

THE PIPER

FEBRUARY 2018



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Ramblings in the Redwoods

I'm sitting here right after finishing up my choices of music for the Folk Mass, looking at all the songs in the three-ring-binder that Sharon and Clark made for me several years back, amazed at how many songs we have played and sung together.

You told me when I came here that one of the things that you liked about my résumé was the musical background. You encouraged me to make guitar and song part of my ministry in this place and that was not a tough sell. You know the old saying, that the one who cuts his/her own wood is warmed twice. I have also heard it said that the one who sings prays twice.

That is not a part of everyone's prayer life, of course. There are people for whom music is more of a distraction than an assist to praying, people who value the quiet. That, I think, comes from those who have loved the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer; the spirituality of those services is a quiet spirituality, a spirituality that turns inward in contemplation. The spirituality of the Eucharist, however, tends to be a triumphal spirituality, a spirituality that looks outward in rejoicing. Both kinds of spirituality respond well to such things as chants, but the Eucharist is more conducive to music that makes the heart jump.

This is not to say that the Eucharist does not fit well with quieter hymnody. Especially in seasons like Lent and Advent it does. But, again, the Eucharist is a place for praise and thanksgiving, and those expressions find a home in song. For me, the guitar has been my choice of musical expression, and when I rediscovered my home in the Christian faith, the guitar moved into it with me.

I grew up in a musical household. My mother had played the violin in her youth and she still had the instrument. My grandfather had played the trombone, and I made an effort with that instrument as a teenager. My Dad had a ukulele and an ocarina, also known as a sweet potato, which he could make music with. He also had a chromatic harmonica, the one with the little lever you could change keys with. My parents were both good singers, my mother an outstanding one. My Dad used to say that everything he learned about singing he learned from my Mom.

We had a Hi-Fi in our house, a big, imposing piece of furniture with a large speaker. It was mono, of course; stereo didn't start to be part of recording until the '60s. We had those old record "albums" which were true albums; LP records in a book, with each separate record in its own sleeve in the book. Those records were classical, and I learned to enjoy them all. We had kids' records like "Peter and the Wolf" and "Tubby the Tuba." But we also had swing music, and one of my favorites, George Gershwin's "American in Paris" and "Rhapsody in Blue."

I listened to all of that, but growing up in the '50s, I also discovered early Rock and Roll, Rhythm and Blues, and Folk Music, beginning with the Kingston Trio, and continuing with Joan Baez, Peter Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan, among others. That was where I learned to love the guitar.

So many of those musicians had their beginnings in church music, singing spirituals and Gospel songs. That was where they learned the phrasing, the rhythm, the sound that they carried into secular songs without leaving the religious music behind. Early Rock and Roll is full of biblical references, and folk music is full of country and gospel tunes. There is a lot of material there.

I have an aunt who is just over a year older than I am who really likes current Praise Music, and was surprised that I didn't know one of the well-known composers and performers of that music. I had to tell her that I was stuck in the past. I like those old-time songs better. No reflection on her, or those musicians, or anyone else who enjoys more contemporary music. I like those old-time roots songs.

I have been grateful for the opportunity you have given me to bring that love of guitar and piano driven music to the front of St. Andrew's Church. I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have.

Speaking of which, I want to alert you to something that is I am trying to create. Saturday, June 30, is my last day at St. Andrew's. I am working to get some kind of musical event together for Saturday, June 23. Put it on your calendars; I don't know yet what all kind of music we will play, but we will have some kind of festival.

-Blaine



St. Andrew's Women's Reading Group

When: Monday, Feb. 12th, 7pm

Where: Jean's

We will be discussing Oxygen.

by Cathy Cassela

Call Jean for more info, 335-5682.



Preschool News

A few months ago, the Preschool asked Maggie Williams to do an audit of the Preschool for last year. The Board asked her to update that audit to the present and make a projection to the end of the school year. Our congregational members of the Preschool Board reported the results of that back to the Vestry at its most recent meeting, in January. The report showed that given the current situation, the Preschool would end the year over \$6,000 in the red.

As reported to the Annual Meeting, the Vestry decided to inform the Preschool Director that they wanted to give her time to try to bring income up to a level which would enable us to finish the year without going into the red. A deadline of March 15 was set, and if the financial situation did not improve, we would cease our support for the Preschool after April 30.

Director Stone said that she decided to let the parents know that the Preschool would be closing, believing it would take some time for them to find new placements for their children. However, the parents began finding alternate placements for the children immediately, with the result that the anticipated income of the Preschool became worse instead of better. Director Stone did not think that the Preschool would be able to recover.

After discussions with Fr. Blaine and Sr. Warden Michael Freeman, it seems to be clear that the ongoing long-term red-ink budget has reached the end of its string and the Preschool will be closing soon.

None of us is happy about this situation. St. Andrew's Preschool has been a constant benefit since its inception in 1982. Though we tried to keep it going after Sharon Fishel retired as Director, it became harder to maintain the income level it took to continue the Preschool as an operation that could pay its own way. Alli Maxson, and then Sherry Stone, tried to maintain the enrollment level so that the Preschool could run in the black, but ultimately were not able to do that.

We all value what the Preschool has brought to this Valley, and the dedication of its Directors. We are grateful for the way the Directors, Teachers and Aides have filled this need for our community.

-Blaine

In Good Faith: Always we begin again

Not to bring up a potentially sore subject, but how are your New Year's resolutions going? I mean, it's been a couple weeks so I think this is a fair question. I'm not asking this to put you on the defensive. For all I know, your new vegan diet is working brilliantly and your six-pack abs have already caused a stir at the gym. Of course, if things aren't going exactly according to plan, you're not alone. Apparently only 8 percent of New Year's resolutions stick, which is why I pre-empted the whole thing this year by not making any.

As I thought about this annual tradition of making and breaking resolutions, it reminded me a bit of the spiritual life. We fall away from our resolutions just as we fall away in our relationship with God. Every person of faith, no matter how devoted, goes through cycles of engagement and disengagement. Sometimes this occurs around prayer, those conversations with God that offer perspective and relationship. We intentionally set aside time for silence and introspection and all is well for awhile, until the demands of our lives come crashing back in, causing us to stumble.

Sometimes it happens with renewed dedication to church attendance before falling away again. We get out of the habit or something happens in our lives that we can't make sense of and we decide it's just not worth it. It seems easier to give up on God and drown out the still, small voice within our souls that gently invites us back into relationship.

And it's easy enough to do. Just turn up the volume on your life by avoiding silence, shunning introspection, over-scheduling yourself, staying online, and keeping the TV on. That's pretty much the formula for avoiding the deeper questions of life.

These cycles of connection and separation don't make us bad or weak, just human. They also bind us to the generations of saints and sinners who have come before us in the faith. People just like you and me whose faith has fallen short at one time or another.

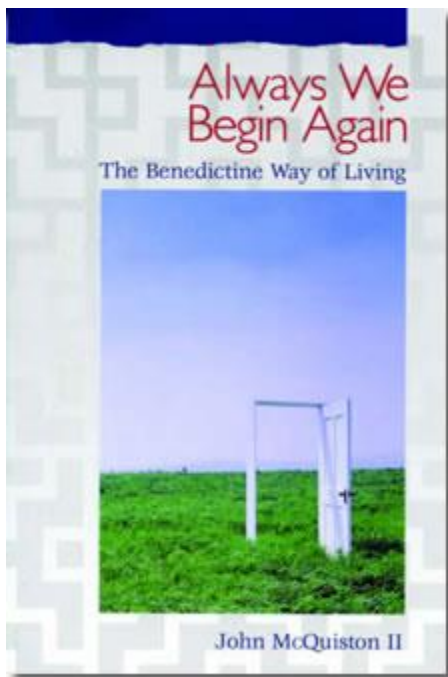
The difference between breaking a New Year's resolution and falling away from relationship with God hinges upon divine invitation. The guilt and sense of failure we put on ourselves when we give in to temptation and eat those bad carbs even after we resolved not to, is self-inflicted. In contrast, God doesn't curse us when we stumble but offers a hand to lift us back up and make us whole.

One of my favorite quotes from St. Benedict, the sixth century father of western monasticism, is "Even when we fail, always we begin again." We will fail;

we will fall. That's not a question. But each stumble is an opportunity to begin again and renew right relationship with God. That hand with which God offers to ' lift us up is always extended in invitation. God waits patiently and eagerly for us to return.

So, perhaps you'll resolve to draw closer to your faith this year. Or at least start asking some deeper questions about the world around you. No one has all the answers, of course, but every faith community helps us see the divine presence in our midst. And if you stumble along the way? That's fine. Because "even when we fail, always we begin again."

Reprinted by permission. The Rev. Tim Schenck serves as Rector of the Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist in Hingham, Massachusetts. Visit his blog "Clergy Confidential" at clergyconfidential.com



Speaking of beginning again, check out John McQuiston's tiny little book, *Always We Begin Again, the Benedictine Way of Living*. "[This book] is the work of an attorney with a busy commercial practice who searched for a truly balanced life and found the blueprint for it in a sixth-century text... the Rule [of St. Benedict] still speaks to all of us who hunger for a meaningful and creatively balanced framework for life.

Phyllis Tickle, from the forward

Tidbits and FYI

Buy SCRIP: See Sharon Fishel for details and to purchase.

Bring non-perishable food for Valley Churches United.

We have 34 pledges for 2018 for \$65,864!

THANK YOU

to all who have completed pledge cards.

5 Lies American Culture Feeds Us Every Day

1. *You Can Be Anything You Want to Be*: The truth is every person has a unique set of gifts. You can't be anything you want to be. But this is a good thing. It frees you up to be the man or woman God has called you to be.
2. *Your Actions Have No Bearing on Anybody Else*: Your actions are affecting others. If not right now, then tomorrow or tomorrow. See # 4 below.
3. *There is Only One Road You Can Take*: God has a plan for your life. But only one road—not so. God's plan is not always linear. This is a Western mindset, not a Biblical one. God's direction can include branches and offsets. The path to the final destination can be achieved more than one way.
4. *Individualism is a Noble Pursuit*: You should not be dependent on any other person. You take care of you. But that's not the church. We trust and rely on God and one another. We, together, are the body of Christ.
5. *If You Are Not Busy, You Are Lazy*: Americans are exhausted men and women. Depression and anxiety are astronomically high. Why? Partly because our culture says if every hour is not filled with something, you are lazy. To Jesus, Sabbath and retreating were as integral to His mission as engaging, healing and teaching.

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Episcopal Church Challenged to Repent

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, issued a call Jan. 22 for the Episcopal Church to spend Lent and beyond examining its history and how it has handled or mishandled cases of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.

The two say in a letter to the church that recent “compelling testimony from women who have been sexually harassed and assaulted by powerful men has turned our minds to a particularly difficult passage of holy scripture.” The story of the rape of King David's daughter Tamar by her half-brother Amnon (2 Samuel 13:1-22), they said, “is a passage in which a conspiracy of men plots the exploitation and rape of a young woman. She is stripped of the



The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, President, House of Deputies and Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry

Jennings and Curry call in their letter for an Ash Wednesday Day of Prayer on Feb.14, during which Episcopalians should meditate on how the church has “failed to stand with women and other victims of abuse and harassment.”

Curry and Jennings said: “As our societies have been forced into fresh recognition that women in all walks of life have suffered unspoken trauma at the hands of male aggressors and harassers, we have become convinced that the Episcopal Church must work even harder to create a church that is not simply safe, but holy, humane and decent.”

Jennings told the council that many Christians might think that such exploitation and abuse happen only in Hollywood or in business and industry “but not in the holy work we do.” However, she said, “those problems have been endemic in our culture in the church for far longer than Hollywood, or tech culture, or corporate journalism have existed.”

It's brief, quiet, and a great way to refill your spiritual tank half way through the week.

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Angel in the Kitchen
Feel'n good when cook'n
Sharing the love of God through your love
of cooking



FOR LENT: MAKING PRETZELS

Pretzels have an important meaning during Lent. Pretzels were made in the fifth century as a Lenten food. The dough was shaped in such a way to look like two arms crossed in prayer.

Pretzels were made to take the place of bread, since milk, eggs, and fats were not used during Lent. As a family, make some pretzels! Enjoy the pretzels and let them remind you that Lent is a time of prayer. Before you eat the pretzels, say a prayer together:

Dear God, we ask you to bless these pretzels which we are about to eat. Each time we eat them may we be reminded that this is the season of Lent, a time of prayer. Help us to remember to pray for those who need our prayers each day. Keep your loving arms around us, O God, to protect us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

BREAD PRETZELS

1 1/4 cups water (85°)	1 egg yolk
1 tablespoon dry yeast	1 to 2 teaspoons water or milk
1/2 teaspoon sugar	Coarse salt
4 1/2 cups flour	

Let yeast and sugar dissolve in water for one hour. Add flour to yeast mixture and beat until smooth. Knead mixture for seven to eight minutes. Place in a greased, covered bowl and let the dough rise until double in size. Divide the dough in half; then divide each half into smaller pieces of equal size. Roll each piece in your hands to make pencil shapes twelve (12) to fifteen (15) inches long. Shape each length of dough into pretzels. Place on a greased baking sheet. Brush with egg yolk and water or milk mixture. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake at 325 degrees until lightly browned on top.

FROZEN BREAD DOUGH PRETZELS

Thaw one loaf of frozen bread dough. Let the dough rise according to directions on the package. Divide the dough in half and place on a floured board. Cut each half into eight (8) equal pieces. Roll small pieces into strips about eighteen (18) inches long. Shape into pretzels. Place on a greased baking sheet. Brush the tops of the pretzels with beaten egg yolk mixed with one (1) tablespoon of water. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake at 350 degrees for twenty (20) to thirty (30) minutes or until lightly browned on top.

Episcopal church converted to emergency response hub after deadly California mudslides By David Paulsen and Mary Frances Schjonberg



A California National Guard humvee is parked outside All Saints-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Montecito, California, where the church was being used this week as a triage center for paramedics and as an evacuation site by the National Guard. Photo: All Saints

Calendar Events

Date	Time	Event	Notes
Sun 2/4	10:00am	Folk Mass	Sanctuary
Sun 2/4	6:00pm	Bible Study	Parish Hall
Mon 2/5	6:30pm 7:00pm	AA Ham Radio Class	Upper Room Parish Hall
Wed 2/7	5:15pm 7:00pm	Evening Prayer Choir Practice	Sanctuary Sanctuary
Sat 2/10	8:00am	Men's Breakfast	Rocky's Cafe
Sun 2/11	8 & 10	VCUM Blessing of Food	Bring non-perishables
Mon 2/12	6:30pm 7:00pm	AA Ham Radio Class	Upper Room Parish Hall
Tue 2/13 Shrove Tue	6:00pm	Pancake Dinner-Hosted by Altar Guild	Parish Hall
Wed 2/15	6:00pm 6:30pm	Imposition of Ashes (no Evening Prayer Service) Girl Scouts	Sanctuary Parish Hall
Thu 2/16	6:45pm	Vestry meeting	Parish Hall
Sat 2/17	3:30pm	Willowbrook Service Meet at church to carpool	
Sun 2/18	8 & 10 6:00pm	Holy Eucharist (Rite I/Rite II) Lenten Soup Supper	Sanctuary Parish Hall
Sat 2/24	9:00am	Vestry Retreat	TBD
Sun 2/25	8&10 Anytime	Holy Eucharist (Rite I / Rite II) Piper articles Due	Sanctuary



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Where God is worshiped and the people are fed