



The First Order

St. Stephen's Parish

Ph 413.448.8276 // Fx 413.442.5374 // mail@ststephenspittsfield.org // www.ststephenspittsfield.org

APRIL 2019

Reflections

I bind unto myself today
the virtues of the starlit heaven,
the glorious sun's life giving ray,
the whiteness of the moon at even,
the flashing of the lightning free,
the whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
the stable earth, the deep salt sea
around the old eternal rocks.

—St. Patrick's Breastplate

St. Patrick's Breastplate, Hymn 370 in our Hymnal, is a classic ordination hymn and is close to the hearts of many clergy people. Three times in my life, this was the opening hymn at a church service that changed my life: my ordination as a deacon, my ordination as a priest, and Tom's and my wedding. When I hear the opening strains of it, every nerve in my body and soul thrill with a sense of excitement. We will sing it together at the end of this month, as we step from these years together in community to



whatever is coming next, for you and for me.

But first, Holy Week and Easter. Together we are about to walk those same steps through Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection. Together we will wave our palm branches in the air and shout, "Hosanna!" and shortly afterward we will again raise our voices to shout, "Crucify him!" Together we will sit at table and break bread and celebrate the institution of the Eucharist. Together we will stand together at the foot of the cross, asking, "Were you there?" Together we will gather in the darkness, hearing the old stories of God's saving power, waiting breathlessly for the crash of cymbals and light that will turn our mourning to gladness.

This Christian story is our story.

We move through these seasons of our lives, by turns triumphant and humble, angry and sad, grieving and rejoicing. And yet, we are not left to walk this way alone. Christ walks with us, among us, beside us, in the guise of others, maybe mistaken for a gardener, or a neighbor, or a stranger ~ yet always with us.

We have walked together since 2013, and have weathered storms and sun, shared joys and sorrows. We have been woven forever into one another's stories. Now our journeys continue in new directions, with all the excitement and bittersweetness of any transition. New colors and textures will be woven into your lives and mine as we move separately into these next chapters.

I look forward to walking these weeks together, through the gate of death to eternal life. And when we emerge in Eastertide, I look forward to celebrating with you, giving thanks for all that has been and that will be.

Maundy Thursday “Middle Eastern” Potluck: 6pm at Zion!

Pastor Tim and I continue to imagine this service as it was originally~ quite literally the Last Supper. With this understanding, we invite our parishes to a potluck, and you are encouraged (but it’s not mandatory) to bring any sort of “Middle Eastern” foods to share.

These might be things like hummus and pita, tabouli, falafel, stuffed grape leaves, a whole roasted lamb, etc..... or just bring any food to share!

Maundy Thursday is also commemorated as the “birthday of the Eucharist”.

Join us that night at the Table for food and worship, commingled.

Easter Sunday Buffet!

Please drop off baked goods or other morning treats (storebought are fine!) in advance or bring them on Easter Sunday, and add them to the Easter Morning Buffet in the Guild Room!

Enjoy a festive pause after church, before getting on with the celebrations of the day!

The Parish Office will be closed on Easter Monday, April 22nd.

Did You Know?

- That **Brody Kaley** and **Ella LaMalfa** made the High Honors list at Herberg Middle School for the second quarter.

Editor’s note: If you have a student or fellow parishioner who has made one of the Honor Rolls, or who has done something worthy of recognition, please email me at joankurber@gmail.com or phone me at 499-3799. I try my best to catch everything in the Eagle, but know I often miss someone – and that shouldn’t be! Thanks!

Holy Week & Easter Schedule

Join us in Holy Week as we accompany Jesus through the days of his Passion.

Palm Sunday, April 14th: 10 am Holy Eucharist, with Blessing of the Palms

Maundy Thursday, April 18th: 6pm at **Zion Lutheran Church** Potluck and Worship at the Table

Good Friday, April 19th: 12 noon, spoken service; 7pm, service with choir

Easter Vigil, April 20th: 8pm, From Darkness to Light, we move from Lent into Easter

Easter Day, April 21st: 10 am, Festival Holy Eucharist; Easter Egg Hunt following the 10 a.m. service on Easter



April

Happy Birthday:

- 1 Noreen Reynolds
- 2 Valerie Andersen, John Crane,
Patricia Lake
- 3 Matt Reynolds (21!)
- 4 Craig Smith
- 5 Victoria Grace Shaw (2)
- 7 Bella Currie (19), Mark Trapani
- 8 Scott Haviland (a milestone!)
- 9 Maribeth Barney
- 10 Lexi Dadak (9), Kaytlyn Samuels (17)
- 11 Jane Church, Elizabeth Leonard, Skylar
Reynolds (a milestone!)
- 12 Susan Coles, Florence Proulx
- 13 Mary Adams, Rachel DiGrigoli,
Christopher Sanders (12),
Cathy Wheelock, Ruth Wood
- 14 Anna Black
- 15 Aiden Champagne (9)
- 17 Steven Bannon, Elizabeth Trapani
- 19 Hunter Brunelle
- 20 Scott Ellis
- 23 Kieran Coscia (15), Michael Laurin
- 25 Aaron Cassavant (16)
- 26 Abigail Fenton (a milestone!)
- 27 Seth DiGrigoli, Josie Ellis
- 29 Bill Carter

Happy Anniversary:

- 8 Cathy and Dan Doyle (1989 – 30th!)
- 14 Claudia and Gary Curry (1984)
- 28 Bette-Anne and Ken Eddy (1990)
Osneyda and Mark Miller (2001)

Prayer List

In addition to those listed in the Sunday Bulletin as being on the Prayer List, there is a group connected by telephone who also keep people in prayer when requested. Simply phone your request in to Sarah and she will relay the request to the appropriate person – and then starts the “Prayer Chain.” People will be kept on the list for 3 weeks, unless notified to remove a name – and the prayers can continue if you simply call Sarah and ask her to keep the name active. Prayer is Powerful!

Berkshire Interfaith Organizing

Have you ever wanted to change something in your community, but you weren’t sure how to do it? Do you have a sense your neighbors care about the same issues as you, but you haven’t had that conversation?

Community Organizing is a way to make change, get to know your neighbors, and develop leadership skills to work together. Come learn how to do it! Together we can!

Organizing 101: Harnessing the Power of Your Community!

Wednesdays 4:00 – 5:30 pm.

April 17, 24

BIO Office at the UU Church

175 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Wendy Krom, our Lead Organizer: 413-464-1804 or wendy@bioorganizing.org

A Meeting

On Sunday, March 24, several individuals (everyone listed in the Annual Report, according to Erin!) met for a delicious lunch and gathering to speak of Hopes and Dreams for the Parish. The most common theme, after hearing from several people, was that there was a need for more people to be involved. For instance, the Altar Guild members are asked to serve for two Sundays and then have a lot of “time off,” yet people pass right by their table on Rally Sunday. A few groups had sufficient participation, i.e. St. Stephen’s Table, but most did not.

Wouldn’t you like to be involved? There are so many choices, so please consider where you would like to serve – your participation gives you so much more satisfaction than the effort you put into whatever you choose to do!