
ST. BART'S MONTHLY

February 2016



Words from Wendy

Dear Ones,

Where did January go? I realized just how much I missed you when I was at Camp Allen at the Discovery Retreat Sunday Eucharist. I was sitting there among all these incredible, wonderful seekers, and I found myself feeling sad. I felt sad because I was not where I really wanted to be. I was longing to be with all of you worshipping joyfully. I have found my nearly first year so fulfilling and downright fun. I think the Holy Spirit was

watching out for all of us when we found one another. And then I missed another Sunday when my little baby turned 21 (please don't call him that when he visits).

We have a big month ahead with the beginning of Lent on February 10 with Ash Wednesday. We then have our annual Diocese council meeting to be held at the Woodlands Feb 12-13. We are sticking with a theme we started during Advent related to art. The book—*The Restoration Project*—is described later in this newsletter. The metaphor of restoration is one we can all relate to—we can all be restored. Let's join together and be restored together.

Lent is a time of preparation just as Advent was, except we are preparing for the death and resurrection instead of the birth of Christ. We are to keep holy this time of Lent. Lent means literally "springtime," and it is a time to return to the desert where Jesus spent forty difficult days readying for his ministry. Jesus allowed himself to be tested. We should allow ourselves to be tested, as well.

Lent is a time to look honestly at ourselves and at the parts of us where we are not thriving. While many people choose to give things up or to serve others during this time, it is important to consider *why* you are doing this act. Our purpose must be to remove obstructions between us and God. So the question is, what is between you and God? What must you clean up or clear away so God might be able to get closer to you?



Thinking about Lent as springtime makes a lot of sense for where we live. Those of us with gardens know what happens in the spring when we ready the flower and vegetable gardens, and those of us who farm are readying the fields for crops. We clear away the old growth and rake away the old leaves and ready the soil for planting. We tame the wildness that has come in the previous months, and the debris left by winter. Just as we do this with our fields and gardens in spring, we clear the space inside us during Lent to prepare for growth in our relationship with God.

This Lent let's join together as we consider *The Restoration Project*. Join me in clearing our inner gardens and fields, and keep that wonderful hope in our hearts as we ready ourselves for the holiest of weeks. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.

Love and Blessings,

-Rev' Wendy

Barks from Brownie

Hello Friends:

Hope this note finds you well. I guess I'd like to clue you in to some stress I've been dealing with lately. It's coming from two things: making mistakes and dealing with change. So let me bark about making mistakes first.

I made a terrible mistake and I'm having a hard time dealing with it. Now understand, I have been so good with the idiot cats, mainly because I know how the family seems to like those stuck-up creatures. But this one day in early January, well, I guess you might say I just lost my head. But I wasn't alone! I suppose LeeAnn and I have a bad influence on one another. And it all started innocent enough. We started chasing one of the goodie-two-shoes outside cats and, well... we caught her. I really couldn't tell you what happened next. It was all so fast and LeeAnn was there and we were just doing what we do and... The result is that the cat, well, she didn't make it. And now I feel awful about it. I feel like I just failed miserably.

So now I'm stuck with all this stress and guilt about the cat. I only wish I knew what to do to make it better. The only way I can describe the feeling is that it's like I can't get out from under the weight of it. But, it occurs to me that scripture is clear on how to handle our own failures and mistakes. Luke's gospel teaches us about forgiveness as Jesus forgives the penitent woman in chapter 7, when he tells her that her faith has saved her and she should go in peace. And I know that we are supposed to forgive ourselves as well as others. So I will work on forgiveness, and on trying to do a better job as a dog of God. And I think many times—like when I do something I know I shouldn't, even if it's not entirely on purpose—being a better dog includes finding ways to forgive myself.

The second area of stress I've been dealing with is change. I don't like change. These days it seems there are all sorts of change in my life—from spending more time in Bellville to changes in my food. I really don't like change. And sometimes it really scares me. So I worry, and that worry leads to stress. I swear, I'm going to lick all the fur off my own paws with the stress of it sometimes.

Back to scripture again, Jesus teaches us not to worry about tomorrow. He says don't even worry about where your food will come from or anything else in chapter 6 of Matthew. I find that scripture very comforting. I need to rest more easily and trust that God has a plan for even an old imperfect country dog like me. One more thing. It is February, after all. And the 14th is one of my favorite holidays. It's all about love. So before anyone else asks, WILL YOU BE MY VALENTINE?

See you Valentine's Day!



-Brother Brownie

Lay Ministry

Sunday, Feb 7

Altar Guild	Volunteers
Chalice Bearer	Gerald Ladig
Lesson Lector	Helen Panetti
Prayer Lector	Susan Ashley-Lafitte
Acolyte	Skye Youngblood
Ushers	Charles Menke, Darrell Lafitte

Sunday, Feb 14

Altar Guild	Volunteers
Chalice Bearer	Bobby Drew
Lesson Lector	Lee French
Prayer Lector	Nancy Wilson
Acolyte	Aubrey French
Ushers	Gerald Ladig, Tom Scholl

Sunday, Feb 21

Altar Guild	Volunteers
Chalice Bearer	Gerald Ladig
Lesson Lector	Nancy Wilson
Prayer Lector	Helen Panetti
Acolyte	Aubrey French
Ushers	Charles Menke, Tom Scholl

Sunday, Feb 28

Altar Guild	Volunteers
Chalice Bearer	Charles Menke
Lesson Lector	Susan Ashley-Lafitte
Prayer Lector	Nancy Wilson
Acolyte	Volunteer
Ushers	Volunteers

www.stbarthempstead.org

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Suggestions for the newsletter?

Email Aubrey!

February 2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 Birthday! Jason Panetti	2	3	4 Birthday! Mackenzie Rodriguez	5	6
7 Worship at 10:00 am Birthday! Ethan Panetti	8	9 Fat Tuesday, Pancake Dinner	10 Ash Wednesday Birthdays! Barbara Jean Nettles & Cathy Allen	11	12 EDOT Council, The Woodlands Birthday! Nancy Wilson	13 EDOT Council, The Woodlands
14 Worship at 10:00 am Vestry Meeting	15	16 Birthday! Jackson Hillman	17	18	19	20 Birthday! Carmen Merrill
21 Worship at 10:00 am	22	23	24 Birthdays! Margaret Devine & Joe Panetti	25	26	27
28 Worship at 10:00 am	29 Birthday! Kathy Holmes					

The Restoration Project

The spark that led Christopher Martin to develop The Restoration Project occurred in 2002 when he visited the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in Washington DC. It was a visit that changed his life. For the first time, he saw what it looked like when a community of highly devoted Christians worked together to encourage each other in Discipleship and to serve the needs of the poor. The founder, Gordon Cosby, said something that cut him to the quick.

“If men and women today began by the thousands experiencing the depths of Jesus Christ in a transforming way, there would simply be no place for their expression of experience to fit into the present-day straitjackets of Christianity. Protestant or Catholic, neither one is structured to contain a mass of devoted people who long for spiritual depth. We are structured towards infancy.”

Since then, his passion has been to develop the structures to help people in ordinary parishes satisfy their longing for spiritual depth. It has been said by frustrated Christians that parish churches only help them get to the spiritual equivalent of fifth grade. In The Restoration Project, Christopher hopes to provide a loving structure for parishes and their seekers to move beyond spiritual infancy and discover the spiritual depths in Jesus available to all.

The visual and the metaphor for The Restoration Project is Leonardo Da Vinci’s painting the Last Supper. In the mid-1970s, before the most recent restoration, it was a beautiful image that was evocative but incomplete. This was due to a faulty surface foundation, the ravages of time and several botched restoration attempts. In 1978 they began the most thorough and careful restoration ever. Over the twenty-one years when they worked, the restorers discovered colors, details and facial expressions that hadn’t been seen for centuries. **Restoration revealed beauty and clarity.**

(**Taken from** <http://www.therestorationproject.net/the-beginning/>)

Announcements

-We will be starting a Lent Project based upon the powerful path that Christopher Martin has made possible to us. Ask Reverend Wendy for more information.

-Pancake Supper on Fat Tuesday, (February 9)

-Ash Wednesday, (February 10)

-EDOT Council—The Woodlands, (February 12)

-Vestry meeting, (February 14)

158th Annual Meeting,
Confirmation,
and a visit
from the
Bishop



Thank you Gerald
Ladig for your service
as Senior Warden!



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