



Lent 2022

Dear Friends,

One could, I think, make the argument that each of us is always in the process of preparation: preparation for new challenges, a new career perhaps, or a marriage, or parenthood, or maybe grandparenthood. We are in a time of preparation today for what we will want or need to be tomorrow. Sometimes that prep is enabled by a course of study like high school or college, or some training program designed to increase our skills and insight. Even rehabilitation after a medical procedure is a step into the future of new challenges and opportunities. In every case, we Christians believe it is God's initiative, God's intention, to transform us into new and able people who can navigate new challenges faithfully and usefully. God manages this process of transformation through love, inspiration, and endlessly creating opportunities for us to discover.

Lent is such a preparatory process. Maybe think of it as 'spiritual rehab.' God is ready and willing to meet with us spiritually every day to transform our weakness into strength through exercises and disciplines designed for disciples. And, though our past is always with us, Lent's intended purpose is to prepare us well for a better future. It's tempting, isn't it, to constantly look back over our shoulders wishing for a better past? But what's done is done. None of it should discourage us from hoping for transformation, or from trusting that God can make it happen if that's what we sincerely want. Seasonally, Lent begins with confessing and asking for forgiveness on Ash Wednesday, admitting that we need rehab, and then ceremoniously becoming complete on Easter Sunday each year. But, of course, Easter isn't exactly a 'graduation' from the Lenten program, but rather a reminder that transformative resurrection is always possible with God. As I said, one could make the case, after all, that each of us is always in process and preparation.

The key to Lenten rehab, in my humble opinion, is prayer. Prayer is the exercise and discipline of disciples. True, God may well have the almighty power to intervene and change us in spite of ourselves, but lasting change comes from deepened relationships. God can't completely transform us unless we are willing to participate in the process and discern God's wise intentions. Prayer is the essential tool for building a relationship with the Divine Source. Now, prayer takes many forms, and is often as much about listening as it is anything else. But whatever exercise helps you to reach out to God is certainly part of the curriculum. And, though Lent is a time for some humble reflection, don't look back over your shoulder to find God, but rather look ahead boldly, with confidence that you can complete this step of the training. Pray for deliverance, pray for transformation, pray for new life, and pray with reassurance. And, hey, let's do it together! *Nick+*

Treasured 2013 reflections about St. John's by Sue Miller

Forty Five years ago, when Ed was hired by VVS, we were house hunting. As we drove into Oneida after one of those lovely soft snows, the sun was sparkling, and the lovely old Victorian homes on Main St. looked beautiful. We came through the light at Walnut St., and Ed stopped when he saw this building. The red door, this red door, seemed to be inviting. A young woman was unloading her groceries and her three kids were running around playing in the new snow. Ed helped her carry bags into the Rectory as her husband pulled in the driveway behind us. He invited us into the Parish Hall and on into the newly redone Chapin Room where we talked about St. John's. He was so proud that the people in this congregation had just completed caring petitions for a bond to build the new hospital. Having come from a very quiet parish not involved in the community at all, we were excited at the prospect of belonging to a church family like this one. That's what we did and we were warmly welcomed by a conderful congregation in this church.

A year later, our Debbie was scheduled for open heart surgery in New York City, but 10 days before that my Dad died after a long battle with cancer. The night we came home from an emotional trip to our New Jersey family home, we received a call from Ed's brother that their father had died not long after we had left. We were faced with having to return to New Jersey to deal with the very unexpected death of Ed's dad, gathering medical records and X-rays to take with us for Debbie's upcoming surgery, pack for a longer stay, and collect school material for the three children. This was when we felt the deep impact of what it means to have a church family—a church family like this. One of our St. John's friends offered to pay for airline tickets to spare us the long drive back with the kids, others brought food, our dear Veterinarian from St. John's offered to take our cat while we were gone. Others called to see what could be done to help us. When we returned from Dad Miller's funeral and Debbie's very successful heart surgery, again people from this congregation reached out to us in many supportive ways, upholding us in prayer and enabling us to move forward.

All three of our children were confirmed here, in this place. Debbie and Michelle were married here, in this place. Our Eddie was buried from this place, his church home. Deb and Michelle even brought their first babies back to St. John's for their baptisms because this was their church home. Our faith has grown in this community of faith and because of this community of faith.

Each of us here has stories to share, connections to this parish and to one another in our church family. We have memories of joy, of grief, and lots of humor because this is what our faith journey includes. We also have dreams of what the future of our church family could become. We, all of us, need one another and the outer community needs this church to be an effective agent of change and growth for the future.

Editor note: We were saddened to say goodbye to both Ed and most recently Sue since this was written. They were very active members of our parish and we are thankful for all the dedication and love they gave this parish over the many years. So glad the sunshine pointed the way for them to St. John's. We are very blessed.

Upcoming Lenten Observances

Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday party will be next week, March 1, in the parish hall (which, by the way, marks its 100th birthday that same day) from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Masking is encouraged. Father Nick will be there to burn palms outdoors. Bring any dried-up old ones

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday services will be March 2 in the church at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. with imposition of ashes for the penitent. The 6 pm service will include Holy Communion



Upcoming Choral Concert:

A concert will be held on May 22, 2022 featuring the following songs: We are the Music Makers, How Can I Keep from Singing, Music makes me feel alive. Thank you for the Music and many more.

If you are interested in singing with the group for this concert, they are taking registration information. Please let either Ann Hodgins or Sandy Alysworth know and they can provide you with a registration form.

If you're not interested in joining, you can always attend the concerts. Mark the date and check with either Ann or Sandy about tickets.

Pennies on the Sidewalk

(article taken from a newspaper years ago - don't remember which one)

You always hear the unusual stories of pennies on the sidewalk being good luck, gifts from angels, etc. This is the first time I've ever heard this twist in the story. Give you something to think about...

Several years ago, a friend of mine and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. My friend Arlene was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy with a fine home on the waterway and cars costing more than her house.

As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant that evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of Arlene and her husband. He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long silent moment.

Arlene wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigar butts. Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny.



He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?

Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been of some value. A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before! What was the point of this? "Look at it," he said. "Read what it says." She read the words "United States of America." "No, not that, read further." "One cent?" "No, keep reading." "In God we Trust?" Yes and?

He explained "and if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin. Whenever I find a coin I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it. God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him. Who am I to pass it by? When I see a coin I pray. I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick up the coin as my response to God; that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Luckily for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful.

When I was out shopping today I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up and realized that I had been worrying and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words "In God we Trust" and had to laugh. Yes, God I get the message.

It seems that I have been finding an inordinate number of pennies in the last few months, but then pennies are plentiful.

Ministry Participant Schedule March through Easter 2022

	March 13	March 20	March 27	April 3	April 10	April 17
Celebrant	Nick+	Nick+	Nick+	Nick+	Nick+	Nick+
Preacher	Joe	Nick+	Nick+	Nick+	Joe	Nick+
LEM	Peter	Colette	Leslie	Colette	Gloria	Peter
Organist	Colleen H.	Colleen H.	Pat B.	Colleen H.	Colleen H.	Colleen H.
1st Lesson	Anne	Val	Gale	Gloria	Bob	Kelly B.
2nd Lesson	Leslie	Shelly	Laura	Beth	Shelly	Susan
Acolyte	Shelly	Stan	Val	Shelly	Stan	Sarah
Ushers	Gisela/Bob	Shelly/ Suzanne	Beth/Birdy	Suzanne/ Gisela	Bob/Anne	Beth/Birdy
Computer	Leslie	Kelly B	Kelly B	Marc A	Kelly B	Susan
Camera	Colette	Gale	Bob	Gale	Colette	Bob
Altar Guild	Ann/Leslie	Ann/Leslie	Ann/Leslie	Val/Shelly/ Kelly	Val/Shelly/ Kelly	Val/Shelly/ Kelly
Counters	Leslie/Kelly B	Leslie/Kelly B	Leslie/Kelly B	Stan/Peter	Stan/Peter	Stan/Peter
Coffee Hr						
St. Pauly's Box	Stan	Stan	Stan	Mark Z	Mark Z	Mark Z

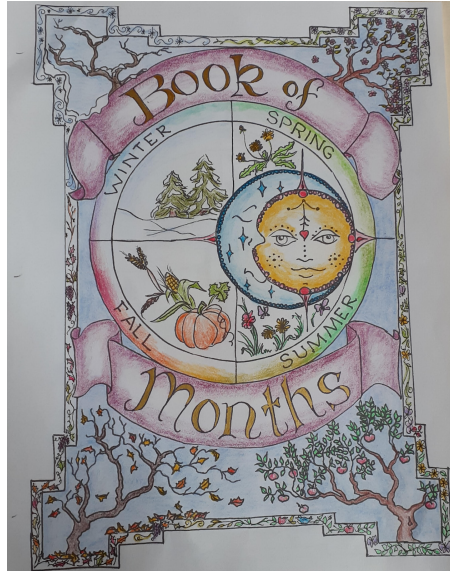
Baptism Blessings!



Gracelyn Bruno, Norita Kane's great granddaughter, was baptized at the Crosswinds Church in Leland, NC.

One of Our Own Publishes a Book

Ann Hodgins recently finished a book that she has published. Congrats on this wonderful accomplishment. Below is a picture of the book. If you have any interest in this—please contact Ann and she can give you details.



Upcoming Issues of Evangelist:

April 9th—for Easter Season
June 4th—for Pentecost and Summer
August 27th –for Fall
November 5th—for Advent/Christmas

Deadline for articles will be two days prior to these dates.
We appreciate all of the articles that were given to us and look forward to the many more that will be shared in the future.

ENJOY!!

Colette Coppola and Colleen Kahler—Co-Editors

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Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe

Rector: The Very Rev. Arthur W. Smith

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Parish Administrator: Leslie Zebrowski

Treasurer: Jack MacMullen

Clerk of the Vestry: Valerie Hill

Senior Warden: Peter Slaunwhite

Junior Warden: Gloria Wilkins

Vestry:

Sandra Aylesworth

Sheila Aylesworth

Suzanne Bauer

Valerie Hill

Garry Hirst

Ann Hodgins

Kellie Highers

Leanne Youngkrans

Bob Wilkins

Loving God, by your grace you have gathered us from many walks of life to become a loving family at St. John's. Help us to sustain the miraculous love within this parish, and guide us in sharing this love with our neighbors. All this we ask through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Website: stjohnsoneida.org