

# *The Chart*

## *March 2007*

### **Letter from the Rector**

March 1, 2007

Dear Friends,

Although we are in our 'Lenten-mode,' activities abound at Christ Church. This coming Sunday (March 4), the Venerable Canon Theodore Bean, Provost of the Cathedral of the Incarnation and Archdeacon of Nassau will be celebrating the Eucharist and preaching at Christ Church at the 8:00 am and 10:00 am services. I will be at the Cathedral that day. Canon Bean has looked forward to being at Christ Church for some time and being at the Cathedral will be a homecoming for me. The Sunday school will be singing a wonderful song (led by Laura and Maggie Pavlovich) after the Eucharist. I do hope you will fill the church for Canon Bean and our children.

On Sunday, March 11, we will celebrate Girl Scouts' Sunday. In the past few years there have been 'community services', which have been poorly attended. This year many churches and synagogues will celebrate Girl Scout Sunday in their own houses of worship. Christ Church is pleased to welcome Girl Scouts, Brownies, Girl Scout alumnae and leaders to worship at Christ Church in celebration of the strong ties of Christ Church to Girl Scouting.

Please do remember the two Lenten education programs. On Wednesday evenings we are considering the ethical implications of the advances that have been made in recent years in biology and medicine. Although many Christians have strong opinions about these issues which are expressed in terms of 'Christian ethics' and quotations from scripture, in reality the issues are very complex and Christian reflection on those issues is difficult. Please see the article inside the *Chart* for times and locations of sessions.

On Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm, we will continue our exploration of the major theological, moral and historical themes of the church. For those who wish to be confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church, these sessions will provide the required preparation; for others it will be an opportunity to refresh knowledge and gain (we hope) new insights. Please feel free to drop in and out of sessions as your schedule permits. A detailed schedule of sessions is in the inside of the *Chart*.

I close by wishing you a blessed Lent in preparation for a joyful Eastertide.

This comes with my best wishes.

Sincerely,

Rev. David B. Lowry, Rector

## **Lent—in word, history and tradition**

This month, I have combined our “Word of the Month” with our irregular foray into church history with an exploration of the word and season of Lent. The word *lent* comes from the Middle English *lente* (Old English, *lencten*). The root of the word is, in modern English, *long*. In the non-church usage, *lent* refers to spring, probably reflecting the lengthening of days during the spring season.

Because Easter always falls in later spring (in the northern hemisphere), the English church (as distinct from the Church of England) came to call the period of time prior to Easter ‘Lent.’ Elsewhere the name for the days prior to Easter tended to be named with reference to forty days. Hence in the Eastern Church, what we call Lent is named ‘the forty’ (τεσσαρακοστή).

In the earliest church the period before was marked by severe times of prayer, abstinence and fasting. However, the period of such discipline was only two or three days. The forty-day period of fasting was mentioned first in the canons promulgated at Nicaea in 325. In Canon V, mention is made that those who have been removed from communion in the church because of their behavior shall be re-admitted to the Eucharist if they repent of their sins while praying and fasting. This shall be done prior to the Paschal Feast (Easter) and such prayer and fasting shall be done over a period of forty days. There are similar provisions for re-admittance to the full life of the church in the autumn of the year.

Various churches through the middle ages set their Lenten discipline in differing ways. Some churches excluded both Saturdays and Sundays from Lenten fasting; others excluded Sundays only. Since most churches started Lent on the first Sunday after Ash Wednesday, few had a full forty days for Lenten fasting and discipline; in the 7<sup>th</sup> century all churches in the West agreed to add four days to Lent by starting Lenten discipline on Ash Wednesday, rather than on the following Sunday.

Over the centuries the severity of Lenten discipline atrophied. What started with total abstinence from all food except at the evening meal became abstinence only from breakfast and early lunch. Further, abstinence from meat, fish, eggs and other dairy products over time became abstinence from meat alone. Of late many prefer to give up sweets, coffee, soft drinks or alcohol rather than taking on the more stringent discipline of fasting. It is interesting to note the similarities in practice between the early fasting traditions of the church and the fasting month among Muslims. Ramadan is the Muslim fasting month (of 28 days in the lunar calendar). During Ramadan, those of the Islamic faith abstain from eating and drinking from before sun-up until the time of sun-down. From sun-down until before sun-up, Muslims are to ‘break-the fast.’

## **Sunday Afternoons in Lent**

We continue our Sunday afternoon classes for (1) those 15 years-of-age or above who would like to be prepared for Confirmation in the coming year, (2) those who have been Confirmed in another church and wish to be received in the Episcopal Church and (3) those who wish to learn more about the church and the Episcopal Church. Classes are held on **Sunday afternoons at 4:00pm** during Lent.

The next Diocesan Confirmation/Reception will take place in the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City on **Saturday, May 5**.

Please contact the Parish Office if you are interested in Confirmation, Reception or just taking a refresher course on the Christian Faith.

## **Lenten Program—2007**

We continue our Wednesday evening program on “Biology and Christian Ethics.”

March 7	From Conception to Birth
March 14	DNA and Stem-cell Research
March 21	Heroic Medicine and Protracted Life
March 28	Sexuality

The sessions on March 7 and March 21 sessions will be held at **Christ Church**. The sessions on March 14 and March 28 will be held at **St. Stephen’s**. All sessions will begin with soup and salad dinner at 7:00 pm and the discussions will begin promptly at 7:30 pm. The programs will end with Compline at 8:45 pm. Please feel free to invite your friends in the community to join with us for this program.

## ♪ Music notes from Kyle Babin, Organist & Choir Master

This year, Lent occupies all of the month of March. Accordingly, the music at celebrations of the Eucharist will reflect the mood of the Lenten season. In this regard, several changes are notable. For instance, the organ is used much less; there are no postludes and no organ improvisations after the reading of the Gospel. Also, most of the choir anthems are sung a cappella and without use of the organ. We also sing plainsong settings of the psalm each week. I encourage each of you to join the choir in singing this beautiful, ancient poetry of the Church. The psalms were originally (and still are!) meant to be sung, not just spoken. Although the musical adornments to the service are limited during Lent, there is still much wonderful music to be heard. And of course, Holy Week and the celebration of Easter are really just right around the corner. Easter should be exciting this year as the choir will be joined at the 11:15 a.m. service by a brass quartet from the Manhattan School of Music and tympanist from the Children's Orchestra Society.

On a business note, I hope you can all be present to hear the Junior Choir sing at the 10 a.m. service on March 18. They are doing a stellar job! Also, we welcome a new tenor section leader, Adam Carman. Adam holds a Master of Music degree from the Mannes College of Music in Manhattan and is currently pursuing a degree in Professional Studies there. We are happy to welcome him as a part of our parish music program. Finally, it is never too late to join one of our choirs. If you have any interest in this, please speak to me. I wish you all a peaceful, reflective Lenten season.

## Happy Birthday!!

*We are pleased to congratulate these friends and parishioners this month on their birthdays...*

Kayla Deosaran, John McGill, Ida Miletich, Mary Lowry, Katelyn Bennett, Carter Paterson, Indu Subaiya, Christopher Beinecke, Philip Horne, Ruth Mishrick, Dana Sevely, Mary Ryan, Ian Schmidt-Spadaro.

## Happy Anniversary!!!

*Our congratulations to all those friends and parishioners celebrating their wedding anniversaries for this month...* James and Karyn Sherwood, Will and Phyllis Ivers.

### **SUNDAY READINGS AND CLASSES FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH:**

#### **THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 4, 2007**

Genesis 15:1-12,17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:22-3, 31-35

**"Jesus and Paul: Founders of the Faith" – 4pm**

#### **THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 11, 2007\***

Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 103; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

Altar decorations are given in memory of Robert Tadler  
by the Tadler and Paterson Family

**"Peoples of the Book: Hebrew and Christian Scriptures" – 4pm**

#### **THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 18, 2007**

Joshua 4:19-24; Psalm 34; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Luke 15:11-32

**"Prayer, Sacraments, Spirituality and Ethics: Making Faith Work" – 4pm**

#### **THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 25, 2007**

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:8-14; Luke 20:9-19

**"The Episcopal Church: What is it Anyway" – 4pm**

\* This Sunday is "Girl Scouts Sunday", all current, former and even retired Girl Scouts are encouraged to wear their uniforms to church.

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**CHRIST CHURCH STAFF**

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