



St. David's
Episcopal Church
Southfield

Staying in Touch

Connections

February 2024

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Lent, A Time for Joy?

For many of us the words 'Lent' and 'joy' go together about as well as ketchup and chocolate...

Yet our faith tells us that joy is one of the major fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5) and that the word 'joy' or a derivative, appears 2,700 times in the Bible.

Couple this with the seemingly increasing worry, anxiety, division, and negativity in our society and your Lifelong Formation Committee decided that this Lent, we needed to take seriously the Bible's considerable emphasis on joy.

What we soon discover is that joy is not a commodity—in other words, it's not limited in quantity nor is it to be experienced in small rations. Joy has no limits, we don't earn it, you find it and live in it!

So a good question to ask is; Will you allow yourself to be joyful today?

Our society bends toward scarcity, which is why walls are painted beige in senior and public housing, and too many public spaces are just so drab!

The aesthetics, that research tells us will bring us joy, like colors, round

shapes, and whimsy, are often reserved for the privileged others, or when we feel we've deserve it, as if paint changes price when it's brighter or more fun.

In so many ways, we are naturally self-punitive, especially when it comes to allowing ourselves to be joyful, which is why the liberation of Jesus is so important to grasp!

This is what we will study during Lent as we read *How Happiness Happens* by Max Lucado—copies are available at the church. Developing a more joyful countenance is beneficial on so many levels. Especially because our emotions are contagious, and how we feel impacts the world around us.

So grab onto Joy!

Make yourself, and the world around you, the happier place God desires it to be.

†Fr . Chris

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.

Psalm 47:1



Maureen Mahar
Senior Warden

Senior Warden's Report

Greetings from your newly elected Senior Warden!

We had a wonderful Vestry Retreat in January and have been given our marching orders. We have set new goals and all of our members bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the job. Focusing on Connections will be a continuing theme and you will hear about it often. Our goals for 2024 are:

1. Create experiences for parishioners to feel appreciated and recognized.
2. Create more opportunities for personal interactions and connections between parishioners.
3. Moving the issue of gun disposal movement in America forward
4. Create opportunities and programing for boys and girls to learn and grow their faith in a relaxed, more social setting.
5. Continue facility and ministry updates.

Serving on the Finance Commission are vestry members: Maureen Mahar (Sr. Warden), Pat Tilley and Marilyn Greening. Vestry members serving on the Property Commission are Hampton Hanable (Jr Warden), Rocco Romano and Alex Reinstra, and serving on the Administrative Commission are members Mary Bensmiller, Rita Spiller and Carol Wells.

If you see any of these folks around the church, say hello, then ask them what their group is working on. We have a whole bunch of ideas and projects that we are planning on working on this year, so if you would like to help or have any other ideas, please let one of us know. We are looking forward to a great year!

Yours sincerely,
Maureen Mahar



Hampton Hanable, Jr.
Junior Warden

Junior Warden's Update

Kudos to Leonard Sackett for taking the initiative to obtain three bags of sidewalk ice melt. Our reserves were depleted, but now we are well stocked. Thank you Leonard!

As previously reported by Rocco Roman, the sanctuary area supply boiler has been operating successfully due to the reduction in size of the fresh air intakes. The funeral of Eugene Buday was able to be held with a warm sanctuary due to some quick thinking—the use of portable heaters to thaw the frozen heating system which had been temporarily frozen. Great work, Rocco!

The kitchen dishwasher is back in operation thanks to Leonard Sackett, who performed a major “dishwasher-ectomy” to remove debris that clogged its operation. Thank you, Leonard!

Hampton Hanable, Jr.

Meet Your 2024 Vestry



Maureen Mahar
Sr. Warden



Hampton Hanable
Jr. Warden



Mary Bensmiller



Marilyn Greening



Alex Reinstra



Rocco Romano



Rita Spiller



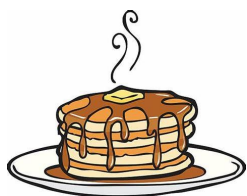
Pat Tilley



Carol Wells

Lent at St. David's—2024

Connecting with God and Others



Shrove Tuesday—February 13

Come join us for pancakes on Shrove Tuesday! Jim Kenning and his crew of Christian Service Brigade volunteers along with other youth in the parish will be serving up many different kinds of pancakes and syrups - at bargain prices! Just \$3 each and \$5 for a family. Tuesday, February 13th from 5:30-7p in the Parish Hall.

Ash Wednesday—February 14

As in past years, we will offer a 'drive thru' option for those wishing to don ashes to begin this penitential season. The drive thru will be open from 7am - 6pm. We will 'ash' you as you enter the driveway. Or come to one of our in-person/zoom (streaming live to Facebook) services at 12noon and 7pm in the church.



Lenten Fish Fry and Taize Service Friday, March 1

Join us for a Lenten fish fry on Friday, March 10! We are preparing fried fish, seasoned french fries, and cole slaw—all for an affordable price. Fish fry is from 5:30-6:30p, Taize worship begins at 6:30p. Bring a friend!

Wednesdays at 12noon During Lent

Why not make more worship part of your Lenten discipline? Come in-person or via zoom streaming to Facebook Wednesdays during Lent at 12noon in the church? Dates include: February 14, 21, and 28 and March 5, 12, 19, 26.

Tuesday Lenten Lunchtime Bible Study of Mark

Tuesdays from 12n-1p we are studying the Gospel of Mark, which is the Gospel we hear from most in 2024. If you've never studied the Bible, or if you're a veteran, you're welcome!

Lenten Devotional Booklet: Practicing Forgiveness

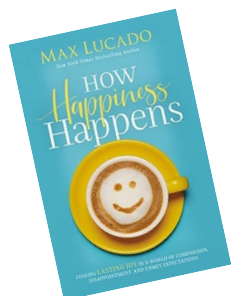
We'll be giving out a free booklet called Living Well Through Lent. It's a daily devotional for each of the 40 days of Lent. You can pick one up in the Narthex on Sundays or from 10a-3p M-F.

Renew Your Faith During Lent

For 5 weeks in Lent you're invited to explore your faith in a regular Lenten class called *Renew*. It's an introduction to the Christian faith suitable for preparation for baptism, confirmation, reception into the Episcopal Church and reaffirmation of baptismal vows. Class dates and times will be set by the students. Contact Fr. Chris to sign up at chris@stdavidssf.org or (313) 585-4840

Lenten Connection Hour Classes: The Happiest Lent You've Never Had!

Did you know that happiness is not a gift or achievement, but a practice? Join us for 5 weeks in Lent as we read and digest the Max Lucado book, *How Happiness Happens* with parishioners Judy Walsh, Linda Williams Bowie, and Felicity Thompson. If you or someone you know would like to learn more about what it takes to be content and fulfilled, you'll not want to miss this Lenten offering. Sundays from 11:30 - 12:15p in



Parish Hall. You need not have read the book to participate. Happiness book discussions will take place on Sundays, February 18 (Lent 1), February 25 (Lent 2), March 3 (Lent 3), March 10 (Lent 4) and March 17 (Lent 5)

Connection Envelopes

Look for a small blue envelope, either mailed to you or available in the Narthex. Please add your contributions through the Lenten season as you are led.

Justice, Liberation, and Holy Week: A Mini-Retreat

with The Rev. Ellen Ekevag— Saturday, March 23, 9a-12n

What did the work Jesus did on the cross affect the ways you and I work for justice and liberation in Metro Detroit and beyond? Join the Rev. Ellen Ekevag from the Bishop's staff, as well as our Seminarian Felicity Thompson, as they address these issues and give us insight into how we can better understand Holy Week as a work of continuous liberation. Contact the church office to sign up. The retreat is free, \$10 donation is ok!

For Young People

Good Friday for Young People

Join us on Good Friday at 12noon for an interactive, child-friendly Stations of the Cross. Bring your friends!

A Lifetime of Forgiveness

by Cindy Weeder Rush

You may have read in the November issue of *Connections* that while working in the memorial garden this past summer here at St. David's, I found a quarter buried in the soil. I took it as a sign that my father-in-law, who was a church member and with whom I was very close, was calling me to St. David's. Dad was known for his quarter tricks. God was using him as a messenger that he knew I would know and trust.

It's always sad to lose a loved one, but especially a child. My parents, siblings and I were at my grandparents' home on Christmas Eve 1957. My three-year-old sister had a little cold and was feeling worse as the evening progressed. My parents took their young family home early so mom could attend to Kathy. She had developed a fever so the doctor was called. Mom was on the phone back and forth with the doctor all night—him giving her instructions to break the fever and her pleading with him to admit her to the hospital. Eventually, the fever did break and she settled down to sleep, mom checking on her throughout the night.

On Christmas morning, Nancy, the oldest of us three girls awoke and was excited to open presents. She tried to awake Kathy to join her, but there was no response. She alerted mom and dad but it was too late. Kathy had slipped into a coma in the early morning and was gone.

Mark your
calendars for
Bishop Bonnie's
Sunday after
Easter visit—
it will be glorious!

A Lifetime of Forgiveness (*cont. from pg 5*)

You would think that our Christmases from there on would have been incredibly sad. They were not. We had happy Christmases. It was all the other days that could sometimes be chaotic. My parents blamed themselves. I was three months old when we lost Kathy so I have no memory of her, although all three of us girls were in the same bedroom the night she went to heaven. I have mourned her death my whole life and was always sad that she died alone. It's only been recently that I realized she didn't die alone—her two sisters were there with her. Maybe that's why I feel so close to her and know she is with me always.

When I was old enough, I asked my mother the details of that terrible night. Admittedly, she relayed to the doctor that she thought Kathy only had a cold, but things had accelerated into something else quickly and she knew things weren't right. A mother knows. The doctor, in as many words, told mom that it was Christmas Eve, he was with his family, and he did not think a trip to the hospital was necessary. I held hatred for the doctor and assumed my mother did too. When I asked her about it, she calmly told me that all the hatred in the world wasn't going to bring back her little girl. I never ever heard my parents speak disparagingly about the doctor. But I, the one family member who never really knew Kathy, decided it was my job to give the doctor the hatred he deserved. I mean, I didn't consciously set out to hate him, but I certainly hated the fallout to our family unit. So I placed the blame on him. Mom had told me his name and I thought I would never forget it. But over the years, I did. And also, my hatred waned. But it turned to disregard.

It wasn't until I heard Father Chris speak about his unintentional death story, that I had an awakening. He said that he went to the funeral, and that the family wanted nothing to do with him. I wondered if the doctor had the decency and quite frankly the bravery to come to the funeral home for Kathy. And why was the family of Father Chris' victim not

compassionate to him? Could they not see that he was remorseful and he certainly didn't intend to harm anyone? What is the matter with them, I thought?

Why couldn't they for....give... him? Ohhh. I see you God. I see what you did there. You brought me (literally) to a place to show me my blind spot. I can judge someone else for not being compassionate but I hadn't applied it in my own situation.

And so I started to think about the work that I needed to do around forgiveness. My hatred had turned into indifference over the years. I think I had to make the doctor not exist in my mind. Again, not consciously, but as a coping mechanism. You can't hold so much hatred without it destroying you. But even though I was now consciously thinking and praying to forgive this person, I didn't have a name so it didn't feel legitimate.

I told myself I would dig through all that was left of Kathy on this earthly plane—an envelope of papers. It was the fall and I gave myself until Christmas to dredge everything up again. I knew it would be emotional. But Christmas came and went. Finally, in January I found the doctor's name. I remembered it immediately when I saw it.

Remember the quarter in the garden? It wasn't lying on top of the ground, easy for me to see. It was buried deep where I was pulling at the gnarly roots. Deep, like the anger and sadness that had rooted in me so long ago. But like I did to the quarter, I'm rubbing the dirt off my heart. The quarter sits on my desk as a constant reminder to do my forgiveness work and to thank God for bringing me to St. David's.

Have a blessed Lent.
Cindy Weeder Bush

Editor's Note:

Cindy and her husband, Howard Rush, were interviewed for the November 2003 issue of *Connections* by John Hawkes for the "Spotlight on Newcomers" column. It is in that story that Cindy references the "quarter in the garden" she mentions above. If you would like to read that story, just go to www.stdavidssf.org and from the options along the top of the window, select MEDIA, NEWSLETTERS, and click on the November 2023 issue.

Spotlight on Newcomers

by *John Hawkes*

Dr. Joseph Thompson is the husband of Felicity, our new Seminarian at St. David's. He works as a Family Medicine Physician with Packard Health in Ann Arbor. His areas of special interest include Primary Care, Chronic Disease Management and Behavioral Health.

Dr. Thompson, along with Felicity, created a medical clinic in a small town in Southeastern Michigan, to minister to patients with mental health challenges within their community.

According to a biography on the Packard Health website, Joseph states, "I have a passion to work with patients and their families to focus on improving health status and working toward optimal functioning in their life circumstances."

Dr. Thompson received his undergraduate degree from Wayne State. He went to the University of Michigan Medical School, then began as an OB-GYN before switching to Family Medicine. He served for two years as a doctor in the Air Force. Afterwards, he became a faculty physician, training residents in hospital settings at various institutions around the country.

Joseph is from Sierra Leone in West Africa and speaks Krio (Creole) in addition to English. He attended Methodist churches as a youngster. Later, he went to the Anglican church with his grandmother. He maintains an interest in serving God.

Through his clinical work, Dr. Thompson's outreach has been successful in working with less fortunate patients who require treatment, by directing them towards regular doctors to receive the care that they urgently need.

Joseph has written a book entitled "Fractal Gridding Made Fractally Simple." It's a visual learning system that encompasses a new and very scientific way of thinking and doing things rapidly in today's world. According to an online dictionary, a fractal is a portion of a curve or figure that has the same character as a whole figure. They are used when describing structures such as a snowflake (no two are identical).

When not engaged in the medical profession, Dr. Thompson has a passion for film making. In his native country, he began the Sierra Leone Film Festival, an event that he is trying to make a staple there.



Last November, St. David's hosted the first-ever Alafia Film Festival that showcased two highly acclaimed films. One was titled "ifine," a half-hour documentary on skin bleaching among Africans and captures the beauty of blackness through the eyes of youth coming of age amid a skin-bleaching epidemic. It is presented in Krio with English subtitles. It premiered at the 2023 Charlotte Black Film Festival and was also nominated for an NAACP award. Joseph worked on the translation with Felicity's help.

The second film entitled "The German King," is about the inspiring life of an African prince raised in Germany who assumes his father's role as King of Cameroon and leads a rebellion to free his people from oppression. It was produced through Angel Studios, a crowd-funding entity that produced the TV series, "The Chosen." Joseph said that the studio has agreed to fund a multi-year series based on the film and that they are in the process of casting it.

After the Alafia Film Festival was announced, Joseph said at the time, "these are two superb films that move the soul and inspire action. Our hope is that our interaction and subsequent discussions can help us gain ground in the healing work that's needed in our culture."

We welcome Dr. Joseph Thompson to St. David's.

A Letter to my Brother

By Gerald Maloney

Dear Michael John,

America is a strange country, and I am writing to tell you about an unbelievable contact I had with the parish priest here. The other day when I was reading my messages on the computer and what did I see but a letter from the parish priest, himself, the Reverend Christopher Yaw, himself.

I have never received a letter from a priest before and I considered it a great honor and I was glad that I checked my mail at least every three months so his message was only seven weeks old. On his letter he wrote *“Good afternoon? This is Fr. Chris Yaw. I urgently need a favor from you, kindly reply to my text as soon as possible. God bless.”* Now aren't I just flattered. Sure, it is like being a lamb led to the slaughter.

The next day the Reverend Father messages me back. *“Glad to hear from you Jerry. I am in a meeting. I would have called but calls are not allowed. I need to get eBay gift-cards today for some woman battling cancer at the hospital, but I can't do that right now because of my busy schedule. Can you possibly get cards for me as soon as possible. I will pay you back later in cash or check.”*

Sure, now isn't he just a very saint of God, busy as he is and not able to use the telephone or leave his meetings and he is thinking all the time of the poor woman. It would be a sin to not step in and help him. I write back and say, *“Sure, tell me how much and how to do it.”*

Now fine priest that he is, doesn't he message me right back and tell me to get two \$200 gift certificates, generous man he is and he working so hard that he cannot even go the bank or talk on the phone. All that I have to do is text the 13-digit PIN number on the cards I get, and his Reverence promises to give me a check when I give him the cards. These Americans are really smart they are able to give people the business.

The Reverend Father messages me again. *“How soon will you be able to get the cards?”* Such a charitable priest. Then I stop, think, and message him back, *“It would be easier If you could give me your address so I could just send you a check. Let me know.”*

The Reverend Father messages me back. *“Just get the cards.”* His Reverence is a bit testy, but you can't blame him. Sure, is he not working all day and praying half the night? Now don't people say, sure, even a holy man has a few holes.

Then, all at once I know what I should do. I have a bit of money set aside to buy a drink for everyone who comes to the graveyard for my burial. I will get his address and give the money to his Reverence. Sure, he is a priest so I can trust him. So, I message him back and say I will just give him the money. If he tells me where he is, working all day and not able to use the telephone, I will send my great grand nephew to bring the money right to him so he can give it to the poor woman.

I do not know why, but I never got a response. It seems American priests are very touchy and there is something about PIN numbers and gift cards that just fascinates them. Tell all the boys at home and everyone you know to be careful when they talk to Americans about gift cards. There is something about them. I do not know what it is, but I think you should avoid any act of charity that deals with gift cards and PIN numbers. To be on the safe side, run like hell as soon as the subject comes up.

Your loving brother,
Gerald Patrick

A Glance Back in Photos

by Joanne Sackett



Advent Activities—Making Advent Wreaths and...
Buying Christmas Greenery from the Scouts.



On December 9, we had a very successful gun buy-back event.

Many long guns were turned in along with many hand guns.





The Annual Christmas Pageant once again told of the birth of Jesus.



Cookies! Cookies! We all love Christmas cookies. As usual, the donations for the cookies went to support our outreach projects.



On Christmas Eve, a harpist and a flautist joined our choir to make beautiful music!



These plarn mats are ready to distribute to the homeless.



Fr Chris speaks to the youth group visiting from St. John Armenian Church.



Anthony Stinnett sang a very moving spiritual acapella



The Rev. Barry Randolph from Church of the Messiah inspired us all when he visited in January.

Gabe Hartmark played a beautiful prelude on his viola.



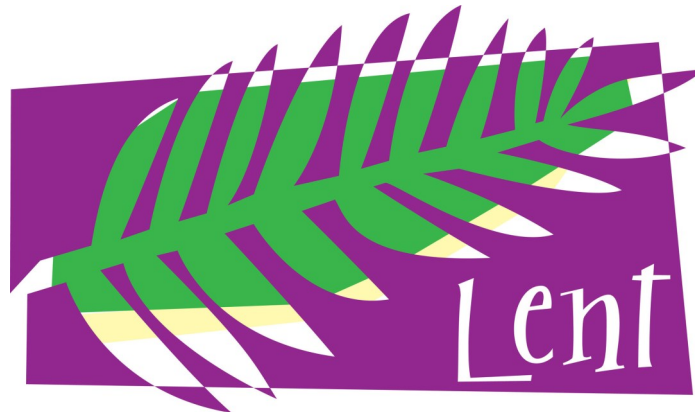
St. David's Episcopal Church

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Connections Newsletter Contacts

Fr Chris Yaw
Edna Buday
Amy Prather



New Building Projects Coming: Support Loose Change Sunday! March 10

Bring Your Loose Change! In keeping with a long-time tradition, we're inviting you to bring your loose change to church once a quarter as we continue to build for the future. We'll put these funds into our building fund as we continue to care for our campus in life-giving ways. Thank you for being such generous people!

Warm Clothing Needed!!

Sixty-five Venezuelan refugees (12 children) have relocated to a homeless shelter a few blocks from Church of the Messiah. They are in desperate need of warm clothing, underwear and feminine hygiene products. We will be collecting new or gently used clean clothing, boots and outerwear for them. Sweat suits are perfect as they can fit a variety of sizes and shapes. Donations can be made in lobby of the church. Thank you to all the generous souls at

Come Pray with Our Jewish Friends *We're Hosted for Prayer and a Meal at Shaarey Zedek*

Ever been to a Jewish synagogue to pray (like Jesus?). Join this Lenten adventure as we offer prayers and support— but also learn and grow— during Lent as we visit Congregation Shaarey Zedek on Saturday, March 9 from 10:45a to 1p, lunch included. Sign up at the Ministry Hub or by contacting the church office.

Monthly Men's Breakfast

*Join Us for Fellowship and
Spiritual Conversation*

All men of the church are invited to join in the fellowship of our monthly Men's Breakfast!



It's at 9am on Saturday, March 2nd at the Country Oven on 12 Mile (just east of Greenfield). Come meet new and old friends. You can sign up at the Ministry Hub in the Atrium or by contacting the church office.

'Shining Our Light' - Stewardship 2024

St. David's has some ambitious plans for 2024 and we need your help. This year's stewardship campaign is called 'Shining Our Light' and we're calling on all of us to ask the Lord how we can help shine the Light of Christ through our parish to love and help our community. If you have not yet done so, it is not too late to submit your 2024 pledge.

Newsletter Delivery

Connections is published on a quarterly basis with digital copies of the newsletter e-mailed to you in February, May, August and November. It is also available online at St. David's website: www.stdavidssf.org (select Media, then Newsletters.) Paper copies will be mailed ONLY to parishioners who request them. To request a mailed paper copy, please contact Amy Prather at (248) 557-5430