

Happy New Year!

*And the shepherds returned....* (Luke 2:20)



Beginning where we left off is important, for what, for example, would have happened to the sheep and to the livelihood of the shepherds had they not returned but had gone on as the vanguard of some new movement? What indeed would have happened to those sages of the east had they *not returned to their country by another way*? What would have happened to Elijah and to Israel had Elijah chosen to remain at the mouth of the cave in mystic splendor, nursing his wounds and wondering at the strange events that had befallen him? There is a time to lay down one's cares and duties and to run with excited spirits to Bethlehem and the manger, *to see this thing that has come to pass*; there is a time to follow the eastern star and take the road not taken; there is a time to flee for refuge from the troubles of the world and seek the safety of the mountaintop.

There is also a time to return - to the hillside, the laboratory, and the scene of one's labors, to begin again where we left off. The church in its rhythm knows this, and that is why the seasons are planned as they are. It is a lesson we might well learn, and there is no better time to consider it than the start of a new year.

It is a hard lesson, for once persuaded that we should in mind and heart go even to Bethlehem, it is very difficult to tear ourselves away. The view that the manger and all that it means is apart from rather than a part of life has given rise to the problem of great expectations and great disappointments. It is no accident that the prisons, mental hospitals, and places of refuge know no greater season of agitation and stress than at Christmas. Somehow it promises so much and delivers so little. Christ is born, but wars persist, marriages continue to decay, the job is no better on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December than it was on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Joy, cheer, peace and goodwill - these are guaranteed minimums for this season, and when we are denied them, things are worse than before.

Is the world any different out there because we employ all the symbols to suggest that it is? Is the newness, the novelty that we seek going to make it and us better than it and we were? The expectation of the New Year is that somehow circumstances will be adapted in a new and happier way, and that with them we too shall be brought along. In the bleak midwinter, though how can this be? The circumstances are all against us. The headlines read the same; the earth is cold and barren, *water like a stone*. What can come out of this? In the ancient Western calendar, before the

great reforms adopted in the English world only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the New Year came not in January but in March, and somehow, for our purposes, that makes sense. There is in the earth a natural cycle, a sense of new life that one can see in the fields, feel in the air; and in harmony with the natural elements of spring and resurrection one can affirm that there is a new thing afoot, there is a new and renewed chance, things need not necessarily be as they have been.

Thus the genius of Easter is that it occurs when all nature can affirm it, and not in the face of overwhelming evidence that refutes life in the face of death. It is harder in January than it is in April to go back from the altar to our work feeling that something has happened to us and that we, not circumstances, are redeemed and born anew, yet that is precisely what we are called upon to do. Of course the world has not changed and the duties that we have avoided or put off await us with grim determination on Monday morning; the magic of this season is too great to play with so trivial a set of things as that.



What is transformed, what is capable of transformation so that where we left off is not the same place as where we now begin, is of course ourselves, for we have come from an encounter with the world of the possible in the midst of the impossible. We, like Moses and the shepherds and Jacob have seen God face-to-face and have prevailed, that is to say, have survived to tell the tale, bearing the mark of our encounter forever, and marveling in the darkest nights of our soul at the wondrous star-filled night.

So here we are, called to begin where we left off and yet to make a new beginning. It is an old choice and a new chance for us and for the world. Christmas and creation are part of the same process of God; they have everything to do with one another, they each speak of loving purpose and renewed hopes, and is it not cause for joy that our gospel, the good news for which we seek, is a gospel of second chances, new opportunities to claim the love of the Father, new opportunities to share and express that love in the world, new opportunities to discover who we are and what we can become in Christ?

The world will not change until and unless we change; the spirit of Christmas cannot be borne out into the cold January air unless we are borne out by it and indeed born again by it. We may, we must, return from whence we came, but we need not return as the same tired creatures, care-worn and spirit-lost, for we have seen wonderful things that have come to pass, strange and mighty sights that will never let us look at the skies in quite the same manner as before. Every baby that comes into the world, every man and woman born of woman is no longer of the same old flesh but a promise and token of Christ, and to deny them is to once again deny him room, while to love and cherish them is to receive a new Christ in each of our lives and worlds.

Christ's presence has hallowed all that we are and every place that we are, and by his grace the world and we can never be quite the same again. Therefore we begin again, that in leaving the manger we may embrace the world for his sake and for ours.

*The world will not care what we know until they know that we care.*



...Not all the world but some in it know that we care...because their lives have been changed by our out-reach. To all those who gave so generously to the Cape Breton Housing Association Stockings, Claire Detheridge's Christmas Gift Cards, Fill A Stable, Hats & Mitts, the Food Bank, and Loaves & Fishes, I say thank you on behalf of those you will never meet but whose lives you have positively altered.

...To all who gave to the Memorials, I say thank you for your gifts not only enable our ministry to continue but they also enable us to continue to spiritually nourish souls so that more of our world may be transformed.

...To all who offered their gifts to enable the parish to worship God, to give thanks to God for making his dwelling place among us, throughout the Advent / Christmas season, I say thank you. Meaningful worship inspires and makes holy seekers out of all of us. God bless you all - Musicians, Choirs, Organists, Lay Readers, Sides persons, Eucharistic Ministers, Actors, Sand Dollar collectors & kit makers, Altar Guilds, Men's Group, Decorators, Custodians, Bulletins Team, Readers and all who opened their hearts to the mystery of our faith for the Spirit to be present.

### SERVICE SCHEDULE

DATE:	CHRIST THE KING	ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
January 31 <sup>st</sup> . (4 <sup>th</sup> after Epiphany)	8:00 am (HC) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30 am (HE)
February 7 <sup>th</sup> . (5 <sup>th</sup> after Epiphany)	8:00 am (HE) 10:00 am (HC)	10:30 am (HC)
February 14 <sup>th</sup> . (Transfiguration)	<u>Annual Meeting</u> beginning with Holy Eucharist at 10:am in St. George's Hall. This is the only service in the parish on the 14 <sup>th</sup> , as it is a time for the entire parish to worship, review the past year and look into the future together.	
Feb. 17 <sup>th</sup> . <b>(Ash Wednesday)</b>	10:00 am	7:00 pm
	7:30 pm - All Ash Wed. Services are the Imposition of ashes & Holy Eucharist	
<b>(Lent 1)</b> Feb. 1 <sup>st</sup> .	8:00 am (HC) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30 am (HE)
February 24 <sup>th</sup> . (Wednesday)	7:30 am (HC) 10:00 am (HE)	7:00 pm (HC)
February 28 <sup>th</sup> . <b>(Lent 2)</b>	8:00 am (HE) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30pm (HC)

March 3 <sup>rd</sup> . (Wednesday)	7:30 pm (HE)	7:00 pm (HE)
March 5 <sup>th</sup> . (Friday)	World Day of Prayer-Christ the King hosting	
March 5 <sup>th</sup> . & 6 <sup>th</sup> . (Friday & Saturday)	30 Hour Fast	
March 7 <sup>th</sup> . <b>(Lent 3)</b>	8:00 am (HC)	7:00 pm Evening Prayer
	Mothering Sunday 10:am- Parish Service	

**Lent 4** is normally Mothering Sunday, a day we usually celebrate together as the youth of the 30 Hour Fast lead us, we have the Simnel Cakes and the Parish Council is commissioned. Like last year we have had to change this day as March Break interferes with the 30 Hour Fast.

March 10 <sup>th</sup> . (Wednesday)	7:30 pm (HC)	7:00 pm (HC)
March 14 <sup>th</sup> . (Lent 4)	8:00 am (HE) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30 am (HC)
March 17 <sup>th</sup> . (Wednesday)	7:30 pm (HE)	7:00 pm (HE)
March 21 <sup>st</sup> . (Lent 5)	8:00 am (HC) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30 am (HE)
March 24 <sup>th</sup> . (Wednesday)	7:30 pm (HC)	7:00 pm (HC)

**HOLY**



**WEEK**

March 28 <sup>th</sup> . (Palm/Passion Sunday)	8:00 am (HE) 10:00 am (HE)	10:30 am (HC)
March 29 (Monday)	7:30 pm (HC)	
March 30 <sup>th</sup> . (Tuesday)	7:30 pm (HC)	
March 31 <sup>st</sup> . (Stations of the Cross)	7:30 pm	7:00 pm
April 1 <sup>st</sup> . (Thursday)	7:30 pm: Foot-Washing (HE)	7:00 pm: Stripping of altar
April 2 <sup>nd</sup> . (GOOD FRIDAY)	10:00 am: The Solemn Liturgy	10:30 am: The Solemn Liturgy

April 3 <sup>rd</sup> . (Holy Saturday)	4:00 pm: The Easter Vigil	3:30 pm: The Easter Vigil
	7:30 pm- HB or Renewal of baptismal vows	7:00 pm- HB or Renewal of baptismal vows
April 4 <sup>th</sup> . (EASTER SUNDAY)	8:00 am (HC) 10:00 am (HE)	Sunrise Service 10:30 am (HE)

How do you think of God?

As first I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things I did wrong, so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell when I die. He was out there sort of like the prime minister. I recognized his face when I saw it, but I really didn't know him. But later on when I recognized this Divine Power, it seemed like life was rather like a bike ride, but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that God was in the back helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was that he suggested we change places, but life has not been the same since - life with my Divine Power, that is, God makes life exciting! But when he took the lead, it was all I could do to hang on! He knew delightful paths, up mountains and through rocky places - and at breakneck speeds. Even though it looked like madness, he said, *Pedal!*

I was worried and anxious and asked, *where are you taking me?* He laughed and didn't answer, and I started to learn trust.

I forgot my boring life and entered into adventure. When I'd say, *I'm scared*; he'd lean back and touch my hand.

He took me to people with gifts that I needed, gifts of healing, acceptance, and joy. They gave me their gifts to take on my journey, our journey, God's and mine.

And we were off again. He said, *Give the gifts away; they're extra baggage, too much weight.* So I did, to the people we met, and I found that in giving I received, and our burden became light.

At first I did not trust him in control of my life. I thought he'd wreck it, but he knows bike secrets - knows how to make it lean to take sharp corners, dodge large rocks, and speed through scary passages.

And I am learning to keep my mouth shut and pedal in the strangest places. I'm beginning to enjoy the view and the cool breeze on my face with my delightful constant Companion.

And when I'm sure I just can't do any more, he just smiles and says, *Pedal!*

**2010 Dates to Remember -**





*A small country church was having a revival meeting, and the evangelist called for confessions. One man was eager. Brothers and sisters, you know I ain't been what I ought to have been. I've stole hogs and told lies and got drunk and cursed, but I thank the Lord there's one thing I ain't never done. I ain't ever lost my religion.*

Life in the Eucharist. It was decided that Life in the Eucharist would take place in the fall of 2010

Lay Pastoral Visiting Course - The Anglican clergy of the region will be facilitating a Lay Pastoral Visiting course throughout Lent. This will take place on Saturdays from 1:00 - 3:30 pm. The dates for the course are: February 13, 20, 27 & March 6, 13, and 20. The sessions are: (1) Introduction & the Role of Lay Visitors (2) The ABCs of Institutional Visiting & Empathy (3) Death, Dying & Grief (4) The Art of Listening (5) Approach to the Cognitively Impaired (6) Care for the Caregivers.



Each of the Anglican parishes in our region are developing their Pastoral Care teams and this course is for any person who already helps to minister in our institutions of care or who feels they are called to this ministry. The role which lay individuals carry out in pastoral visiting is not like that of the ordained yet it is vital to the well-being of the one visited as well as the entire faith community.

At this point it appears that the sessions will take place in St. George's as they did for the last regional Lay readers course. That way we can have our own space. If you are interested in this course, please speak to Fred or me in January - we need to know numbers. Please Pray about this.

*At a church potluck dinner, the visiting evangelist was talking to one of the members. "By whose preaching were you converted?" he asked the young man. By no one's preaching, came the answer, but by my parent's example.*

Annual Meeting Date: Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at St. George's Hall, beginning with a service at 10:00 am. This means the Annual Report will need to be in the hands of the parishioners on Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> so that it can be read before the meeting. All reports will need to be into the office by January 31<sup>st</sup> so that the Annual Report can be put together. Please type reports - if possible - so that the office can quickly put the book together. Again this year, we will have a light lunch, provided by all of us.



Those whose last names begin with a letter between **A & M** are asked to bring sandwiches



Those whose last names begin with a letter between **N & Z** are asked to bring a finger dessert. Keep any paper plates / cups / napkins left over from Christmas - we could use those and not have to do dishes.



Shrove (pancake) Tuesday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast at St. Bart's 8:am to noon. \$5.00 per person. St. George's Hall, 4:30 to 6:pm (amt. unknown).

Elder's Eucharist & Dinner - will be held on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> this year. The change from a Thursday to a Sunday is because there are individuals who would like to help with this dinner but cannot because when it falls on a workday, they can not be present until about 6 pm and the preparations begin early in the morning - with the Eucharist beginning at 4:00 pm. More on this in the New Year.

**Received from the Diocese -**

**300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Eucharist Memorials:** Anglicans throughout the diocese are able to offer memorial gifts to him Glory of God and in loving memory of loved ones at the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Eucharist on June 6, 2010 (3:00 pm) at Exhibition park, just outside the metro area of Halifax.

Memorial gifts can be offered in the following categories; Wine & Hosts, Service Bulletin, Flowers, and Communion Linens. Each memorial gift is \$25.00. Please ensure that the completed 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Eucharist Memorial Form (found in the narthex in the church) accompanies your payment. Cheques are payable to the Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island. Please do not send cash.

To ensure your name and that of the person(s) being memorialized is included in the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service Bulletin, send the completed memorial Form and payment in no later than March 31, 2010. Please send your form and payment to:

Faye Morrison, 1571 LeMarchant Street, Halifax, NS. B3H 3R2, (Telephone - 902-423-5070).

Received from the Cathedral Church of All Saints - an invitation to join the Cathedral Congregation in 2010 for special worship and music events, which have been scheduled. 2010 celebrates not only 300 years of Anglican worship & witness in our diocese but also 100 years of Christian witness at the Cathedral. If you find yourself heading to Halifax in 2010, you might want to check with the Cathedral to get the exact dates and times of the following -

January - March: **Love to learn Series** - Talks featuring archives & architecture, vestments & vessels, woodwork & windows, music, melody and more

April: **Tea in the Transept** - An elegant afternoon tea, 1910 style

June: **Cathedral Capers** - Cathedral Hospitality Day for the children of our diocesan family

July - August: **Cathedral Tours** - In costume and drama

November: **Grand Patronal Festival** - Featuring a 1910 style dinner in the Cathedral & a majestic church service

December: **Pageant**