



The Journey
St. Paul's Episcopal Church Monthly Newsletter
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Sin and God's Wrath - and Lent

Sin is intrinsically a theological concept. You can have ethics, and fail your ethical code and still be an atheist. You can have a moral code and be an agnostic. But sin, sin is a Church word which means to be separated from God.

The Church has always believed that we are all sharers in a state of sin, calling it Original Sin. Original Sin is a state into which we are born, something shared by all human beings. It is humanity living together apart from God. Whatever your beliefs about the stories of Adam and Eve, their fall reflects the sad state of fallen human nature. Being subject to Original Sin, as we mature and grow we also develop patterns of sinful behavior that the Church calls Actual Sin - sinful stuff we are responsible for directly. They are the natural consequences of living as part of a race separated from God, even if baptized as a child. We just "pick it up" even before rational thought begins and it begins to snowball as we grow and age until we come to ourselves and turn to God.

Sin, again, means alienation from God. Our God is a God of love, but not a patsy. God is also a God of consuming holiness. In fact, according to the Bible, to see God is to die, to be consumed by his holiness. God's wrath and God's love are the two sides of God's paradoxical splendor. God's love and wrath are related like light and darkness are. And we - as the writer of Ephesians put it-- are "by nature children of wrath." (2:3) This is the result of both Original Sin and Actual Sin (collectively and individually). God's opposition to all sin is wrath. We in the modern Church have lost our nerve in proclaiming the truth about God and God's wrath. By doing so, we cheapen the Good News by watering down the Bad News from which we have been rescued.

Being by nature children of wrath is why the Gospel is such ecstatic good news. "For he has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14). God has saved us, saved us from ourselves and from his wrath. Yahoo!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

What, then, about Lent? Well, both Original Sin and Actual Sin have dug tenacious roots in us by the time we are actually serious about life with God. Lent is when we, assured because of our baptism that he has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, can with the confidence of God's love look at some of the chaos within, address it and perhaps grow beyond it a little. I hope yours is a holy Lent.

God's Peace
Jay

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Adult Lenten Study

This year we will be studying the Gospel of Mark for our Lenten Study, following the Lenten Suppers. We will be using the noted biblical scholar, Werner Kelber's *Mark's Story of Jesus* as a study guide. You may pick up a copy at the Church Office (they are free) for as long as they last.

Jay

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Communications Updates...

Web Site: The Communications Committee would like to thank Preston Depew for his many hours of hard work on our current church website. This has been a tremendous labor of love for our church and we feel his contributions deserve much credit and gratitude. The current website requires programming expertise that only a few church members have, however, and our committee has discovered a new format that is very user-friendly to maintain and update, even for non-programmers. We are therefore working on creating a new website, anticipated to become available in late March (though it will always be updating and changing). One feature of our new website is the ability for individuals to sign up to receive electronic notification whenever new announcements are posted. We can therefore post static information, monthly information, and more frequent announcements all within the same format! More information regarding the new website will be forthcoming, but in the meantime we are asking committees and groups to send in information that can be added to the website. If your committee or group would like to contribute information to the website, please send an electronic document to Alison Barton: alisonthesp@yahoo.com

Name tags: The results of the survey indicated a majority of members would like to have name tags, so these will be in place in a few weeks. For those of you who don't need them, or would rather not wear them, please give them a try for the benefit of

those would have said it would be very helpful. You may know everyone, but they may not know you! The greeters will help you remember to put them on and take them off and leave them on the board each Sunday. If you do not have a name tag, or have lost yours, please contact Kathleen Donnellan: 578-6955. She is going to oversee the project. There will be blank tags and pens for guests to use.

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***Meals on Wheels volunteers for
March***

March 7

Cooks: Bill & Eleanor Ford, Betty O'Neill

Drivers: Hunter, Robin Wilkerson, Borg, Yungmeyer

March 14

Cooks: Ed & Elena Allen

Drivers: Treva Tarpley, Paluzzi, Linda McGuire, Stout

March 21

Cooks: Bob & Jean Peace

Drivers: Peace, Friant, Donnellan, Danette Price

March 28

Cooks: Becky Friant, Linda McGuire, Kathleen Donnellan

Drivers: Deb Caligulari, Forrester, Berg, Kramer

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Ulster Project

{{{ JANET – there was no attachment from Ann Yungmeyer – could you copy what it said into this section?? Thanks }}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}

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Bits & Pieces...

The Altar Guild is out of containers in which altar flowers are delivered to shut-ins, patients, etc. Needed: wide-mouth vases and/or 46/52 oz. juice or vegetable cans. They can be taken to the sacristy on Sunday or delivered to the church during the week.

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If you'd like to stay up-to-date on the Diocesan search for a new Bishop, you can bookmark this link:

<http://www.etdiocese-search.com/>

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Thanks to your generosity on SOUPER BOWL Weekend: the EYC collected \$50 and 132 cans of soup to donate to our Food Pantry. Thanks again!!

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