

The St. Thomas Times and Tidings

February 2008

Volume 2, Issue 6

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Planning a Lenten Discipline

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. (BCP 265)

Lent is almost here. These words from our Ash Wednesday Service call upon us to think about the priority of faith in our lives, and to undertake some godly activities to strengthen our faith. Let's briefly look at them.

We begin with self-examination and repentance, which comprise one overall action. Repentance is inherent in true self-examination. An honest appraisal will bring to mind those things we are doing or not doing that mark our shortcomings. And true repentance means more than feeling regretful. It means actually doing something to change the *status quo*.

Prayer is an essential part of this self-examination. Through prayer and listening the Holy Spirit can help us discern the priorities God has for us. And as we continue in prayer throughout Lent we can draw closer to God and have a clearer vision of the Risen Christ and joy of Easter. Pray daily. If you have gotten out of the practice of saying grace before meals, start it up again. Worship with your family and others every Sunday, and don't miss our Wednesday Lenten programs. You are loved by God. Prayer and corporate worship are good ways to experience that.

Fasting can be meaningful to many people. If you haven't fasted before, you should check with your doctor if you have doubts about your health. The practice of fasting also includes the idea of abstinence, which means eating less and foregoing certain culinary pleasures. The purpose is to remind you of your spiritual commitment.

This leads to self-denial, which can mean "giving up" or "taking on." Giving up is eliminating things that could interfere with the sincerity and focus necessary to share this solemn journey with our Lord and Savior. Taking something on is the same idea in reverse. Perhaps we have not been doing something we know that we should do; the other side of the coin.

Finally, reading and meditating on God's Word will make other parts of Lent more meaningful. In the Bible you will find encouragement, comfort, solace, and grace. How many other books in your library offer all that? But don't just start with Genesis and try to go from cover to cover. We have Bible reading plans in the office. For starters, read Luke, Acts, and Galatians, and then call me. Alternatively you could read the Daily Office that begins at page 953 of the Book of Common Prayer. We are in Year Two and the top numbers are Psalms for morning and evening prayer. However you approach it, set aside enough time to think and pray about what you read.

Finally, if you find that you have had a "Lenten lapse," just remember that God still loves you and don't allow Satan to sit on your shoulder and whisper in your ear that you might as well give up your plans for Lent. To the contrary, God will always welcome you when you ask. My prayers are with you for a holy and blessed Lent.

Fr. Bill

NOTES FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN by Dick Park



As we start a new year, it's a good time to reflect on the role of the Vestry in the Parish. Each year at the annual meeting, we elect three members to serve three-year terms. This year Don Ball, Karen Hector, and Tyrone Sartin were elected to three-year terms. Two are relatively new but very active participants in the parish, and one brings an institutional memory of years as a communicant. All the Vestry members bring a broad range of knowledge, skills, and experience. That diversity is helpful in performing our role as stewards of the parish.

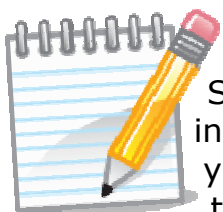
The Vestry works closely with the Rector in discerning and communicating the vision toward which God is drawing our community. We are also responsible for marshaling our resources to meet that vision. (In the coming couple of years, we have the challenge of raising our income in order to achieve the expanded vision of the parish.) According to church canon, the Vestry is the agent and legal representative of the parish in all matters concerning corporate property and the relations of the parish to the Rector. The Rector is responsible for the pastoral and spiritual direction of the parish. In practice, our Vestry works closely with Fr. Bill as we deal with financial matters. Lou Crowe, the Treasurer, attends all Vestry meetings and reports to the Vestry on month-to-month budgetary matters.

The vestry members are assigned areas of church life to monitor. Those assignments have not been made yet for this year, but in a following newsletter, we will enumerate them so that lines of responsibility are understood by all. I have accepted the appointment by Fr. Bill as Senior Warden for another year, and Jack Allen was elected Junior Warden by the Vestry at the last meeting.

As the "Rector's Warden," I am an advisor to and sounding board for Fr. Bill, and I try to communicate his vision to the parish; I am also responsible for his and Susan's well-being (although it is a challenge to get Fr. Bill to take vacations and to keep him from working long hours!).

The Junior Warden is the "People's Warden" in our current practice. That means he is the primary line of communication from the congregation to the Vestry and Rector (although that is a duty I willingly share). He is not primarily responsible for the buildings and grounds, except for long-term planning. This past year, Bob Saucier, with his knowledge of community craftsmen and availability when problems arose, was responsible for the buildings.

In conclusion, we have an excellent Vestry that is looking forward to another exciting year at St. Thomas.



Ministry Sign-Up Sheets

Sign-up sheets for St. Thomas' ministries and programs are on the table in the foyer under Bishop Gray's picture. Please consider areas in which you can assist the church as we extend ourselves to each other and to the community.



ECW News by Judy Gaupp

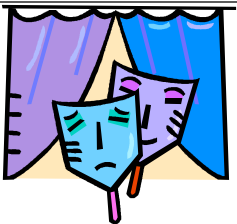
Our next ECW meeting will be on Saturday, February 9, 10:00 a.m., in Johnson Hall. Frances Pike of the Diamondhead SPCA will be our guest speaker. Child care will be provided. We hope you will join us.

For information about Episcopal Church Women (ECW), please feel free to call Mary Sartin (586-9007) or Judy Gaupp (216-3528).



TLC!

The St. Thomas Samaritan Guild, which comforts those in our church family who are ill or infirm, is expanding its ministry to include helping family members and others who are burdened with caring for those loved ones. This ministry includes preparing and delivering meals, home visits, and help with errands. This is an important ministry that can help prevent caregivers from becoming patients themselves. Please sign up in Johnson Hall.



St. Thomas Amazing Praisers

Our drama group will be doing a two-part play called "Remembrance" during Lent. It is a thought-provoking and humorous production about life and the afterlife in a high-tech future. We need cast and crew as well as our past players. Please contact Susan White (255-2568) if you would like to participate.

We are happy to announce that John Maxwell will be with us on February 27th for the Wednesday Evening Lenten Program, performing one of his superb and inspirational one-man show Christian dialogues. You will not want to miss it!



Take a Test Drive with the Choir

Earlier this month our Music Director, Bob Bruce, asked all who felt so moved to consider joining the St. Thomas choir.

There will be an opportunity on Wednesday, March 12 to sample the Choir experience. The Choir will perform a special program on this last Wednesday in Lent, and you are invited to add your voice to the choir for the event. Your presence not only will enhance the music, but also will enable you to evaluate how choir membership on a longer-term basis might work for you. Please let Bob know by February 24 if you are interested so he can plan rehearsals.

Adult Education Resumes

Adult Education will resume at 9:00 am this Sunday, February 3, between the services in the large Sunday School room. We will have an introductory presentation on prayer and spirituality that will cover different types of prayer and ways to pray. It will include centering prayer, meditative prayer, contemplative prayer, the Jesus Prayer, and *lectio divina*. It will consider how to make prayer a transformative discipline rather than just an activity to be completed, and also will touch upon things such as involuntary distractions during prayer, and other difficulties. Depending on how it is received, this presentation could be a preview on a more in-depth multi-week program.

Adult education will continue during the Sundays of Lent with a five week program that examines who Jesus Christ is, which will lead to a discussion of the important doctrines of the Atonement, how we are saved, and who is saved. The last session will discuss the meaning of Jesus' last words, and summarize the course. Details of the entire Lenten program are at pages 10 and 11 of this newsletter.

Youth Ministry by Penny Edwards

penny@stthomasdiamondhead.org

Jesus likes Hockey

On Friday, January 18, a group from St. Thomas attended the Sea Wolves vs Florida Everblades hockey game at the Biloxi coliseum. It was Youth for Christ night and there were jumpy houses, inflatable obstacle courses, and free puck give-aways. There was also a Christian rap group and rock band. A good time was had by all. As a bonus the Sea Wolves came from behind to win. If this is something that the youth or older kids would like to do again, please let Penny know.



"Popcorn Theology" Movie Night

Our next Popcorn Theology night will be **Friday, Feb. 8**, at 6:00 p.m. Our last movie was well attended. We learned about the value of hard work, sacrificing for the benefit of others, and friendship. Our next movie is going to be the "Grand Champion." This movie stars Emma Roberts, Julia Roberts, Bruce Willis, and George Strait. A boy tries to save his best friend and prize winning calf from becoming Sunday dinner. Please try and make it! Friends are welcome.



Jesus Also Likes Baseball

On Sunday April 6th, the first Zephyrs' Kids Day will be at 2:00 pm at the stadium on Airline Highway in Kenner. Tickets are \$5 with a church bulletin. If there is any interest in this event, we could leave after the 10:00 am service and caravan to the ball park. This would be a great family activity, and there will be lots of give-aways. The Zephyrs are the AAA farm team of the N.Y. Mets.



Sunday School

Sunday School is at 10:00 am for pre-school kindergarten, and elementary school aged children (grades 1-5). Please contact Georgia Saucier (255-4127) or Penny Edwards if you would like to be a part of this important ministry.



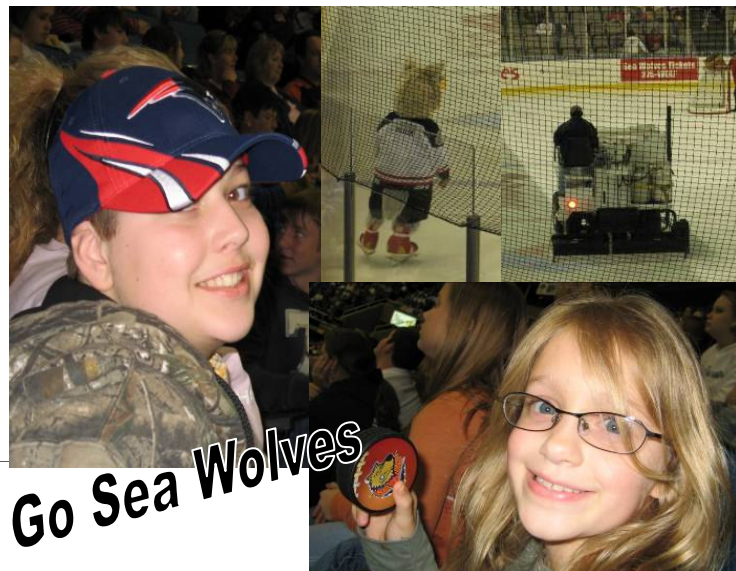
February 10th St. Valentine's Celebration

During Sunday School on February 10, we will have a special St. Valentine's celebration where we will discuss **LOVE:** love for each other and love for God. We will make and share valentines. We will also have a special snack.



Easter Egg Hunt (Easter Day—March 23)

Our Easter egg hunt will be after the 10:00 am service on the church grounds. Donations of plastic eggs and or candy are being accepted. Please contact Penny Edwards if there are any questions regarding any of the above items. Thank you for all of your support.



Winter Fest 2008

Our first Winter Fest had a nice turnout. Thanks to DeAunna, Evan, Sydney, Heather, Laurel, Alan, Katie, and Matthew for helping with games and cooking. The hamburgers and hot dogs were delicious. It was great to see our youth working together. The children enjoyed prizes and games while the adults enjoyed food and fellowship. The weather was a little chilly but it was a nice change.



EYC Update

Our Youth Group from St. Thomas, St. Peter's by-the-Sea, St. Patrick's, and Christ Church will not meet on February 3, and will resume on February 10 at St. Thomas beginning at 5:00 with dinner in Johnson Hall. We also are planning a combined Youth Sunday program where the youth from all four churches will join together for four Sundays to go as a group to each of the churches for a Youth Sunday program. This program is tentatively scheduled to begin on April 6 at St. Peter's by-the Sea, and then continue on April 20 at Christ Church, April 27 at St. Thomas, and May 4 at St. Patrick's. These dates will be confirmed or changed soon. Additional joint programs are being planned, and details will be announced.



Annual Meeting



The annual parish meeting was held on January 13. Fr. Bill, Dick Park, and Paul Montjoy gave reports, and the 2008 budget was presented.

Vestry elections also were held at the meeting. Don Ball, Karen Hector, and Tyrone Sartin were each elected to three years terms. Retiring from the vestry this year are Joe Floyd, Bobbie Stephens, and Katherine Wilson. Minutes of the meeting are available in the church office.

February Birthdays

02—Evelyn Young	03—Pris Williams
03—Paul Montjoy	07—Joye Taylor
11—Steve Austin	12—John Stewart
14—Joyce Badgett	18—Ciara Ford
20—Newton Daigle	21—David Hector, Jr.
22—Bruce Frallic	24—Kelly Allen
25—Janet Fiveash	25—Joan Hill
26—Bill Hourin	27—Laurel Bruce
27—Charlie Badeaux	

Remembrance



The parish extends its sympathy to Mary Sartin on the passing of her mother, Mollie Kalle, who has entered the blessed rest of our Lord. *Rest eternal, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon her. May she rest in Peace and rise in Glory.*

Diocesan Annual Council



The Annual council of the Diocese of Mississippi met in Natchez January 25-27 for both business and fellowship. Diocesan officers and delegates to the General Convention in Anaheim in 2009 were elected. The Rev. David Knight from St. Patrick's in Long Beach was elected as an alternate. Delegates to council from St. Thomas were Lynda Gilmore, Patty Hourin, and Bobbie Stephens. Alternates were Charlotte Crowe, Lou Crowe, and Joe Floyd. Our Senior Warden, Dick Park, attended as a guest, and Sally Kappus carried the St. Thomas banner in the Eucharistic procession on Sunday morning.

Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfast Group meets on the third Saturday of each month, at 8:30 am, in Johnson Hall. The next meeting will be Saturday, February 16. For more information, call Gary Gilmore (255-4396).

"Walk the Bible!"

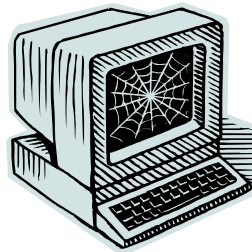


Please join us as we walk the Bible. This exercise includes walking and discussing passages with no preparations needed. Just bring your walking shoes! This is good exercise for our bodies and souls, physical and spiritual.

Where: Walking Path, DH Country Club
When: Wednesdays & Fridays, 9:00 a.m.

For more information or to see if weather permits the walk, please call Maren Casano (255-4117) or Susan White (255-2568).

St. Thomas Website



The final but preliminary, and almost complete but still a work-in-progress version of the St. Thomas website is at www.stthomasdiamondhead.org. Please look at it, test the links, evaluate its functionality, and let us know if you see anything that needs to be corrected, or if there are any links, drop down boxes, etc., that do not work properly. We know that parts of it are incomplete, and that we still need some text for pages that are under construction. All suggestions are welcome. Contact Debbye or Fr. Bill.

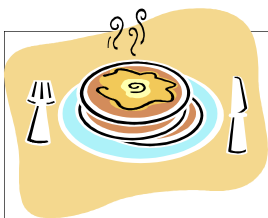
February 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 12:10—AA	2
3 8am—HE Rite I 9am—Adult Ed 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	4 12:10—AA 1:30—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	5  6:30pm—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	6  ASH WEDNESDAY 12:10—AA 12:15 & 6:30pm—Ash Wednesday Services	7 10am—Samaritan Guild	8 12:10—AA 6pm—Popcorn Theology	9 10am—ECW
10 8am—HE Rite I 9am—Adult Ed 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	11 12:10—AA 1:30—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	12 6:30pm—Choir	13 12:10—AA 12:15—Eucharist & Healing Service 6pm—Lenten Evening Program	14 10am—Samaritan Guild	15 12:10—AA	16 8:30am—Mens Breakfast Group
17 8am—HE Rite I 9am—Adult Ed 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	18 12:10—AA 1:30—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	19 6:30pm—Choir 7:30—Vestry	20 12:10—AA 12:15—Eucharist & Healing Service 6pm—Lenten Evening Program	21 10am—Samaritan Guild 6:00—Parents' Meeting	22 12:10—AA	23
24 8am—HE Rite I 9am—Adult Ed 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	25 12:10—AA 1:30—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	26 6:30pm—Choir	27 12:10—AA 12:15—Eucharist & Healing Service 6pm—Lenten Evening Program	28 10am—Samaritan Guild	29 12:10—AA	

February 2008

	February 3 8:00 HE: Rite I 10:00—HE: Rite II	February 10 8:00 Service 10:00—HE: Rite II	February 17 8:00—HE: Rite I 10:00—HE: Rite II	February 24 8:00—HE: Rite I 10:00—HE:Rite II
Altar Guild	<u>Team 3</u> Boos, Crowe, Pickens, Swayze	<u>Team 4</u> Allen, Floyd, Giffin, Gilmore	<u>Team 1</u> Ball, Bentson, Breen, Hourin	<u>Team 2</u> Bryan, Casano, Park
Flower Guild	Bobbie Stephens	NO FLOWERS	NO FLOWERS	NO FLOWERS
Chalicers—HE Reader—	Chalice—Ed Weidlich Reader—TBD	Chalice—Ed Weidlich Reader—Jackie Calvert	Chalice—Ed Weidlich Reader—TBD	Chalice—Ed Weidlich Reader—Jackie Calvert
Usher—8	Don Young	Bruce Frallic	Don Young	Bruce Frallic
Acolytes—10	Matthew Saucier Sydney Ruzicka Ciara Ford	Evan Ruzicka Heather Haines Devin Lockard	Matthew Saucier Sydney Ruzicka Ciara Ford	Alan Bruce Heather Haines Devin Lockard
Lector(s)	Jim Williams	Bob Eddy	Paul Montjoy	Susan White
Chalicers	James DeDeaux Frank Gaupp	Darlene Park Bobbie Stephens	Susan White Sally Kappus	Skip Giffin Bill Frisbie
Usher—10	Darlene & Dick Park	Bob Eddy & Lou Crowe	Bob Eddy & Paul Montjoy	Bob Eddy & Gary Gilmore
Greeter	Paul Montjoy	David & Karen Hector	Don Ball	Chad Badeaux
Hospitality	Judy and Frank Gaupp	Georgia Pickens Helen Davis	Corny Swayze	Travella& Edward Dabler Mary & Tyrone Sartin
Bulletin Helpers	February 1 Mary Minor Fargason Genie LeBlanc Barbara Ford	February 8 Mary Sartin	February 15 Mary Sartin	February 22 Travella Dabler February 29 Helen Davis

Servers if you are unable to serve when scheduled, obtain your replacement and if possible, let Debbye know by Wednesday the changes.



Lenten Program Begins With Pancake Dinner

Our Lenten Program will begin on Shrove Tuesday, February 5, the day before Ash Wednesday, with a pancake dinner at the church beginning at 6:00 pm. This follows the tradition in the church of using up milk, eggs, and butter in preparation for fasting during Lent. For those on the Gulf Coast who want an alternative to the Mardi Gras celebrations of Fat Tuesday that will be going on at the same time, come and join us at the church.

Dates To Remember

Feb. 03—Adult Education resumes
 Feb. 06—Ash Wednesday
 Feb. 05—Pancake Dinner (6:30pm, church)
 Feb. 08—Popcorn Theology (6pm, church)
 Feb. 13—Lenten Weds. Evening Program
 Feb. 16—Men's Breakfast
 Feb. 19—Vestry Meeting
 Feb. 20—Lenten Weds. Evening Program
 Feb. 21—Parents' Meeting (6pm, church)
 Feb. 27—Lenten Weds. Evening Program
 John Maxwell Performance



Wednesday Healing and Eucharist Service at 6:00 pm

Our 6:00 pm service of Holy Eucharist and Healing will move to 12:15 pm after Ash Wednesday to accommodate our Wednesday evening Lenten programs. The service is designed so that you can come to either or both parts of the service. Eucharist is celebrated first, and there is a dismissal for those who leave at that time. You may remain for healing prayer and anointing, which can be offered for yourself or for others about whom you might be concerned.

New Ministries, Programs and Activities in 2007

St. Thomas began or reactivated several ministries and programs during 2007. This marks the church's continuing recovery from Hurricane Katrina. The activities are:

- Acolyte Program Expanded
- Amazing Praisers Drama Group
- Angel Tree for Needy Kids
- At-Risk Children Mentoring
- Brown Bag Sunday for the Needy
- Children's Bell Choir
- Cursillo Small Group
- Eucharist on Wednesdays
- Friendship Groups
- Jr. and Sr. High School Youth Group
- Lay Eucharistic Visitors Activated
- Monthly Parents' Meetings.
- Popcorn Theology
- Prayer Ministry
- Storage Shed and Pavilion Construction
- TLC for Caregivers
- Youth Minister on Staff
- Used Book Corner
- Walking Club
- Web Site Expansion



Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study meets Mondays at 3:00 pm in the large Sunday school room. Everyone is welcome! For information, please Contact Maren Casano (255-4117).



Brown Bag Sunday

The first Sunday of each month continues to be Brown Bag Sunday when we all are asked to bring nonperishable food items to the church for delivery to the Hancock Food Pantry. Please place your items in the designated area in Johnson Hall.

LENTEN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Tuesday, February 5, Shrove Tuesday

6:00 pm Traditional Pancake Dinner (at the church)

Wednesday, February 6, Ash Wednesday

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Imposition of Ashes

6:30 pm Holy Eucharist II, Imposition of Ashes

Sunday, February 10, I Lent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

9:00 am Adult Education, Doctrine of Christ, Part I

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, February 13

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Holy Unction (Healing Service)

6:00 pm Holy Eucharist II, Soup and Salad Dinner, Lenten Program, Amazing Praisers.
"Remembrance" (Pt. I)

Sunday, February 17, II Lent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

9:00 am Adult Education, Doctrine of Christ, Part II

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, February 20

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Holy Unction (Healing Service)

6:00 pm Holy Eucharist II, Soup and Salad Dinner, Lenten Program, Amazing Praisers.
"Remembrance" (Pt. II)

Sunday, February 24, III Lent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

9:00 am Adult Education, Atonement and Salvation, Part I

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, February 27

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Holy Unction (Healing Service)

6:00 pm Holy Eucharist II, Soup and Salad Dinner, Lenten Program, presentation by
John Maxwell

Sunday, March 2, IV Lent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

9:00 am Adult Education, Atonement and Salvation, Part II

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, March 5

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Holy Unction (Healing Service)

6:00 pm Holy Eucharist II, Soup and Salad Dinner, Lenten Program, instructed
Passover Seder (live)

Saturday, March 8

10:00 am Quiet Day (at the church)

Sunday, March 9, V Lent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

9:00 am Adult Education, Last Words of Jesus, Wrap-Up

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, March 12

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II

6:00 pm Holy Eucharist II, Soup and Salad Dinner, Lenten Program, St. Thomas Choir, Bell Choir, and Others

PALM SUNDAY AND HOLY WEEK SERVICES**Sunday, March 16, Palm Sunday**

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Monday, March 17

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II

Tuesday, March 18

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II

Wednesday, March 19

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II, Holy Unction (Healing Service)

6:30 pm A Service of Tenebrae

Thursday, March 20, Maundy Thursday

12:15 pm Holy Eucharist II

6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Service, Stripping of the Altar

Friday, March 21, Good Friday

12:15 pm Good Friday Liturgy

6:00 pm Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Good Friday Liturgy

Saturday, March 22, Holy Saturday

10:00 am Holy Saturday Liturgy

7:00 pm Easter Vigil

Sunday, March 23, Easter Day

8:00 am Holy Eucharist I

10:00 am Holy Eucharist II

Reconciliation of a Penitent

In the Episcopal Church we make a public and corporate confession of sin each time we celebrate Holy Eucharist. This is part of our liturgy to prepare ourselves to participate in the Real Presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at the Holy Table

Sometimes a person also might wish to make a private confession to a priest and seek absolution. This sacramental rite of the church is called Reconciliation of a Penitent, and is described beginning at page 446 of the Book of Common Prayer.

There is no requirement, however, for private confessions. In the Episcopal Church we say "none must, all may, and some should."

A confession may be made any time, and not just in times of illness. It is especially appropriate during Lent. A confession is strictly confidential, and is not a matter of subsequent discussion unless a penitent so requests. Please contact Fr. Bill if you would like to discuss or learn more about this rite of reconciliation.

Prayer Ministry



The St. Thomas prayer ministry offers intercessory prayer for members of the church, their families and loved ones, and the church as a whole.

A *24 hour Prayer Line* for emergency or immediate needs is available to offer prayer for these needs. Please call Susan White at 255-2568 (home) or (228) 229-4881 (cell) to alert the prayer ministry team.

A *Prayer Corner* and two prayer team members are available in the loft during Eucharist and in the back of the sanctuary after the 10:00 am service.

An *Intercessory Prayer Group* for anticipated or long-term needs also is available. Please write a prayer request on a form available on the table in the foyer and place it in the box on that table. A group of prayer warriors will pray for these needs during the week.

All requests are treated with confidentiality. If you would like to become a part of *any* of these prayer ministries, please call Susan White at 255-2568. For example, you may choose to be a part of the telephone chain, *or* to pray during the week in response to written prayer requests, *or* to serve the prayer corner, *or* some combination of these.

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