

THE CANTERBURY TALES

JANUARY 2016



FR. MARK'S MUSINGS

Dear friends in Christ,

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever.

I am constantly encouraged by the hope and faith demonstrated by so many of you. It is up lifting to my spirit and I am privileged to work with you to develop and grow the church in this exciting and challenging time. And indeed there are challenges ranging from parking lot and driveway replacement and repair to computer hardware and software needs. From our out-reach program(s) and how people can live out their faith to how we worship. And how do we welcome new and younger people to our life of faith.

Some of our challenges seem absolutely daunting, impossible, or at least improbable that we can overcome them. How are we going to survive let alone grow especially considering our financial deficit? Well, I will tell you how. (But I'm sure you guessed that's where I was going with this anyway.) I started this letter with Paul's closing line to his second letter to the Christians in Corinth. But perhaps the line that precedes the verse above is a good place to start.



11 Finally, brothers and sisters,^{*} farewell.^{*} Put things in order, listen to my appeal,^{*} agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth to tell them not to lose heart. They should persevere and keep up the work of Christ. In short, he told them to be the body of Christ. (It was in Corinth that Paul developed his concept of the body of Christ and that all the body parts needed one another.) Therefore they need to work together not just to be Christ, but to serve Christ by loving one another and service others. Paul's words are just as appropriate to us today.

Agree with one another. Paul certainly does not mean we must all agree on everything we say and do, that is not realistic. But I'm sure he does mean that when the church has discerned a particular policy or direction, that all members get behind and support that effort. To live in peace means to respect one another and speak honestly and openly. We do not have to agree, but without mutual respect we are nothing but a group of individuals doing whatever we please and the whole body cannot grow. If we can follow Paul's advice from two thousand years ago (talk about traditional!) and we can love one another, greet one another with the peace of God and respect the will of the group, even if we disagree, then there will be little we can't overcome.

And I know we are getting better and better at this. I know by looking at the results. So here's some info. In the past two years we have accomplished 20 of 28 items on our "to do" list for the building and office. The new furnaces were accomplished by the giving of the congregation. The other 20 were accomplished by donations from inside and outside the parish and the personal contribution of time and talent by several parishioners. They include things like repairing and painting the doors at the east end of the building, fixing and painting bathrooms, cutting down trees, gardening, tuck pointing, and window repairs. There is more to go of course but we are making great progress at little or no expense.

As we consider our outreach ministries we have three wonderful examples on how to broaden our scope of ministries that will serve the community of Greendale. The first is the Canterbury Crafters. A group of women in and out of the church that have matched up the gift of knitting



with the needs of people who are homeless, in hospice care, or just need the loving touch of something made by someone who cares. Our pastoral care team is working on offering our incredible pastoral care gifts to people outside our church that they might be comforted by the good news in the form of a visit from someone who cares. I think it is important to recognize that St. Thomas of Canterbury has more people with the gift of pastoral care than those who need it. It became implicitly obvious that we had a gift to share without giving up anything at home. And finally, our magnificent choir has shared with us the gift of music. It is often said that singing is like praying twice. And our choir has so much to offer that they then reached out to the community to see who could benefit from the gift of music. The response was overwhelming and the gift matched the need perfectly. These are perfect examples of realizing a gift and matching it up with a need of the community. It is indeed being Christ to the community. These examples are an example by which we can begin other ministries here in Greendale and hopefully they will meet with the same success.

Another challenge before us is money. Believe it or not, financially we are on the right track. This year the diocesan loan will be paid off and that money will then go to paying off the line of credit which will be converted to a loan. Add to that our annual pledge drive has increased every year for the past four years. This year we have budgeted our lowest deficit in a very long time.

Liturgically we have made some changes like relocating the choir and a couple of pews to facilitate the use of the altar rail, and give us more flexibility for logistics as in the Palm Sunday procession and other special services. In addition, there has been one consistent request from all quarters of this congregation. Get more young people! I believe our outreach ministries and improved Christian Ed programs will accomplish that. But we must also look at our liturgy to see how we can best welcome them into the church. That includes the ongoing effort with our service bulletins that they provide succinct information, and the use of a variety of forms of the prayers of the people. We are always looking for ways to express our faith to the young while still respecting the traditions we hold dear.



When I take a look back at the accomplishments we have made and the work done by the renewal teams and the vestry, I am filled with awe at what can be done when we do come together and support one another. When the needs of the whole body become more important than the needs of any one individual, we can accomplish great things. And indeed I believe that we have just begun. I also believe that the future holds some amazing things for St. Thomas of Canterbury. We will not always agree, but as long as we continue to support the work of the whole, we will not just survive, we will thrive!!

I pray for a prosperous and wonderful new year for all of you as the church of Christ.

Peace always,

Fr. Mark





DEACON'S NEWS AND NOTES

“The beginning is the most important part of the work”
(Plato, philosopher)

Happy New Year!

I continue with my regular Fridays at Nicholson House, the diocesan office, (804 East Juneau) and again invite you to stop in for coffee and a tour. Periodically there are staff meetings/planning days and I go in to answer the phone and door – like January 6th.

We, on the Lifelong Christian Formation Committee, met with the Bishop on January 7th to discern its future direction.

On January 9th, some of us on the Commission on Ministry had an informational meeting for the two individuals considering a call to ordination. On January 13th we will meet with the Bishop to confirm its direction.

With The Rev'd Carla McCook's acceptance of a call to St. Margaret of Scotland in Sarasota, FL, I have been appointed as the new director of the Deacon Formation School and will be away from St. Thomas of Canterbury one weekend a month. This month I will be at the De Koven center Saturday/Sunday, January 23rd and 24th. Basically, my role is being present to the candidates and staff as well as facilitating the separate parts of the program. Please keep us in your prayers!

Executive Council starts in February. As executive secretary, I need to help prepare the agenda for the meeting and enter documents needed for the meeting into our drop box.



On the second Sunday of January, February and March, I will be doing My Promise, My Faith with the children at St. Thomas of Canterbury.

“And now we welcome the New Year, full of things that have never been”
(Rainer Maria Rilke, poet)

Peace and prayers,

Deacon Marge



2016 SUNDAY SCHOOL INFORMATION



1st Sunday of the month	All Children are welcome at the alter
2nd Sunday of the month	Pre K- 2 nd grade will have Sunday School 4 th and 5 th grade will NOT have Sunday School when Angie and Bridget acolyte (They will acolyte on the same Sunday) Girl Scouts will meet with Deacon Marge at 9 AM <i>My Faith My Promise</i> pin
3rd Sunday of the month	Pre K-5 th grade will have Sunday School
4th Sunday of the month	Pre K-5 th grade will have Sunday School 1 st Communion instruction at 9am
5th Sunday of the month	No Sunday school for any grade
Morning Prayer	No Sunday School for any grade



Pre K-2nd grade will be taught by Tori Celsor with supervision by Donna Celsor until Tori has completed Safeguarding Gods Children in Feb 2016. Tori is considering a degree in early childhood development.



4th -5th grade will be taught by Joy Becker, Lisa Chemelski and Donna Celsor on a rotating basis



6th-12th grade will be taught by Erika Stoving at 9am and will meet all Sundays unless notified otherwise



1st Communion instruction will be held the 4th Sunday of the month at 9am. Please contact Noelle Gehlhaart for information. Emails will be sent to interested parties with confirmed dates.

Please know that you are always welcome to join us in your child's Sunday School class.



HELP WANTED



Coffee Hour Hosts

Do you enjoy catching up with your church family at coffee hour? Who haven't you seen in a while? Do you bake? Coffee hour is a great place to get to know your church family better. A coffee hour host is a one year commitment. Your responsibilities include making coffee and treats of your choosing. We can show you how to make the coffee. After coffee hour you are required to clean up any mess (use the dishwasher if you want) and take out the trash. This is not a lifelong commitment. Coffee hour hosts sign up for a one year time period beginning March 1. Sign up sheet is posted in the narthex. Please see Donna Celsor of the Parish Life vestry liaison for more information.

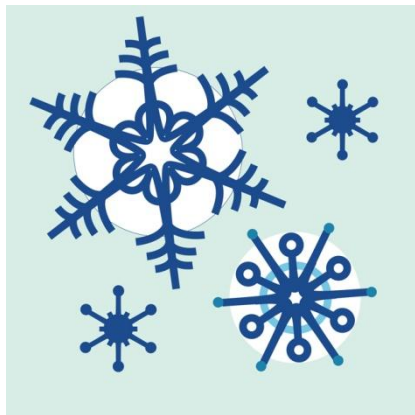
Singing Rooster Coffee Representative

We have been asked to become a distributor of Singing Rooster Coffee. The sale of this coffee helps build the economy of Haiti, where the beans are grown. This also reduces the amount of donation support that Haiti requires. Please attend the annual meeting for a taste of this coffee. Please fill out the survey regarding Singing Rooster Coffee and let us know if you would like us to serve this as our coffee hour coffee. You may also purchase this coffee for your own home use.



Easter Bunny Assistant

Christian Education needs one person (or a group) to assist the Easter Bunny with the children's Easter Egg hunt on Easter morning. Responsibilities include selecting treats and filling the plastic eggs. Candy and small toys are popular. You may assist with hiding the eggs as well. Please see Donna Celsor for more information.



LENTEN MEAL AND EVENING PRAYER



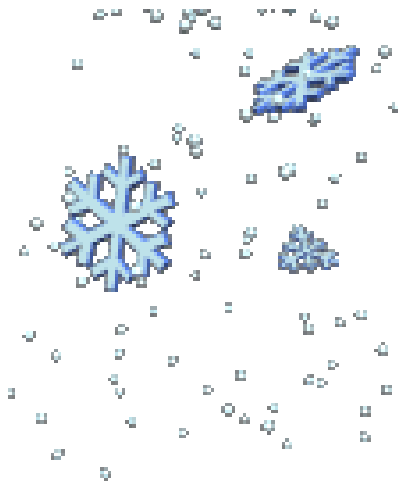
Starting on **Friday, February 12th**, we will be holding our Lenten program on Friday evenings again this year. We will share a meal and fellowship starting at 6PM, with Evening Prayer to follow at 7PM. This program will run through March 18th, when we will end with Stations of the Cross. A sign-up sheet for meal contributions will be on the bulletin board in the Narthex.



WINTER WEATHER REMINDER



In the case of severe winter weather, Channel 12/WISN is where St Thomas posts our closure information. You can either watch Channel 12 for updates, or go online to <http://www.wisn.com/weather/closings> for the most updated information.



PREPARING THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS 2016

The Altar Guild and several members of the Church community came together on December 20th after the 10:00 AM service to decorate STOC for the Christmas celebration.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE



JANUARY CELEBRATIONS



BIRTHDAYS

Violet Kluessendorf	January 3
Evan Klumb	January 4
Joy Zick	January 4
John Labisch	January 6
David Burkart	January 8
Nancy Bauman	January 9
Virginia Harper	January 10
Heather Owen	January 10
Dee Dixon	January 13
Lynne Heinz	January 13
Nicole Becker	January 14
Becky Fisher	January 18
Barb Labisch	January 24
Agnes Strommen	January 26
Ben Radavich	January 27



ANNIVERSARIES

Angie Bier & Jimmy Kim	January 3
------------------------	-----------



BOOK CORNER



I think I need to change the title of this column to “Book/Media Corner” because once again I am sharing something in addition to a book.

For those who have read books or attended bible studies using Beth Moore material, know her as a dynamic speaker and author. Last week she premiered her new television series, *Living Proof*, on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN-Channel 21 on Time Warner) on Wednesday evenings. As stated on her website, “Living Proof Ministries is dedicated to Biblical literacy and a commitment to guide believers to audaciously love and live on God’s Word”. I watched the program and found Beth in her usual high-energy format, speaking from her heart and guiding her audience towards God’s love. This might provide you with another resource for bible study and daily living.

