans Ministry. If you know of people outside of Saint David's who might like to support this ministry, let Jo Joubert know and she will give you a copy of a letter for them, with the basic information about the ministry and how to give. Thanks!! As of January 29th we have \$900.00 of the budgeted \$4000.00 for 2024 and we have a promise of another \$2,250.00!

Thanks go out to the following for your generous support of this ministry.

Bobby J's Restaurant David Wolos Jim Shields Joyce Miller
Jo Joubert Harvey Hill Renee Sprinthall Daniel Paquette

DISCRETIONARY FUNDS: by Father Harvey

This is my regular reminder that I have a small discretionary fund which is intended to give people a little financial boost when necessary. Deacon Terry does too. If you get in a bind, please talk to one of us. I should add those conversations and any help people receive from either discretionary fund will be fully confidential.

REIMBURSEMENTS:

Across from the office are forms for receiving reimbursements for expenses people incur on behalf of Saint David's, as well as a list of which vestry member is in charge of which budget line. You can also see who is in charge of which budget area on our webpage at <https://www.stdavidsagawam.org/leadership.html>. As always, if you need to spend the Church's money, please complete the form and get the signature of the relevant vestry person.

SNOW POLICY

Now that winter is here, you will see this article for the next couple of months. The Church will always be closed if Agawam High School closes for the day because of snow. On Sunday mornings, we have to make that call ourselves. When Church is closed, notice will appear on our webpage and on television stations 3, 6, 40, and 22. All meetings are presumed to be cancelled, including any meetings by outside groups that rent the Church property. In we cancel in-person services on Sunday morning, we will still livestream or zoom a service at 10:00. Our full snow policy is posted on the bulletin board by the office. Thanks!

BIG BLUE DROP-IN CENTER (at Christ Church Cathedral), by Fr. Harvey

The Big Blue Drop-In Center located in the undercroft of Christ Church Cathedral is once again looking for donations of gently used winter wear. Typically something like fifty people visit the Drop-In Center every Thursday. Many of the guests are homeless and in need of all types of clothing. If you go through your closets and drawers and find items to donate, please drop them off. Please call the Cathedral first to schedule a time when someone will be there. 413 736-2742. They can use sweatpants and hoodies as well as coats, boots, gloves and other items needed for life on the streets.

One of the pillars of the Drop-In Center, Deacon Linda Taupier, recently moved to Arlington MA. They are therefore looking for volunteers to help staff the Drop In Center on Thursday afternoons. If you are interested, please let me know, and I'll direct you to the relevant people. Thanks!

BOOK CLUB: by Linda Seabury

Our book club session with Mike Tourville, the author of "A Promise To Astrid", was very informative and fun. Our book club's next book is called "Sarah's Key" by Tatiana de Rosnay. If you are interested in reading this book, please let me know, and I will be glad to order it for you.

Just a reminder that all the women of St David's Church are welcome to come to our monthly book club meetings. Even if you have not read the suggested book, you are most welcome to come to the meetings and enjoy the fellowship of the other women.

Our next book club meeting will be on Sunday, February 25, at 11:15, in the Community Room of the church. Hope to see you there.

COFFEE HOUR: by Dina Joubert-Lavoie

Coffee Hour is a time for our Church members to meet and greet each other. The hostess and hosts do a great job providing us with treats.

I am posting a list of who currently has volunteered to do Coffee Hour.

Joanne freeman does the first week of the month.

(Joanne will not be doing July, August or September)

The second week of the month is done by Dina Joubert.

The third week of the month is done by Pat Wolos.

The 4th week of the month is done by Dixie Lauzon.

If there is a fifth week it is done by Jo Joubert.

We are always looking for ideas to give the coffee hour variety. If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to host a Sunday coffee hour and give our other volunteer a break, just let Dina know.

DINNERS :

March 4th will be our Turkey Dinner with all the fixings. Tickets will be available on February 4th .

The sign up sheet and volunteer sheet will also be ready for your viewing. Please sign up IF you are planning to attend. This is helpful for the accurate purchase of supplies for cooking.

As always thanking the volunteers in advance for your help.

WHY ST. DAVID'S

Why Statement covers 2 aspects - why the Episcopal Church, and why St. David's in particular, though the St. David's part actually came first. I was raised as Roman Catholic, but after some intense soul-searching, a deeply personal revelation made me leave that church more than 50 years ago. If I were a celebrity, I probably would have been excommunicated anyway. My faith in God never dwindled, but how I worshiped changed to a more solitary or small group kind. Since about 5 or 6 years ago though, I could feel God trying to draw me back into the church. I just wasn't sure which one exactly. That pull got even stronger during my husband's illness and after his death.

After my husband died, a friend, Jim Shields, invited me to come to a service here. Unfortunately it was right around the time of what would have been my 45th wedding anniversary and the whole visit turned out to be a disaster, with me leaving the service early, walking the labyrinth in the rain, and crying most of the way home. Thanks to Jim though, I was back here within a month to talk with Father Harvey about my grief. I was impressed by the fact that here was a priest willing to talk to me - me, not a member of his congregation, and so why would he care? But care he did! Our talk turned out to be one of the most important and productive conversations I have ever had in my life. We were talking about my soul here, after all.

After talking with Father Harvey, I started attending services at the Universalist Unitarian Church in Greenfield, about 8 miles from my house, but felt something was missing. I kept feeling drawn back to St. David's - 35 miles away - and started coming here more and more. The next thing I knew, I had become a permanent fixture. I thank you all for that. Never in my life have I seen a group of people living out their faith like you do. You are all so supportive and loving. So the St. David's part of my life is a direct consequence of all the good that I have experienced within these walls.

Now, why the Episcopal Church and not some other one? I think what sealed the deal to explore the Episcopal religion was the first time I received holy communion at St. David's. I had such a good feeling permeate the whole of my being that I was sure this was where I belonged. But those of you who know me well know that I do not take my faith lightly and I still had questions. Participating in Bible study, the healing services, and contemplative prayer helped answer some of those. What ultimately helped me become an Episcopalian though was attending the Episcopal Way sessions and the continuous spiritual guidance from Father Harvey. I was able to ask the hard questions and have discussions with him without being considered a heretic. And during one of our last classes when he discussed the similarities and differences among the various Christian religions, I knew this was indeed the right place for me.

So, grief brought me here. Kindness - yours - kept me here to investigate and meditate. And study, coupled with spiritual guidance, solidified my decision to become an Episcopalian. I thank God for the entirety of the path that led me to this place in my life. Thank you, Lord, for you hear our prayers! Mary Moore

CREATION CARE KIDS' CORNER by Mary Moore

Birds to look for in *February*!

February is chockfull of bird activity. At the beginning of the month, you might see or hear great horned owls. They are among the first birds to start building their nests in Western Massachusetts. Around the middle of the month, you might spot ducks coming back into the area from the south. You might also see killdeer in farmers' fields if there is no snow on the ground. Then towards the end of the month, you may see turkey vultures or flocks of grackles and red winged blackbirds, which are also coming back from the south. In addition to all these returning birds, you might hear cardinals and chickadees, two kinds of birds that stay here for the winter, but that are now singing their spring songs.

Activity: Here are the scrambled names of some other birds that live in Western Mass. See how many you can figure out. Answers are found at the bottom of this page.

brion

newr

hifnc

leage

whak

sogoe

raspwor

onepig

CREATION CARE: by Pauline Mortenson

Loggerhead Sea Turtles

You're a volunteer on a deserted beach on the island of Wasswa, a national wildlife refuge, which is 14 miles southeast of Savannah, Georgia. The island is only a three-mile-wide piece of land. It's a nearly moonless night in July around 9:30 p.m. We're looking for loggerhead sea turtles which are considered threatened worldwide. We're told to look for something like tire tracks. Then we see the tracks...three-foot-wide parallel grooves running up from the ocean. The sea turtle is on the sand dunes and is rhythmically moving her flippers, reaching one back flipper at a time below her and flicking a bit of sand away from the hole she's digging then will lay her eggs. The female returns to the ocean and about two months later baby sea turtles emerge from the nests and crawl to the sea. The hatchlings face 1,000 to 1 odds against surviving to adult. The females that do survive won't be back to the region for perhaps another 30 years. This is just the start of a week-long adventure in learning about loggerheads.

If you would like to learn more about the loggerheads, please email me and I'll loan you the article I got the above information for the article.

Answers to Kids' Corner

1) robin, 2) wren, 3) finch, 4) eagle, 5) hawk, 6) goose, 7) sparrow, 8) pigeon.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Our Weekly Events

Sunday: Services at 8:00 and 10:00;

Sunday School at 10:00 (except 2/25)

Monday: Men's Bible study at 7:00

Friday: Healing Eucharist at 12:00

Bible Study at 1:00 (in person and Zoom)

Contemplative Prayer at 2:30 (in person and Zoom)

M-F: Compline at 8:00 PM (on Zoom)

Th-F: Morning Prayer at 8:00 AM (on Facebook)

Our Special Events

Sunday, February 4: Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting at 11:15

Sunday, February 4: Church without Walls at 12:00 at the Parish Cupboard

Monday, February 5: Prison Bible Study at the WCCC at 7:00

Tuesday, February 6: Veterans Lunch at 11:30

Wednesday, February 7: Prayer Shawl Ministry at 2:00

Sunday, February 11: Commitment Sunday at 8:00 and 10:00 (time & talents)

Sunday, February 11: Development Meeting in Sunday School Rm 11:15

Tuesday, February 13: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at 5:30

Wednesday, February 14: Ashes to Go, 7:00-8:00am and 4:00-5:00pm

Wednesday, February 14: Ash Wednesday Service at 5:30

Friday, February 16 and 23: Stations of the Cross at 11:15

Sunday, February 18: Bishop's Visitation at 10:00

Tuesday, February 20: Tuesday Discussion Group at 4:15 on Google Meets

Saturday, February 24: Vestry Retreat from 9:00 to 1:00

Sunday, February 25: Conversation on the Stations of the Cross at 11:30

Monday, February 26: Prison Bible Study at the WCCC at 7:00

Tuesday, February 27: Tuesday Discussion Group at 4:15 on Google Meets

Tuesday, February 27: The Chosen Watch Party and Conversation at 6:00

Regular Rentals

Mondays from 6:30-8:30 PM: OA

Thursdays from 9:30-11:00 AM: OA

Saturdays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM: Al-Anon Meeting

Saturdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM: Narcotics Anonymous

All events are listed on the calendar on our webpage (<https://www.stdavidsagawam.org/calendar.html>). To reserve space for an event, please first check if the space and time you want are open. Then email our calendar keepers at saintdavidsMA@gmail.com. It will be official when you hear back from them.



It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35

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