

THE TRUMPET

St. Michael's of the Valley...making an eternal difference in each other's lives and in the world

St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church, PO Box 336, Ligonier, PA 15658

Phone: 724-238-9411 Church office hrs. Monday – Friday 9 AM until 1 PM

February 2024 Issue



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What a cold January we had! People were telling me Ligonier hadn't had cold like that for about 10 years. It was *perfect* for the Ligonier Ice Fest. 65 amazing ice sculptures dotted the Diamond, including one sponsored by St. Michael's—a heart with doves, symbolic of the love and peace of Christ.

A number of years ago at St. Paul's in Petersburg, Virginia, we had snow on Easter morning and we had to pitch the Easter Eggs in the snow for the children. Well, Easter is early again this year, March 31st. Let's pray we don't have snow.

Even though it may feel as if we just celebrated Christmas, Lent begins in 2 weeks on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. The season of Epiphany was about as short as it could ever be, just 5 weeks. So, it's not too soon to think about how you will observe Lent this year. In addition to the usual fasting and Lenten devotions, another option could be to commit to attending every service offered by St. Michael's during Lent.

We will begin with two Ash Wednesday services, one at 10:00 a.m. without music, and another at 7:00 p.m. with music. I think it is spiritually significant that the "Proper Liturgies for Special Days" in the Book of Common Prayer begins with Ash Wednesday, not Christmas or Easter. On Ash Wednesday we are reminded that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. Without God's life in us, we are just dirt.

The tone of the Sunday services will change during Lent, with the Kyrie replacing the Gloria at the beginning of the service, and the alleluia's being omitted until Easter Sunday. The theological and spiritual focus for us will be reflecting upon the nature of our sin and repentance. We are preparing to celebrate the Day of the Resurrection with clean hearts and minds.

The high point of Lent is Holy Week. It begins with Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, on March 24th. We will remember Jesus' journey to the Cross in the Liturgy of the Palms, which begins with a palm procession into the church at both services.

The Maundy Thursday service will be held at 7:00 p.m. with music, ending with the Stripping of the Altar. This is a solemn service which begins our commemoration of the events of Good Friday. Jesus leaves the disciples with the command to love one another as He has loved them.

In contrast to the glory of the Maundy Thursday service with all the red vestments and hangings, the Good Friday service is simple and the church is bare. Communion is not celebrated. The clergy wear only black vestments. The Passion According to John is read and the Solemn Collects are prayed. In churches with choirs, numerous anthems are sung and perhaps the cross is venerated. We believe Jesus died around 3:00 in the afternoon. Silence is observed at that time. We will have our Good Friday Liturgy at 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday together are called the Triduum, the 3 holiest days of prayer for Christians. These days are observed with prayers, fasting, and often special sacred music written just for the events of these days. In many places churches and other Christian communities observe the Great Vigil of Easter on the evening of Holy Saturday, which concludes early on Easter morning. In some places, like Virginia where I grew up, churches hold sunrise services in cemeteries on Easter morning. The joy we experience on the Day of Jesus' Resurrection comes out of the darkness we experience on Good Friday.

I have experienced all of these services and found them to be highly rewarding spiritually. As you can see, we have a rich liturgical tradition. I hope some of this information about our observance of Lent will help to make your experience of Lent this year more meaningful.

Faithfully,

Margorie +

AN UNKNOWN CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

Since I grew up in Virginia, surrounded by Revolutionary and Civil War battle fields, I've been interested in American history. A number of years ago while serving a parish in Richmond, Virginia, I heard this prayer read by someone on the local radio station. It is very moving, written by a humble Christian soldier. The introduction is written by Dr. James I. "Bud" Roberston, Jr., a noted scholar on the American Civil War and Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Virginia Tech. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

"People who say that nothing else needs to be published on the Civil War are woefully uninformed. Over 31 million Americans were involved in that conflict. Each had a story to tell. What most of them saw, and experienced, changed their lives just as permanently and just as dramatically as it changed the nation into an indivisible united state. And knowing what each person endured has value because the individual stories illustrate how dear our heritage should be to all of us.

One such participant in the Civil War will forever be unknown. He was a Confederate soldier. In all likelihood, he hailed from Virginia. If the man fit the usual pattern, he was a farmer, in his early twenties, single, and devoutly Protestant. He had gone to war because his state (which was then his country) had been invaded by a Northern army that seemed determined to overturn illegally a Southern way of life in existence since colonial days.

The soldier probably had fought in a number of battles. His simple life had been shattered by the brutality of man, the sight of combat, the screams of the wounded, and the stench of death. He lived in filth, suffered from hunger, wore rags and the shoes of a dead soldier. He feared sickness more than the enemy, for diarrhea, typhoid fever, measles and pneumonia were the biggest killers of all.

For three years this Johnny Reb survived everything that man and nature could hurl at him. Asked how he had managed to outlast adversity, the man likely would have answered that the protective hand of God had kept him safe. Religion was more a personal matter than a denominational issue for most Civil War soldiers; and the higher toll the war took, the more those men fell back on the one thing they had left: faith.

Obviously, this man had hopes for the future. He also was confident that after the cruel war was over, and with the blessings of the Almighty, he would know success and happiness. But first he must affirm his allegiance to Him who had given the young soldier life and opportunity.

In the spring of 1864, battle exploded once again on the outskirts of Richmond. After the fighting ended and armies marched off to grapple elsewhere, small details of soldiers moved onto the battlefield to bury the dead. One party came upon the Confederate soldier. He lay amid the dead in the front of the battle line.

Just before burying him on the field, the grave-diggers made the usual search of the body. Inside the shirt pocket was a sheet of paper. On it this common soldier a day or so earlier had scrawled some thoughts. They were a statement of what life meant to him. As such, the words are an everlasting testimonial to one simple human being.”

The soldier wrote:

*I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly how to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things.
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy.
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men.
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for – but everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.*



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday, February 4, 2024 ~ Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

First Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31

Psalm 147: 1-12, 21c

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 11, 2024 ~ Last Sunday after the Epiphany

First Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalm 50:1-6

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Gospel: Mark 9:2-9

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 ~ Ash Wednesday

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Psalm 103:8-14

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sunday, February 18, 2024 ~ First Lent

First Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-9

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25, 2024 ~ Second Lent

First Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalm 22:22-30

Second Reading: Romans 4:13-25

Gospel: Mark 8:31-38

SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY SERVICES

Sunday February 4, 2024

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II
Children's Offering
Adult Christian Education ~ 9:15 am
Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

Sunday, February 11, 2024

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
Adult Christian Education 9:15 am
Coffee Hour after 10:30 am service

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 Ash Wednesday

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Sunday, February 18, 2024

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
Adult Christian Education ~ 9:15 a.m.
Coffee Hour after the 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 25, 2024

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
Adult Christian Education ~ 9:15 a.m.
Coffee Hour after the 10:30 a.m. service

Wednesday, February 28th ~ 10 AM

Holy Eucharist & Healing Prayer Service

SCHEDULE OF SERVERS FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 4th ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Mary Whittemore
Usher: Sam Pollina

Sunday, February 11th ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Lisa Frederick
Usher: Joe Frederick

Wednesday, February 14th ~ Ash Wednesday ~ 10 AM

Lay Reader: Mary Whittemore
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, February 18th, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Jan Carlin
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, February 25th, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Bobbie Off
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, February 4th ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Laura Fisher
Usher: Carl Campbell

Sunday, February 11th ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Cindy Pompelia
Usher: Mick Pompelia

Wednesday, February 14th ~ Ash Wednesday 7 PM

Lay Reader: Cindy Pompelia
Usher: Mick Pompelia

Sunday, February 18th ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Laura Fisher
Usher: Carl Campbell

Sunday, February 25, 2024 ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: *still needed*
Usher: Rex Ashbrook

ONE DAY WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL RETREAT ~ March 9, 2024

Theme: "Following God in a Perplexed World" ~ *Being an Apprentice of Jesus*

When: Saturday, March 9, 2024 ~ 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Cost: \$25.00/per person. Includes Breakfast and Lunch.

Checks should be made payable to: **St. Michael's of the Valley**

Mail to: St. Michael's of the Valley, PO Box 336, Ligonier PA. 15658 by **March 4, 2024**.

SIMPLE SUPPERS DURING LENT

During the Lenten season we are going to have simple suppers on Wednesday evenings. The simple supper's will be from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the parish hall. The evening includes a light meal, a Lenten study, and the service of compline. The dates are as follows:

Wednesday, February 21st, February 28th, March 6th, March 13th and March 20th. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us on Wednesday evenings.



OPEN ALTAR FLOWER MEMORIAL DATES

The following dates are available to have memorial flowers on the altar at St. Michael's. The cost is \$55.00 payable to St. Michael's of the Valley.



Sunday, April 7th

Sunday, April 14th

Sunday, April 21st

Sunday, April 28th

Sunday, May 12th

Sunday, May 19th

Call or email the church office to reserve one of the dates if you are interested.

HIRING NURSERY ATTENDANT & ORGANIST CHOIR DIRECTOR

St. Michael's is looking to hire our next Organist/Choir Director and an individual to serve as a nursery attendant on Sunday mornings during the 10:30 AM service and during special services or events.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please have them contact Rev. Marjorie Bevans at the church office.



FIRST COMMUNION



If you would like your child to receive first communion on Easter Sunday, please call the church office (724-238-9411). The Rev. Marjorie Bevans will meet with the child(ren) the Saturday before Easter on March 30th @ 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.



St. Michaels has been a loyal supporter of the Ligonier Ice Fest. This year's sculpture was a heart with doves, symbolic of the love and peace of Christ. This year's Ice Fest was held January 19th thru 21st.