

# St. Andrew's Lenten Meditation Guide 2019

*Sponsored by the Adult Formation Committee*

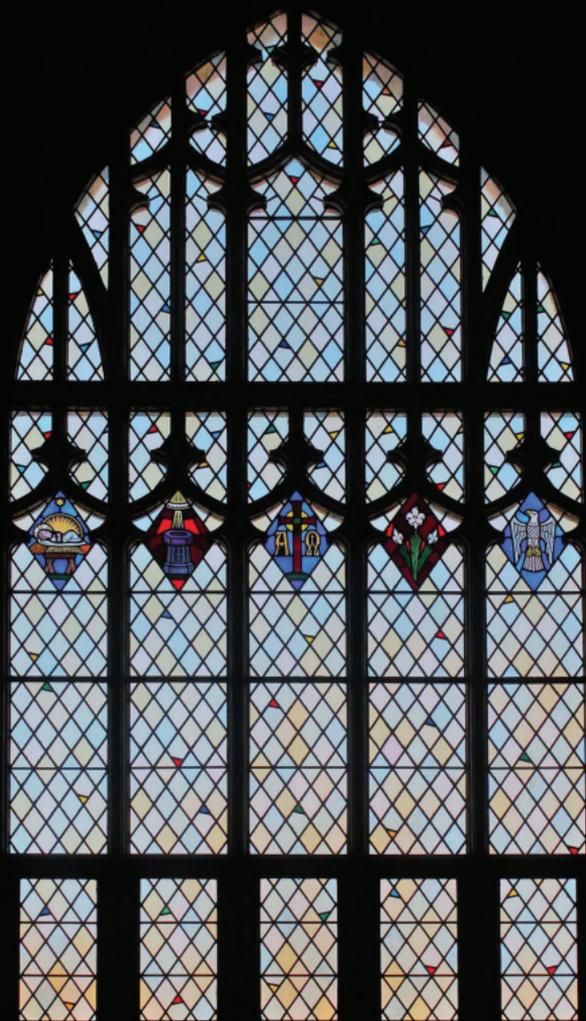


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# St. Andrew's Lenten Meditation Guide 2019

*Sponsored by the Adult Formation Committee*



CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

**ST. ANDREW'S**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



## Editor's Note

*Dear people of God,*

I AM WRITING THESE WORDS DURING MY FINAL DAYS at St. Andrew's, as I prepare to move to Chicago to accept a new call as rector of a church there. I am busy sorting through books I meant to read, notes I meant to answer, projects I meant to complete—all the accumulated detritus of my messy life.

And already, I can feel the same temptation I face every year: to treat Lent as a sort of divine self-improvement plan. *This year for Lent, I think, I will . . . Wake up at the same time every morning! Stop eating sugar! Make more time to pray!*

Reading the early proofs of this book helped me to remember that self-improvement, admirable though it may be, is not the purpose of Lent. Instead, our ultimate goal is to draw closer to the heart of Christ.

The contributors to this devotional (perhaps with the exception of yours truly) understood this instinctively. Here, you will find maps of many different paths toward closeness to God: The authors are finding their way there through favorite books, communal worship, and turning faith into action, to name only a few.

At this writing, I am still thinking about the Lenten discipline to which God might be calling me. But I know for sure that I am planning to give up self-improvement. The only thing I truly need to cultivate is an open heart, so that I might be ready to accept the overflowing love of the God who redeemed us through his only Son.

Yours,

Cat

*The Rev. Catherine Healy*

Assistant Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

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## Ash Wednesday

### March 6, 2019

*Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven ... But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:1, 6)*

LENT'S DIFFERENT COMPONENTS include penance and denial. Interestingly, both are shared by all major religions to help our spiritual development, although they take different forms. For Christians, they prepare us for the profound mysteries of Holy Week and Easter.

For the coming Lenten days, Christ gives us a road map in today's Gospel. What we encounter are not lists of dos and don'ts, but adult guidance in our self-discernment. Three case studies illustrate where we need help: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. All are exemplary practices; the problem is not with them, but with us. We're prone to disguised motives and self-deception. Giving money to help others is exemplary, but when we do it, we are not to "let [our] left hand know what [our] right hand is doing." Praying is exemplary, but we need to pray in secret, behind closed doors. Fasting, again, is exemplary, but Jesus commands us to practice it alone.

So these practices are between God and us. To this privilege, there's added further good news. Repeated after each case study are the words "your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

*Peter Fergusson is a retired professor at Wellesley College. He is the vestry member for adult formation at St. Andrew's.*

## Thursday after Ash Wednesday

### March 7, 2019

*Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)*

THIS PASSAGE INSPIRES ME regarding the concept of a Christian continuum. As I get older and see children and young adults attending church each week, I'm struck by the sheer awesomeness of Jesus' love—stretching over the past two thousand years, from generation to generation, to every corner of the world. Our Christian rituals have been passed down for thousands of years through a shared love of God and in memory of the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us. I feel gratitude for the early Christians, who wrote prayers and hymns that we still use today, and I derive comfort knowing that these rites will continue on to future generations through the love and care we give to our children, families, church, neighbors, and communities.

While we are all just individuals on separate journeys through life, I gain strength and perspective when I remember that we are part of a much bigger community created by God, fueled by the love of Jesus, and extended through our children. This Lenten lesson reminds me to hold fast to Jesus throughout my life.

*Carrie Hawley resides in Sudbury and has been a member of St. Andrew's since 2016. She currently serves on the membership committee and will be serving on the adult formation committee in the coming year.*

## Friday after Ash Wednesday

### March 8, 2019

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. (Isaiah 58:6, 9)*

ISAIAH 58 SPEAKS TO THE COMPLEXITIES of striving to worship God, but failing to integrate all aspects of our spiritual lives. The passage tells the story of a people who seek to be true to God's word, but often mistake spiritual ritual for true and meaningful action. This observation holds as much relevance today as it did at the time of its writing.

In the closing lines of this chapter, we're reminded that, despite our shortcomings, God is with us, always. With this truth, I'm reminded to confidently live my faith through deeds, not through belief alone. I'm reminded to have a bias toward Christian actions, not rituals alone. What can we, as Christians, do today to reflect God's light in the world?

*Jeff McAdams joined St. Andrew's in 2011 with his wife, Karen, and children, Ella (15) and Sevi (11). He is a member of the stewardship committee and a Rite-13 leader.*

## Saturday after Ash Wednesday

### March 9, 2019

*The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. (Isaiah 58:11)*

BACK IN THE EARLY '90S, I was working at the university library one night when a group of undergraduate students crowded the circulation desk. With their elbows on the counter, they rallied me to join their worship gathering. They had done this before, but I always said I didn't have the time. As an international student, I faced both academic and financial challenges; I barely had enough time for sleep.

"Don't you believe God will help you?" they asked earnestly, eyes aglow. And in my head, I thought, "How?" But if you were to ask me the same question today, I would say, "Yes!"

Over the years, especially through Lent, I've learned to pray intentionally. When I face adversity or difficult choices, I ask God for guidance. I sit next to him, talk to him, and listen to him with full attention. God continually helps me discover my spiritual gifts, genuine passions, and unique abilities to serve the world—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. And so I live a full life, focusing on serving, rather than worrying. I always end my prayers with "Thy will be done!", knowing that God has my best interests at heart.

*Anne Tong, formerly a vice president and director of brand strategy at Young & Rubicam New York, is now an independent publisher of children's books and related services with an emphasis on encouraging imagination, nurturing creativity, and inspiring a sense of contribution to the world. She served on the St. Andrew's membership committee from 2013 to 2017.*

## First Sunday in Lent

### March 10, 2019

*The devil said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" (Luke 4:3-4)*

AFTER JESUS SPENT FORTY DAYS IN THE WILDERNESS without food, the devil suggested that he eat something by turning a stone into bread. With one elegant and concise statement, Jesus avoided the first of three tricks from the devil.

In this rebuke, Jesus may also have another purpose. He reminds us that it is not enough to make decisions in our own lives based on what is easiest, what is most tempting, or what seems most practical in the moment. Instead, he directs us to transcendent principles, inviting each of us to ask, "How often do I try to live by bread alone?"

Jesus does not say "no bread" or forbid us from engaging with the material world—luckily for me, since practical activities occupy a large slice of the pie chart of my daily life. Perhaps this Lent, though, I will increase the share devoted to transcendent things, remembering that I cannot live by bread alone.

*Stephen Mahoney enjoys keeping his six children happy and productive, each in their separate orbits. His wife Erica Gelser introduced him to St. Andrew's, where he appreciates the inspiration, occasionally volunteers, and enjoys the men's book club.*

## Monday in the First Week of Lent

### March 11, 2019

*You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself.*  
(Leviticus 19:17)

IN HARPER LEE'S NOVEL *To Kill A Mockingbird*, the young boy Jem Finch explains, "You can choose your friends but you sho' can't choose your family, an' they're still kin to you no matter whether you acknowledge 'em or not, and it makes you look right silly if you don't." As I reflect on my own family gatherings, the truth of those words has never been clearer to me. While I don't feel hatred for the members of my extended family, I sometimes feel challenged in trying to like or love them. Add in-laws to the mix, and the result is a group of people around the dinner table with little in common.

As holidays and years pass, I trust that God is using these relationships to mold me into a better, more Christ-like person. I know that I too am a work in progress, and I do see glimmers of hope, especially when one of my brothers needs help and I reach out to them, as they do for me.

As God loves me unconditionally, so too am I to love others, kin and stranger alike. Only through prayer and the grace of God am I able to manage such love.

*Susan Jackson was born and raised in Dover, MA, earned an MSW in California, is the proud mom of Katherine, and runs a pet-sitting business in her spare time. She has enjoyed working as the Christian learning coordinator at St. Andrew's for the past twelve years.*

## Tuesday in the First Week of Lent

### March 12, 2019

*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and will save those whose spirits are crushed. (Psalm 34:18)*

WE ALL HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME FORM OF PAIN OR LOSS in life, as part of the human experience. It could be the loss of a loved one, a setback, or a disappointment. When I find that it is difficult to pray, or when I have trouble seeing a way forward, I call my daughter's godfather, and we pray together. We don't pray for answers; we pray for the strength to offer our burdens to Jesus.

In a humbling way, knowing that the Lord is there to help ease the pain of those who are suffering reminds me of God's love for all of us. No matter what happens, I trust that he will carry us through the difficult times.

*Matthew Benfer has been a member of St. Andrew's for four years. He is an assistant teacher for the first-grade church school class.*

## Wednesday in the First Week of Lent

### March 13, 2019

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:11)*

MID-MARCH CAN BE A DREARY TIME OF YEAR. Mud and sleet, mixed together with old piles of dirty snow, tend to make me long for spring and the snowdrop flowers that pop their heads up through the wet earth. I feel the need to sling off the vestments of winter—boots, hats, bulky sweaters—and eagerly watch the sun's morning light break through a wintry dawn.

We seek refreshment of spirit as much as we long for spring. The psalmist, too, longs for a spring cleaning of the soul, asking God for a clean heart and a right spirit.

The stillness of the eight o'clock service at St. Andrew's on a Sunday morning is a reboot for my soul. As the celebrant offers the opening Collect for Purity with the words, "To you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid," all the stresses and mistakes of the week past fall into perspective, and I am refreshed.

*Harriet Thompson is a retired secretary who spends her time gardening, volunteering, and babysitting her niece's children. She is an office volunteer at St. Andrew's and an usher for the eight o'clock service.*

## Thursday in the First Week of Lent

### March 14, 2019

*In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. (Matthew 7:12)*

I ATTENDED A CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, where my English teacher, Brother O'Neil, kept a small sign on his bulletin board that read: "If you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" Adherence to the Golden Rule would likely be a key piece of evidence to secure a conviction at trial. This rule transcends many faiths and seems simple and easy to follow. Nothing to it, right? Well, not exactly.

For example, let's examine our daily interactions with other people. Many of us go through the motions of basic politeness towards others. This does not seem to live up to Jesus' expectations of the Golden Rule. Do we simply want to be treated with basic politeness, or would most of us prefer someone who listens intently, remembers our names, and is genuinely interested in what we have to say?

Simply put, Jesus is asking us to "do to others as you would have them do to you." For many of us, this means challenging ourselves to live up to the letter and spirit of the Golden Rule, and not just go through the motions.

*Harry Condon, Jr. lives in Needham with his wife Kathryn and daughter Caroline (10), and is happily adjusting to life with a new puppy, Murphy. He is a member of the St. Andrew's finance committee, serves as an usher, and enjoys the men's book club.*

## Friday in the First Week of Lent

### March 15, 2019

*But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matthew 5:22)*

BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE A TENDENCY TO BICKER, especially when they are packed into an airplane for a cross-country journey and then into a car for a six-hour ride to the mountains. This is exactly what we experienced during our Christmas vacation, traveling not only with our immediate family, but also under the watchful eyes of the grandparents. Travel and close quarters can inevitably lead to tensions and annoyances with family members.

However, today's Scripture reminds us that it is important to treat others with respect and patience. Life is fragile, and we do not know how many more holidays we will get to spend with our loved ones. Even when tensions are high, take a step back and think: *Is it really more important to be right, or to be kind?*

Enjoy all moments. Laugh and love. Be thankful and appreciate your family. Make lasting happy memories, even if your sibling is "taking up too much space."

As the Swiss poet Henri-Frédéric Amiel writes, "Life is short, and we have too little time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. Be swift to love; make haste to be kind."

*Bettina Eikeboom is happily married to Arnout and has three children: Christiaan, Clara, and Johannes. She has been a member of St. Andrew's since 2003.*

## Feast of St. Matthias

### March 16, 2019

*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:44-45)*

I GREW UP IN A COMMUNITY where everyone was very good at making everything look good on the outside, giving the impression that all was perfect. Over the years, I have come to accept the fact that no one is perfect, including myself. The reality is that we all have struggles and imperfections. These issues manifest themselves in different ways, but they often impact our relationships with each other.

I am not going to like everyone I come into contact with, but as a child of God, I can love them and pray for them. I face this challenge every day, but, as this passage reminds me, those challenges are opportunities to reach out and share my love in every way I can.

*Jerry Olivetti is a proud father, husband and business partner who loves golf. He has been a member of St. Andrew's since 1998, when his daughter, Posy, was baptized.*

## Second Sunday in Lent

### March 17, 2019

*The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."  
(Genesis 15:1)*

WHEN ABRAM HAS THIS VISION OF GOD, he has been waiting many years to be blessed with a child, and has all but given up on ever having an heir. God's encounter with Abram reminds me of the occasions when I feel impatient. One thing I often forget is that God has a plan for me, and that God's schedule of events may not be what I expect it to be. Like Abram, I sometimes rely too much on instant gratification and lose sight of the end goal.

God's promise to Abram reminds me that my impatience is ineffective, and that there is no need to worry as much as I often do. Instead, I need to work on increasing my trust in God. When I correctly apply this strategy of trust, I feel less worried and more fulfilled. Throughout my life, I hope to continue becoming a more trusting, more patient person by relying on God's help.

*Sydney Jobson is a lifelong Episcopalian from South Florida. She worships weekly at St. Andrew's, and shares her enthusiasm for St. Andrew's with friends at Wellesley College, where she is a first-year student.*

## Monday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 18, 2019

*Jesus said, "I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also." (Luke 6:27)*

THE GOOD LORD IS ALWAYS TESTING US to reveal our true nature. Today, physical assaults requiring us to turn our cheek to an aggressor's rage are thankfully rare, but verbal abuse meant to threaten or hurt is very likely to happen. How can we respond with grace to verbal abuse, particularly when it comes from a loved one? The instruction to "turn the other cheek" does not require you to passively allow someone to hurt you; rather, it is a command not to attempt retribution. Retaliation just invites more evil, permanently destroying close relationships.

The Lord commands that we love and pray for our attackers, which we do—but liking them again after an attack, even if they are family members, requires real work, and we need God's guidance to do it. Pride is the biggest stumbling block for most of us, along with the commitment of our time. Since few of us are monks, we generally have a lot of personal pride and very little time. Jesus teaches us that we must give up our pride and work hard to find love for our oppressors, within the time we have—before it's too late.

*Phillip W. Thiessen works as an engineer for Raytheon in Marlborough. For many years, he has been a member of the eight o'clock congregation at St. Andrew's.*

## Tuesday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 19, 2019

*Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness. (Psalm 89:1)*

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, every Sunday, my siblings and I would cross the street in front of our house and wait for the church bus. The bus would take us and our neighborhood friends to St. Boniface, a Catholic church in our town with a very large congregation.

Being a young child, I didn't fully understand the prayers I was reciting or the hymns I was singing, but I was able to recognize that they were important to me and the others standing near me in the pews. Therefore, I learned at an early age that God loved me and those who gathered with me in worship. We were there to celebrate his love for us and our love for Him.

As an adult, I have a greater understanding of the prayers and hymns I hear in church and how important they are to my spiritual life. The opportunity to worship, rejoice in the Lord's goodness, and express thankfulness with fellow parishioners brings me joy and comfort. It allows me to share in the promise of Psalm 89, praising God's steadfast love and faithfulness to every generation, forever.

*Kris Vanin is a wife, mother, and registered nurse. She is an usher at St. Andrew's, and also participates in Bargain Haul and the fellowship committee.*

## Wednesday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 20, 2019

*Jesus called the apostles to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28)*

LENT IS AN OLD ENGLISH WORD MEANING "SPRING," the time of lengthening days. Spring is a season full of promise and hope. We give hope to others when we are selfless, supportive, and encouraging towards each other.

In this Gospel reading from Matthew, Jesus tells us that God honors service rather than power and wealth and challenges us to serve the Lord—and, in turn, each other. The people I admire the most in this world are those who are giving of themselves, who serve and help others. Like so many of us, I often feel overwhelmed by the pressures of life and focus too much on my own struggles. It's natural to be focused on ourselves, but when we give to one another, it is far more satisfying and healing. Serving others is the essence of what it means to be an Easter person.

The season of Lent reminds us that that we have a call to look beyond ourselves; to serve our church, our community, and our world; to be generous of spirit and demonstrate compassion. Through our actions, we can offer the hope that the world so desperately needs.

*Sam Schaefer is the proud father of Norah and Coley and husband to Heather. He is a lifelong Episcopalian and has been a member of St. Andrew's since 2011.*

## Thursday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 21, 2019

*Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green: in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8)*

THIS PASSAGE FROM JEREMIAH speaks to the hope and resilience faith can bring. As we face a troubled, challenging year ahead, there is so much about which to be anxious—uncertain and extreme weather, economic instability, fear of illness, and on and on. For many people, the worry is overwhelming.

For me, Jeremiah's "tree" is the mystery of renewed strength that comes from the regular "watering" of faithful reflection and the communal energy of the church. When bad things happen, our faith community helps us build the stamina and grit to look for ways to change what we can, as well as offering us the support of friends to help us accept what we cannot change.

Another strength of the tree is that it does not cease to bear fruit, even when we face drought and suffering. It's a reminder that we are called to find ways to nurture and care for others, especially in times of despair.

*Jane Andrews is a newly retired social worker and psychotherapist who worked at Mount Auburn Hospital for forty years. She has been active at St. Andrew's since 1983 and is moving to San Diego in 2019 with her longtime partner Bob Harrington to be near to children and grandchildren.*

## Friday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 22, 2019

*Grant, O Lord, that as your Son Jesus Christ prayed for his enemies on the cross, so we may have grace to forgive those who wrongfully or scornfully use us, that we ourselves may be able to receive your forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*  
(Collect of the Day)

IN TODAY'S COLLECT, we pray not just for forgiveness, but for grace in forgiveness. Jesus led by example as he prayed for his enemies on the cross. He did this for our benefit, so that we could receive his forgiveness and carry on his example.

Some offenders are easier to forgive than others. Unconditional love toward our children, for example, may move us toward forgiving them more quickly than we might forgive a professional colleague for the same offense. But Jesus challenges us to gracefully forgive colleagues, enemies, and strangers, even when it is hard.

It seems that forgiveness is harder today than ever before, because technology provides so many more ways to express anger or scorn. How would Jesus teach us to use grace in forgiveness in our own age? He might say that precisely because forgiveness has become more difficult, it is more important now than ever. He might also teach us that, although modern life gives us more ways to hurt each other, it gives us an equal number of new ways to forgive with grace.

*Charles P. Curtis is a devoted husband and the father of two college-aged children. He is a regular participant in the ten o'clock service and has found a spiritual home at St. Andrew's, where both his children have served as acolytes, his daughter as a crucifer, and his wife Amanda as a church school teacher.*

## Saturday in the Second Week of Lent

### March 23, 2019

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. (Psalm 103:1)*

THIS BEAUTIFUL HYMN OF PRAISE TO THE LORD represents to me the bedrock of religious faith, because it expresses our response as creatures to our Creator. It is the ultimate expression of thanksgiving for our very being.

Ever since I finished graduate school and have circulated in the halls of academe, I have been among scholars and scientists with thoroughly secular views of creation. They penetrate the mysteries of the Big Bang, the possibilities of life in outer space, the immense variety of human religious belief. In the face of their religious skepticism, I always come back to the one unshakable truth that I did not create myself, nor the wondrous world around me.

We are all creatures of God. In thanksgiving for our very being, for the beautiful world around us, for our families and loving friends, the most direct way of expressing our gratitude is to praise the Lord, to bless the Lord, our Creator.

*Janet Giele has been a member of St. Andrew's since the 1960s. She is a choir member and served as a warden in the late 1980s. She is Professor Emerita of Sociology, Social Policy, and Women's Studies at Brandeis University and the author of books and articles on family matters and women's changing life patterns.*

## Third Sunday in Lent

### March 24, 2019

*O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you. Your loving-kindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast. (Psalm 63: 1, 3, 8)*

WHEN I FIRST ENCOUNTERED PSALM 63, I could not help being engaged by its intense expressions of passionate and joyous love for God. It calls for human love reaching beyond its usual limits to achieve an apotheosis of love. The psalmist's deep devotion is both material and transcendent.

Now, back to the mundane. How can I bring this symphony of love into my own being? It is not in my nature to engage in such exalted thoughts and feelings. I was raised in a family in which emotional expression was not encouraged. Religion did not occupy a significant place in my home. Something was missing, but I did not know what it was.

Relating to the Almighty has been a lifelong challenge for me. Psalm 63 provides me with insight about how I can have a relationship with God. I believe I must work at deepening that relationship so as to improve my love for the people close to me, particularly my wife, children, and siblings. This is no easy task, but I will keep working at it. Will I succeed? I am hopeful. "My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast."

*Victor Calcaterra is a retired physician who has practiced at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Newton-Wellesley Hospital. He has been an active member of St. Andrew's for five years and sings in the senior choir.*

## Monday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 25, 2019

*And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." (Luke 1:28-30)*

THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT STRIKE ME today about this passage as I write: First, that Mary is afraid and the angel reassures her; and second, Mary's determination to surrender to the will of God. I have no idea how Mary dealt with the day-to-day realities of life two thousand years ago, but I know her feeling of determination to follow the will of God, even when perplexed: starting with prayer and ending with a community of people around you, helping to see you through.

As a Quaker, I think of this in the words of George Fox, the founder of Quakerism: coming "up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God," transporting yourself, if you will, from this world to a place of peace and reconciliation—a place words cannot describe—with a still and joyful feeling that you are playing your part.

Mary, like you, I pray for all the strength and determination needed to surrender to the will of God. May we all find favor and be blessed in unexpected ways.

*Katharine Clark: daughter, sister, lover, wife, mother, grandmother, Quaker, minister, activist, and administrator, among other things. She is the parish administrator at St. Andrew's.*

## Tuesday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 26, 2019

*Show me your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths.  
(Psalm 25:3-10)*

AS A SENIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL, I am unsure of what lies ahead. Since I was a young child, I have been given guidance on what to do and when to do it. But next year, I will officially be an adult, and I will be making many more decisions on my own. Of course, I will still have my family for guidance, but I will have much more control over what I want to do with my life, and this is somewhat scary to me.

I trust that after graduation, when I start my journey into adulthood, God will continue to show me his ways and teach me his paths. I realize that with greater independence comes greater responsibility. I hope that God will help me to make the right decisions—not only in difficult situations, but also in my everyday life. This way, I will always be able to follow the path that God has set for me.

*Scott Sawyer is a senior at Wellesley High School. He is an acolyte and an avid youth group attendee.*

## Wednesday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 27, 2019

*Moses said: "Take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children." (Deuteronomy 4:9)*

MOSES IS ADDRESSING THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL in the land of Moab, where they have stopped at the end of a long journey, about to reach the Promised Land. Before they enter Canaan, Moses recalls the great events of the past forty years, reminding people how God has led them through the wilderness. He instructs them to be obedient and loyal to God and the Ten Commandments, emphasizing the First Commandment—to devote themselves to the Lord alone. In Moses' address, we are reminded that God has saved and blessed his chosen people and that if we simply love and obey God, we will have life and continued blessings.

This passage makes me also think about what I have seen and know, and the importance of passing on knowledge and traditions—from both the Bible and our own family history—to my children. Even further, I think of those in my life who have encouraged and believed in me, those who have been true role models—my parents, my teachers, my spouse, and Christ himself—and feel compelled to pass on that inspiration not only to my children, but to all of God's children.

*Cari Dineen is a mother to Charlotte (8) and George (5), and a freelance writer living in Needham with her husband David. She is active on the St. Andrew's church school committee and teaches church school to kindergartners.*

## Thursday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 28, 2019

*From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. (Jeremiah 7:25-26)*

WHILE I DO NOT ALWAYS KNOW when God is trying to speak to me, I do always know when I am actively avoiding God's presence in my life. This verse from Jeremiah reminded me of all the times I have ignored (and still ignore) God in favor of my own plans. Many times, I have thought I had it all figured out—so much so that I silenced God's voice, rather than obey it.

However, each time, God has found a way to break through my stubbornness, introducing people and places into my narrative who shone with the spark of the Divine. As with Christ and the prophets who came before him, some of these encounters were with the most unexpected people. Each time I "stiffened my neck," God reminded me of the Creator's presence.

This Lent, may we take time to listen and pay attention for when God sends the servants and prophets to us, day after day. May we not have stiffened necks, and instead look for God in the most unlikely people and places. May we remember—and trust—that God has promised to be our God, and that we are God's people.

*Anna Page is in the ordination process for the priesthood in the Diocese of Massachusetts, a student at Duke Divinity School, and a First Lieutenant in the United States Army. She is sponsored by St. Andrew's for ordination and still considers it her church home.*

## Friday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 29, 2019

*One of the scribes came near and heard Jesus and the Sadducees disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31)*

WE ARE ALL IMPATIENT FOR CONCISION. We want to cut to the chase and get to the heart of the matter. What's important, what's dross? What do I really need to know, right now?

In today's readings, Jesus provides us a set of CliffsNotes on what all this God-stuff is about: Love God with everything you've got, and love your neighbor as yourself. The first one is a steep ask; the second one, even more so. Love God with all my heart? Love all my neighbors?

Carrying out those two commandments seems impossible if I rely on my efforts alone. No matter how hard I try to squeeze out love for the "neighbor" who steals my parking spot, cuts me off in traffic, or votes for the other party in an election, I'm going to fall far short. I'm only human. The secret I have found is that I can do these things only with God's help. It is only when I stop, turn my heart over to God, and invite Christ to love through me that I can fulfill these two most important commandments.

*Kenneth Graves lives in Wellesley with his wife, Jill Allen, and his two boys, Owen and Colin. His family has belonged to St. Andrew's since 2006.*

## Saturday in the Third Week of Lent

### March 30, 2019

*You have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*  
(Psalm 51:16-17)

TODAY'S READINGS ARE AN IMPORTANT reminder to me of what true worship entails. Especially blessed with extraordinary privilege and material benefits as I am, it is very easy for me to slip into a sense of lazy entitlement and self-righteousness, following rituals based only upon rules and custom. I find the ceremonies of many faiths very compelling and feel great spiritual inspiration from worship. But, as Psalm 51 reminds us, worship without love of God is hollow and selfish.

The Scriptures also remind us that we are all equal before God, in sin and in virtue. True faith, honest repentance, and sincere worship come from a humble spirit. In today's reading from the Gospel of Luke, Jesus warns, "All who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Humility is hard and contrary to much of what our culture values, and I have a long way to go to achieve it. Am I able to humble myself and worship God with a broken and contrite heart? Lent is a time for each of us to reflect on the sincerity of our faith.

*Joe Hamilton is recently retired from a career in international insurance, now with more time to dedicate to St. Andrew's and international interests. He and his family have been members of St. Andrew's since moving to Wellesley in 1995, and Joe has taught church school, assisted with youth group trips, and is a long-term lay Eucharistic minister, currently coordinating the scheduling of the LEM team.*

## Fourth Sunday in Lent

### March 31, 2019

*All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)*

DURING MY CHILDHOOD, I attended a church where the Lord's Prayer was always followed by the words, "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy, keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ." It is a wonderful prayer, and an understandable wish that we might ask our merciful God to steer us in the right direction during our lives, such that we can enjoy the peace of knowing that we are giving all we can in the service of others.

Paul's words to the Corinthians are comforting to me because, although we all desire to be free from sin and to live as God wishes, we often fall short. The Scripture provides a reminder that God doesn't focus on our trespasses. God loves us, despite our flaws, and trusts us to forever try our best to improve.

*Karin Breedis is a parishioner, wife, and mother. She is a volunteer teacher for the kindergarten students at St. Andrew's.*

## Monday in the Fourth Week of Lent

### April 1, 2019

*Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own country. (John 4:44)*

THE PEOPLE OF NAZARETH STRUGGLED to recognize Jesus as a prophet. Their attitude was: Jesus is one of us. His mother and brothers live among us. How can he be so special? He's ordinary, like us. We are in his tribe; he comes from our hometown.

In the same way, each of us can become over-familiar and too comfortable in our relationship with God. It is easy to slip into a place where we dishonor Jesus and his teachings because we can take cover in calling ourselves Christians. This can lead us to overconfidence, especially if we believe that we know all there is to know about Christ and his teachings. If our knowledge of the faith becomes part of our comfort zone, it can hinder us from working harder to become better followers of Jesus.

We need to challenge ourselves to look for deeper—and perhaps more discomfiting—ways of being Christian, and to understand our obligations as Christians as we live each day. Calling ourselves Christians is not enough; we need to constantly reach further into Christ's teachings and seek to understand the meaning of his life, so that he can become a fuller part of ours.

*Dave Boghosian has been a member of St. Andrew's for 20 years. His two sons, Rich and Jim, were confirmed in the parish. He serves as an usher and is active in Bargain Haul, the nominating committee, and the men's book club.*

## Tuesday in the Fourth Week of Lent

### April 2, 2019

*God is in the midst of her; she shall not be overthrown; God shall help her at the break of day. (Psalm 46:6)*

IN THIS VERSE, the psalmist is referring to the earth as “she” and reassuring us that, no matter how much tumult the world is in, the Lord of Hosts is present and caring. These days, I find myself worrying a lot about the state of the earth and how human activities are affecting the health of our planet. What will my future grandchildren face for challenges in their lives, in unpredictable weather, sea levels rising, or reduced natural resources?

I also think a lot about changes in families and communities as I observe my 10-year-old students. Increasingly, my colleagues and I find that we have to explicitly teach traits that most of our fourth-graders used to have, like empathy, cooperation, and delayed gratification. What will our future society look like if people are becoming more self-centered and isolated?

The reassurance of the writer of Psalm 46 gives me comfort. I don’t need to know how God is in the midst of our world and community, just that God is here, and will be here forever to help us. The strength of God in each one of us promises that we “shall not be overthrown.”

*Cam McCormick is a fourth-grade special education teacher in the Weston Public Schools. Since 1992, she and her family have attended St. Andrew’s, where they find a strong spiritual home.*

## Wednesday in the Fourth Week of Lent April 3, 2019

*Jesus said to the Jews, "Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished." (John 5:19-20)*

LIKE MANY, I'VE WORKED HARD to be independent since moving out of my parents' home too many years ago to count. It is a struggle for me to not make decisions or do things myself. Today's reading helps us to understand how Jesus is dependent on the Father. Moreover, he does nothing independently of the Father; the work of Jesus is the work of the Father. As an independent adult, I find it challenging to consider becoming as dependent as the reading suggests—even if that dependence is on God.

Upon reflection, my family's move from Pennsylvania to Massachusetts in 2017 brought with it a stronger connection to God. A job opportunity in Needham meant a career change, uprooting friendships, moving away from family, and increased uncertainty—not only for me, but for all of us. Our relationships with and dependence on God have never been stronger. Through this dependence, we've made new friends, have joined new communities, and have all grown spiritually.

We all depend on ourselves and other people. Following in Jesus' way, we can grow in our conscious dependence on the Father. And when we do, we will observe the Father's great works in our lives.

*Greg Urban lives in Needham and has attended St. Andrew's with his family since late 2017. He is the proud father of Carolyn (13), Janie (10) and George (3), husband to Coryell, and works in the software industry. Greg attends St. Andrew's and recently attended his first Coventry Supper.*

## Thursday in the Fourth Week of Lent

### April 4, 2019

*But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people. (Exodus 32:11, 14)*

IN TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READING, God is incensed that his children have turned from him after all he has done to rescue, protect, and provide for them. The only thing that spares his people from annihilation is the plea of Moses. At first, I found this passage confusing. Why would God, as powerful as he is, take into account the advice of a mortal man?

Although this passage also warns against disobeying God, it reveals another one of his truths to us: Our prayers matter; talking with God matters. Whether we ask for very little or for something monumental, God hears our prayers and takes them into account as he shapes our lives. Especially during Lent, when we try to pray more often, we may think that God does not hear us. *Surely he has more important things to do, we say, instead of listening to someone so insignificant.* This passage proves that notion false.

In this age of polarization and disaster, it is important to remember that God hears us—and, more importantly, he listens. Remember this Lent, and always, that your prayers are not in vain. God cares, he listens, and he will respond in his own time.

*Emma Barry is a freshman at the Montrose School in Medfield and a competitive dancer. She was confirmed as an Episcopalian this fall, and she serves as an acolyte and teaches kindergarten church school at St. Andrew's.*

## Friday in the Fourth Week of Lent

### April 5, 2019

*They reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves, "Short and sorrowful is our life." (Wisdom 2:1)*

IN THIS INFORMATION-DRIVEN AGE, it is easy to focus all our attention on the present moment, ignoring the past and the future in favor of the here and now. The intensity of this focus can overwhelm our sensibilities and lead us to pessimism. We are bombarded by so many demands and distractions that it can be difficult to remember and accept into our lives the words of today's collect: "O God, you have given us the Good News of your abounding love in your Son Jesus Christ."

To embrace this Good News of abounding love, God requires us to do only two things. We must believe in the salvation with which we are gifted—our faith. And we must realize that this salvation comes to us not on our own terms, but as a gift from God—his grace. The knowledge and understanding of these two central tenets of Christianity, faith and grace, is what frees us from a "short and sorrowful life."

*David Steele and his family have been St. Andrew's parishioners for 20 years. It is their spiritual home, where they have found many friends.*

## Saturday in the Fourth Week of Lent

### April 6, 2019

*It was the Lord who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds. But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. And I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered!" But you, O Lord of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind, let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. (Jeremiah 11:18-20)*

RECENTLY, I'VE FELT SUCH DESPAIR about what is happening around me—a sense of powerlessness to exert any influence in the world. I think especially about the rash of mass murders which have occurred over the past few years.

Although Jeremiah's plea was in a different context, much of it speaks to me in a way that brings some comfort. For the consciously "devised schemes" that "led gentle lambs to slaughter," "cutting them off from the land of the living," all we can do is share our pain with God, asking him to do what only he can do—judge and impose retribution. Another of the readings for this day, Psalm 7, echoes this sentiment: "Bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure."

*Jane Givens has been enjoying retirement as the best job she's ever had! She is a former two-term treasurer of St. Andrew's and an eight o'clock usher, counter, and knitter.*

## Fifth Sunday in Lent

### April 7, 2019

*The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.  
(Psalm 126:4)*

I GREW UP NOT GOING TO CHURCH, as neither of my parents are religious, so I never went to Sunday school and had no early understanding of God. After I made the decision to get baptized in the Episcopal Church in Baltimore at age 29, I continued to have a very private experience of religion. Even now, I still sometimes feel like I'm "winging it."

This summer, I went through a difficult time, and at one point I faced a lot of stress about how I pray. My major dilemma was: *How can I "put God first" when I don't know what God's will is or what the future holds—and what if the future is full of really bad things?* Given my limited religious background, I couldn't figure it out.

One Sunday morning at church, Cat noticed that I was stressed and came to sit and talk with me when the service ended. I told Cat my dilemma, and she said, "Prayer shouldn't cause you stress. God loves you and supports you and your family." Over the next few months, we met several times. She helped me rearrange the wording in my prayers, and now praying is a wonderful experience. I know that God was behind this series of events, and for him (and Cat) I am so grateful. God does great things for us.

*Elke Cardella has been a member of St. Andrew's for eight years and has taught church school for four years. She lives in Wellesley, has a six-year-old boy and a ten-year-old girl, and enjoys her job as a real estate agent, as well as running, yoga, sewing, and board games.*

# Feast of St. Joseph

## April 8, 2019

*Jesus spoke to the people, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)*

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, my dad introduced me to a book called *The Lantern Bearers*, by Rosemary Sutcliffe. It was a special book, and one that allowed me to share in my father's love of history. In its pages, I got lost in a fictional story that takes place in Britain as Rome is falling—but it was also one of the first times I really thought about my own mortality and the impact one person can make on the world in the brief moment we are here. One of my favorite passages is:

"It may be that the night will close over us in the end, but I believe that morning will come again ... We are the Lantern Bearers, my friend; for us to keep something burning, to carry what light we can forward into the darkness and the wind."

If Christ is the light of the world, then we are his lantern bearers, carrying forward what light we can. My dad fulfilled a lifelong dream and walked Hadrian's Wall this past fall, walking in the book's protagonist's footsteps, all the while feeling the presence of something much bigger than himself. Was it God? Maybe I'll just have to go and find out for myself one day.

*Amanda Kern is a mother, singer and music teacher with over 16 years of experience in public and private education. She is the director of the St. Andrew's junior choir and Christmas pageant, brings music experiences to the church school and Kids' Place on a weekly basis, and sings with the senior choir when time permits.*

## Tuesday in the Fifth Week of Lent

### April 9, 2019

*He will look with favor on the prayer of the homeless; he will not despise their plea. (Psalm 102:17)*

MY FRIENDS WHO ARE NOT RELIGIOUSLY OBSERVANT sometimes ask why I go to church. While it is a simple question, the answer is complex and difficult for me to fully articulate. I often fall back on saying, “How can an hour spent contemplating peace, love and forgiveness be anything but time well spent?” or “Hard to argue with spending time thinking about the Ten Commandments—where else do we talk to our kids about those values?”

Having been through this conversation enough times, the most common rebuttal is that we can integrate these things into our lives without a structured worship experience. True, but I would contend that most of us don’t. The line from Psalm 102 regarding the prayers of the homeless provides a good example of how weekly worship brings empathy into our thinking. I’m hopeful that, by making space for reflection, I will live my life in a manner more consistent with our Christian values.

*Bill Wiberg lives in Wellesley with his wife, Lynda Sperry, and is the father of two daughters, Holly and Wendy. He serves St. Andrew’s as an usher and supports Lynda in her many church activities.*

## Wednesday in the Fifth Week of Lent

### April 10, 2019

*Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31)*

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, it was hard for me to understand the relationship between God and church. I saw St. Andrew's as a place for me to build friendships and grow in community, but not as a place that had much of a role in building my connection to my faith. But as I've grown older and have become more involved, whether as an acolyte or a member of the youth group, I have started to find a deeper connection to God.

As I entered my teenage years, I began to recognize the importance of my faith. I started to better understand what was being communicated in worship services, became more and more aware of God's role in my life, and began really involving myself in my community. As my fellow youth members started to believe, so did I, and I have grown up so much through trusting God.

*Kelly Rawson is a junior at Wellesley High School. She serves as an acolyte in church and is an active participant in the St. Andrew's youth group.*

## Thursday in the Fifth Week of Lent

### April 11, 2019

*Search for the Lord and his strength; continually seek his face. Remember the marvels he has done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth. (Psalm 105:4-5)*

IN TODAY'S READING, I feel the power and grace of God's gift to us. I, like many, am busy with the needs and requirements of daily life, and this psalm reminds me to pause and see our miraculous world. I may be in the mountains of Vermont or walking down a street in town, but in either place, the blue sky, majestic trees and the sound of birds remind me of the wonderfully complex gift we have been given.

When I think about this, I am reminded that we are stewards of the earth. God's gift to us, as his promise to us, was for all the generations that have come before and for all the generations that will come after.

*David Welch and his wife Lisa Onorato live in Natick and have been members of St. Andrew's since 1999. David is a member of the finance committee.*

## Friday in the Fifth Week of Lent

### April 12, 2019

*My God, my rock in whom I put my trust, my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge; you are worthy of praise. (Psalm 18:2)*

THIS VERSE HELPS ME RECALL my belief in God's infinite love for all of us. Having total trust in God's love, I believe that I am always protected, and if harm or sadness does come to me, God will save me. This faith is very important to me in everyday life when I am faced with the challenges of school and other events.

Secondly, I believe that I should always thank God and offer my full devotion and love to God. When I pray, I like to thank God for everything in my life before I ask for help with my fears or with accomplishing my goals, or to just barely survive a hard physics test. I feel so fortunate when I compare myself to other people in the world that I especially feel the need to thank God and pray for the troubles of others. I feel that I owe God my full love, devotion and praise, as well as my commitment to not only live the best life I can for myself and my family, but also to help other people, individually and by serving my community.

*Karina Cowperthwaite is a senior at the Noble and Greenough School in Dedham. She serves as a crucifer at St. Andrew's.*

## Saturday in the Fifth Week of Lent

### April 13, 2019

*You have withdrawn all your fury and turned yourself from your wrathful indignation. Show us your mercy, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. (Psalm 85:3, 7)*

AS I READ THROUGH PSALM 85, I focused on the sentence about turning away from wrathful indignation. That phrase, “wrathful indignation,” resonated with me. We are told in the psalm that the Lord has done this; he has turned away from anger, and is now being asked to show mercy.

How frequently in our lives do we succumb to indignation and anger? At this time of political turmoil, our wrath can be close to the surface, exploding in many of our interactions. In our hectic lives, even seemingly small things like being cut off in traffic or being kept on hold on the phone for too long can cause us to experience exasperation that can become anger. Making the decision to turn away from these emotions and turn to mercy is not always easy to do. We need God’s help.

Lent is a time when we try to focus our minds and hearts toward God. Could part of our Lenten discipline be relinquishing the anger that rises too quickly in our daily lives and spills over, tainting our relationships? Could we endeavor to be more merciful and forgiving?

*Ann Schwarz and her husband Tom live in Wellesley. They enjoy having three of their four children and six of their eight granddaughters living nearby. Ann has worshipped at St. Andrew’s for over 50 years. All of Ann and Tom’s children were confirmed there.*

## **Palm Sunday**

### **April 14, 2019**

*Jesus sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this: 'The Lord needs it.'" (Luke 19:29-31)*

I LOVE PALM SUNDAY. At my church back home in Jamaica, it is a spirit-filled morning, when the whole congregation waves around palm fronds and shouts of "Hosanna!" fill the air as we welcome Jesus into Jerusalem.

I think an important part of Jesus' entering into Jerusalem occurs moments before, when a couple of disciples go to find him an unridden colt. Their immediate obedience always blows me away. They are doing something that, to onlookers, may seem a bit odd. Yet they do it with confidence, simply because Jesus requires it of them.

Jesus requires things of us every day: to walk with him, to pray, to read our Bibles. It's sometimes tempting to compromise on these tasks when we don't feel motivated, or when we know that onlookers may find it odd that we spend our time doing "stuff like that."

This Palm Sunday, I challenge each of us not to procrastinate on our walk with God just because we don't feel inspired, or because others may think it odd. Instead, let us remind ourselves that there is only one motivation we need to do these things, following the example of the disciples: "The Lord needs it."

*Lia James, now in her second year at Wellesley College, has truly found a wonderful home with St. Andrew's that is not unlike her own St. Andrew Parish Church in Jamaica. She feels so, so blessed to have been welcomed into this amazing community of believers. She thoroughly enjoys being a fourth-Sunday acolyte, and otherwise regularly attending the ten o'clock service.*

## Monday in Holy Week

### April 15, 2019

*Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. But Judas Iscariot said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." (John 12:3-5, 7-8)*

I OFTEN NEED A REMINDER TO STOP AND APPRECIATE the people that God has put into my life. Today's Gospel reading illustrates that the disciples may have needed a reminder, as well. Until Mary anointed the feet of Jesus, I suspect that this dinner gathering at her brother Lazarus' house seemed routine for some: yet another post-miracle follow-up visit in a busy schedule of healing and raising the dead. Some in the group may have been more interested in seeing Lazarus than Jesus. Jesus stops the conversation when he reminds his friends, "You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

In recent moments in my own life, God has reminded me to break from my ordinary routine and to appreciate those with whom I am connected: my father's 80th birthday celebration, my daughter's preparation to leave home through her college selection process, and the retirement of a longtime boss and mentor, to name a few.

Rev. Cat's dismissal blessing, now even more poignant as she herself leaves for bigger and better things, sums this up well: "Life is short, and we have too little time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us."

*Bruce MacKinnon is a third-generation member of the parish and a proud graduate of the St. Andrew's church school. He attends the ten o'clock service regularly and can be found enjoying his time with generations two and four in the second pew from the back.*

## Tuesday in Holy Week

### April 16, 2019

*But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. (1 Corinthians 1:28-30)*

AS I REFLECTED ON THIS PASSAGE, I realized the significance of equality in the presence of God. Some people may be smart, strong or widely admired, but to God, that really does not matter. He used the foolish, the weak, and the low to prove a point that we are not to boast about ourselves. In God's eyes, everyone is equal; therefore, everyone should be treated the same. No one is better than anyone else.

In modern days, this principle seems to have vanished under a society full of competition and desire for success. Recently, my friends and I have gone through the college process, bragging about ourselves to people we have never met, rather than focusing on the activities that mean the most to us. Yet this passage reminds us to be humble. We all are blessed with God's gifts.

During this season of Lent, I will reflect on what it means to be humble and appreciative of what we've been given. I believe that God wants us all to strive to be the best forms of ourselves that we can, not the best in the eyes of others.

*Maggie Donahue is a senior at Wellesley High School, where she participates in cross-country and track. She has served as an acolyte for the past four years.*

## Wednesday in Holy Week

### April 17, 2019

*Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed. (Collect of the Day)*

UNFORTUNATELY, WE SOMETIMES FACE personal challenges that feel insurmountable, or we learn that someone we love is sick, or we read about a stranger who is struggling. It's during these times that I frequently turn to God and ask for his help and guidance. However, today's collect reminds me that there is something else I could remember and learn during these difficult situations.

I find the choice of words in the collect interesting. Should we really accept our sufferings "joyfully"? I certainly hope not. Instead, I think the words are a reminder that we should be practicing many of God's other teachings. We need patience to understand that what we originally hoped for may not happen exactly as we wanted it to (or happen at all). We can find joy in lending a loving hand to those in need of help, giving our time and treasures. Lastly, periods of suffering can be a time to listen and connect more thoughtfully with God.

I wonder if this is when the true glory is revealed to us and those around us—when we practice the wonderful lessons of love.

*Nicole Goodnow-Hussey and her family have been members of St. Andrew's since 1991. She and her husband recently moved to Wellesley and look forward to becoming more involved with our great community.*

## Maundy Thursday

### April 18, 2019

*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. (John 13:34)*

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO IN LONDON, I took part in an inter-faith meeting attended by members of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim faiths. The focus of the meeting was the perspective that different faiths brought to the human understanding of the nature of God or the Divine. It was very interesting to hear a Buddhist monk say that the great Christian contribution to humans' understanding of God is that love permeates the nature of God.

On Maundy Thursday, we remember the call of Jesus to Christians to make that divine love permeate our own human lives. The name *Maundy* comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means "command." At the Last Supper, Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment: to love each other as he had loved them. During his earthly life, Jesus had shown them that God's love knows no limits. It involves not only unmerited forgiveness, but love of people across all barriers, even love of our enemies.

The memory of that interfaith meeting many years ago has always stayed with me, because it seemed so fitting to be reminded by a member of a different faith about the core teaching of Jesus on the limitless nature of God's love.

*Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole has been the rector of St. Andrew's since 2013. Adrian and his wife Sarah celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on January 1 this year.*

## Good Friday

### April 19, 2019

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ... Our forefathers put their trust in you. (Psalm 22:1, 4)*

WHY DO WE CALL TODAY “GOOD” FRIDAY? I find myself asking that question every year. Today, as a congregation, we brace ourselves and wade together through the betrayal, shame, pain, and despair of the crucifixion. This is the day that shatters.

Living in a world which can shatter our own lives, so many of us live in fear, regret, and sadness. Crime, suicides, eating disorders, hatred, violence, broken relationships, illness, greed, and selfishness stalk the human family.

But in the book *Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life*, Archbishop Rowan Williams promises us that there is “an endless endurance in God’s love ... Beyond every failure, God’s creative mercy waits.” God’s transforming love brings new life out of death. Resurrection happens to Christ once and for all, but its transforming power ripples out across time and space. God longs to bring new life to us, too.

Today is the ugly start of a divine promise: Unimaginable life can come out of death. That is why we call today Good Friday.

*Rev. Margaret K. Schwarzer is the associate rector for adult formation and membership. This year, she is cheering for her son Ben’s soccer team at Brookline High School and has taken her workouts at the gym more seriously. (Gotta stay in shape for the Turkey Trot.) 2018’s joys: Ben was confirmed at St. Andrew’s, and stepdaughter Rachel was married.*

## Holy Saturday

### April 20, 2019

*O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*  
(Collect of the Day)

TODAY IS THE EASTER VIGIL—a time of waiting. Just as Mary waited at the foot of the cross, and Joseph of Arimathea waited to prepare Jesus' body for burial, we await the risen Christ and wonder what it means for us to "rise with Him to newness of life."

Waiting is difficult: It takes patience and trust that new life can happen. In the book *Praying Our Goodbyes*, author Joyce Rupp states that before we can say hello to new life, we must first say goodbye to that which we have lost. Loss needs prayerful consideration, and goodbyes take time.

As we prepare to observe the Easter Vigil, may we remember to whom we belong—the God of love, who helps guide us from suffering and loss to new life. May we also take the time to "pray our goodbyes"—those in our individual lives, and for the God who suffered an excruciating human death. Jesus taught us how to live and die, and has promised to lead us through death to newness of life. And so we await the first light of Easter, with great expectation for the moment when we will proclaim: "Alleluia. Christ is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia."

*Rev. Karen Vickers Budney is the pastoral associate at St. Andrew's. She was sponsored for ordination by St. Andrew's and ordained a priest 27 years ago. She and her husband, Al, have two children: Alex (with wife Sarah and son Finn) Budney, and Caroline (with husband Gregg and son Neal) Zimmerman.*

## Easter Sunday

### April 21, 2019

*Supposing Jesus to be the gardener, Mary Magdalene said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). (John 20:15-16)*

READING THIS PASSAGE, I am never sure whether John intends it to be funny or heartbreaking. It is comical: Mary Magdalene sees her friend out of context and mistakes him for the gardener. It is devastating: She is wrecked by grief for Jesus, distraught at the disappearance of his body, and so overwhelmed and exhausted that she can look him straight in the eye and not realize he is right there, looking back at her.

I find it a bit too easy to identify with Mary Magdalene here. No matter how much I long to see the face of Jesus, I sometimes have trouble noticing his presence in my life—especially at times of grief or loss, when I am too distressed to notice that he is present with me.

But the beautiful moment in this part of the story comes when Jesus calls Mary by name. Even when she cannot recognize him, he still recognizes and loves her, and his love restores her to herself. This is part of the promise of Easter—that in Jesus, we worship a God who knows us, loves us, and calls us each by name.

*Rev. Catherine (Cat) Healy is the rector of the Church of St. Paul & the Redeemer in Chicago. She had the extraordinary good fortune of serving as the assistant rector at St. Andrew's from 2015 to 2019, and reminds you that the next time you are visiting Chicago on a Sunday morning, you know where to find her.*







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