



Dozens Gather During Lent to Discuss Suffering???

On Fridays in Lent we are gathering to ponder suffering and transformation in the baptizing community.

What on earth? People will actually come out for a soup-and-bread supper and talk about *suffering*? And what on earth, or in some other world, is *transformation*? Yes, people are coming out. Most likely because suffering is a part of everyone's life, if not now then in the future. And transformation is what the Gospel does if we let it. It changes the way we view things. More than that, it changes the way we are at our core.

The paintings of Ed Knippers surround us as we talk, think, question, pray about these matters. Bodiliness, violence, wounds are what the passion story is about. Either we can sanitize it and hope it all will go away by our becoming other-worldly and religious, or else we see that our religion is precisely about getting real as creatures that inhabit this planet.

Yet "getting real" does not mean getting simply rational (although on some days that sounds like a good idea). It means opening ourselves up to the possibility (I would say knowledge) that there are more dimensions of this universe than the human eye commonly measures. Things like holiness break into our mindsets, and things like servanthood challenge our middle-class assumptions. And things like Resurrection and Pentecost suggest that the world as we know and domesticate it is only a fraction of the truth.

So being open to the truth about ourselves and our world is where the Lenten journey is taking us this year. And, as always, it is just like that supper of soup and bread: appetizing and healthy, but ultimately only a taste of the banquet that could be.

There's still time for you to join us. Fridays in Lent, through March 14. Stations of the Cross at 6pm; supper at 6:50; programs in English and Spanish from 7:25 - 8:15pm.

*-The Rev. Frank Dunn,
Senior Priest*

Lenten Day of Prayer

Join us for a Lenten Day of Prayer, led by Carolyn Bluemle. This silent retreat will be held in the nave Saturday, March 8, from 9 am - 3 pm. Come and pray together in several different ways: yoga (exploring our incarnate nature and praying through the body; some previous yoga experience preferred but not required), meditation (quieting body and mind to hear God's voice), and reflections on vulnerability, reconciliation, and images of the passion. (You will be able to choose from images in the art exhibit, or the stations of the cross, or icons which Carolyn will bring.) Deep rest after a silent vegetarian lunch prepared by Chef Rachel Merga. The \$45 fee includes lunch. Scholarships are available.

Contact Carolyn:
www.cmagicisafoot.com.

BREAD

March 2, 2008

The Fourth
Sunday in Lent

Number 1595

**SEEING
LITURGICALLY**

Patrick Ellis,
Washington
Theological
Union professor and
St. Stephen's
parishioner,
presents "The
Arts in Christian
Worship" at The
Church of the
Epiphany's
midday brown
bag series,
Nourish Your
Soul, on
Thursday, March
6, 12:30-
1:30pm, at
1317 G St, NW

BREAD

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WIN Pursues Affordable Housing In Columbia Heights

On February 13, WIN leaders from St. Stephen's, All Souls and St. Augustine met with several city housing officials to discuss the formation of a housing SWAT team for Columbia Heights to enforce affordable-housing preservation through a variety of proactive approaches. Mayor Fenty has set a goal to preserve 500 units of housing in Columbia Heights within 2 years, which includes at this point several buildings close to St. Stephen's.

Further negotiations will be held to hash out the details of the SWAT team, but with a firm commitment from the mayor on this issue we are optimistic that it is only a matter of time before this new asset will be in operation.

St. Stephen's WIN team has a few upcoming events; all are invited to take part:

March 9- Celebration with Mayor Fenty at All Souls Unitarian to recog-

nize WIN's work on affordable housing in Columbia Heights and the city, and to introduce new legislation. This will take place during All Soul's 11am service.

March- Lobby visits with key council members in order to build support for new housing legislation.

April/May- Citywide Action with Mayor Fenty to report on progress towards Neighborhoods First Goals

Lastly, a big thanks to all who have represented St. Stephen's Church in community meetings these past months. Our presence as an institution on the issue of affordable housing is being noticed. I hope you can join us in action in these coming months as we continue to make impressive strides towards a more fair and livable city for all DC residents.

For more information, please be in touch.

-Matt Brouwer

Dear St. Stephen's Church:

In 2001, a group of United Methodist students started regular mission trips to Chinchu, Peru, to work in outreach and service to a people in great spiritual and physical poverty. The work has continued each summer over the last few years. Great strides were being made throughout the community and the church through outreach and the construction of a children's day school.

On August 16, 2007, a powerful earthquake devastated the region. Hundreds were killed and thousands injured. Hundreds of homes and buildings were destroyed or damaged, including the Methodist church.

A group of United Methodist minis-

ters, laypersons, and students, many of whom are veterans of previous trips, have decided to accept the call of Christ to be in service to the "least of these" and is organizing a service trip to Chinchu for May 1-9, 2008. Among the participants is a group from Vanderbilt Divinity School, which I now attend.

We will fill an immediate need to assist in rebuilding and repairing homes and schools and be in pastoral care to those who are mentally, spiritually, and physically broken.

None of this is possible without the support of those who affirm this calling in us. Therefore, we are asking for you to help make this trip possible.

WORSHIP

at St. Stephen's

We ask you to faithfully participate by your prayers and your gifts so that we may participate by our presence and our service. The trip will be costly and we cannot afford it alone. Yet, with faith the size of a mustard seed and with your gifts of financial support, this greatest obstacle can easily be overcome. Likewise, this experience will not be possible without your support of prayer and encouragement. It is my prayer that you will consider helping in one or both ways.

Individuals can make donations by writing checks to “Danny Redding-

Rhodes” with “Peru - Jessica Bridges” printed in the Memo line. Checks may be mailed to: Danny Redding-Rhodes, c/o Vanderbilt Divinity School, 411 21st Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37240-1121.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in participating in this work for God’s Kingdom on Earth.

In the Peace of Christ,
Jessica Bridges

(*Jessica worshipped with us last year while interning with Sojourners Magazine.*)

Doing God’s Work with Kids

A new monthly program, “Doing God’s Work”, has begun for the older children who attend Sunday School. Once a month a speaker joins our regular Sunday School time and tells the children what they do for work or as a volunteer.

We have explored the problems of juvenile detention with Liane Rozzell, discussed peace-making techniques with Barbara Wien, and learned about starting schools in Afghanistan and Bangladesh with Colette Chabbott. The main idea is to engage the children in the many ways we can live out our lives doing God’s work. I think the kids really appreciate the effort each presenter put into his/her talk, and they join in discussions enthusiastically.

Possible topics for upcoming months include working to rebuild a church in New Orleans, and perhaps a (no doubt very popular) talk by a woman who does puppy rescue and adoption. Future presenters are needed, so if you would like to do a presentation, please let me know.

-Barb Neal

Dear Church Family:

February 6, 2008
Greetings from beautiful Guyana, our lovely native land.

We all arrived home from various parts of the globe to celebrate and give thanks for our mother’s 100 years of life on this planet. It was also a reunion of sorts—a gathering of family and friends, some of whom hadn’t met in over 50 years.

Both the Saturday celebration and the Sunday thanksgiving were splendid affairs, with even the weather cooperating. My mother’s grandsons took turns on both days lifting her from the second floor to the lawn where tents were set up. In the beginning, she seemed agitated, but when she realized that she was the center of attention, she cooperated, asking, “For me? For me?” She was also able to read from the prayer book and sing along with us.

What a blessing!

Leota Lawrence

(*Leota returns to the US any day now from her month in Guyana.*)

Sundays

8:00a—

Holy Eucharist,
Rite I

10:30a—

Holy Eucharist,
Rite II with
Children’s
Spiritual
Formation

5:00pm—

Misa en Español

Celebrants and
Preachers

3/2: The Rev.
Sarabeth
Goodwin (8:00,
10:30, 5:00)

3/9: The Rev.
Frank Dunn
(8:00; 10:30);
The Rev.
Sarabeth
Goodwin (5:00)

LECTIONS

4th Sunday in Lent
(March 2)

1 Samuel 16:
1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:
8-14

John 9:1-41

5th Sunday in Lent
(March 9)

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

THE SAINTS

Monday, March 3

JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY, PRIESTS,
1791, 1788

Birthday: Michael Wilpers

Friday, March 7

PERPETUA AND HER COMPANIONS,
MARTYRS AT CARTHAGE, 202

Birthday: Joan Bennett

Tuesday, March 11

*Heavenly Birthday: Julia B.
Reynolds, 1983; Ellen
Williams, 2007*

Wednesday, March 12

GREGORY THE GREAT, BISHOP OF ROME,
604

Birthday: John McMullen

Thursday, March 13

*Birthday: LaGrande Lewis,
Larry Coughern*

Friday, March 14

Birthday: Romel Dick, Jr.

Sunday, March 16

Birthday: Shirley Evbuoma

THE PRAYERS

Here's who we've been praying for recently:

•Louise Dyer and Falan Yinug, Jessica and Aaron Hansen, Catherine and Paul Bugala, and Lisa Luceno and Gabriel Pinski, who are expecting babies;

•Ridgely Bennett, Terrey Danley, Brother John Mathis, Maria Navarrete, and all who desire to be restored to health; those who are homebound; and all who care for aging relatives, the sick and the homebound;

•Winifred Allen (mother of Pat Gray), Jennie May Allen (grandmother of Pat Gray), Robert Aten (father of Diane), Duane Bonds, Helen Bonds (mother of Duane), Bob Brown (former parishioner), Clara, Jeremy & Kyra Grant (Jane Bishop's daughter and family), Michael Lippe (friend of Priscilla Phelps), and all those who have been commended to our prayers.

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ON THE COVER...

Detail from the painting "Christ Ministered to by the Angel" by Ed Knippers, on display in the church through Holy Week.

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