



# The Episcopal Community

*Marked as Christ's Own For Ever*

## The Episcopal Community Newsletter

*Marked as Christ's Own For Ever*

Volume 3, Issue 1

February 2012

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Dear Sisters,

As conveners of the Circle of Leadership, we are writing to invite you, a member of The Episcopal Community or perhaps a prospective member, to share our excitement about our gathering next summer. The Episcopal Community will hold its first-ever national gathering in Indianapolis July 2-12, 2012—a history-making event in which we hope you will want to participate.

We will hold our first-ever national business meeting on Saturday morning, July 7. While many of us know some of the other members already, this will be our first opportunity to get acquainted with the whole membership—our far-flung sisters gathered in one place. If you can only be present for a short time, plan to make it on Friday evening and all day Saturday, July 6 and 7. For those of us who have already made our vows, we will reaffirm them on Saturday; we hope too that those who have been preparing for membership will be installed at that time so that we can all share in that joy.

Our goal in gathering in Indianapolis at this time is to be of service to The Episcopal Church. In part we will do that through a Prayer Garden that we will establish and staff in the General Convention's exhibit hall (set-up begins Monday, July 2; take-down, Tuesday and Wednesday, July 10, 11). Before General Convention begins, we will pray over the chairs of the bishops in the House of Bishops and the tables in the House of Deputies, leaving behind cards to tell that we are supporting their work with our prayers. We have been asked and agreed to be responsible for the General Convention's prayer chapel. We hope to be very visible as well at the daily worship services of the General Convention and in other volunteer positions. We hope you will want to join in this effort in whatever time you can be present.

Our Gathering hotel is the Indianapolis Downtown Sheraton, six blocks from the Indiana Convention Center where General Convention is being held. Information on making your reservation is in the accompanying sheets. To help contain costs for our members, we will have a "hospitality room" at the hotel in which we can not only gather for community-building and socializing but also, if we wish, prepare and eat simple breakfasts and pack a lunch to carry with us to the General Convention sites. There will be a cost-per-day for those who wish to participate in the breakfast/lunch option; the signup and dollar amount are also in the registration material. Each registrant will have a keycard for the hospitality room so that it will become our gathering place.

If you have questions later, email Bev Ruebeck at [b.ruebeck@att.net](mailto:b.ruebeck@att.net) or telephone 317.490.3212.

We pray you see you among us in Indianapolis next July! Remember, we are....

Marked as Christ's Own For Ever,

*Elizabeth Hart*

*Sue Schlanbusch*

## **You are invited to join with The Episcopal Community July 2-12, 2012, in Indianapolis for our first National Gathering 2012 at General Convention**

**Registration:** There is a reservation fee of \$25 per person. Make check payable to The Episcopal Community and send to Kathy Funk (address on the registration form). There will be no refunds after June 23.

**Hotel:** The conference hotel is the **Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre**, 31 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

**Reservations:** You must make your own reservation directly with the hotel (not through a corporate number). To take advantage of the group rate, call Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel at 888.625.5144. Ask for In-House Reservations and mention you want The Episcopal Community rate.

If you need a roommate, we may be able to help match up "singles."

**Parking:** The hotel offers self parking at \$25 per 24-hour period and valet parking at \$30 per 24-hour period. Both valet and self parking offer in-and-out privileges. Hourly self parking fee is \$5 per hour with a maximum of \$25 per day. You may pay parking on your room bill or use the pay machine on the first level at the garage entrance.

**Travel:** If you will be flying in, use the local airport, Indianapolis (IND), which is approximately 16 miles from the hotel. A taxi from the airport costs about \$40. Shuttle service is about \$16 with Carey Indiana (317.241.6700; reservation required) or Affiliated Transportation (317.484.2424; reservation required).

**Driving directions:** Go to <http://www.starwoodhotels.com/sheraton/property/area/directions>

**Meals:** Beginning Monday afternoon, July 2, there will be a Hospitality Room for which each of us will have a key. Snacks and beverages will be provided, as well as internet access. There will be a free-will offering to cover the cost of the refreshments provided.

Meals are your personal obligation, including the Gathering Dinner on Saturday evening in the hotel restaurant.

Materials for preparing simple breakfasts and lunches will be available for those who sign up for this option using the preference form; that service costs \$10 per person per day, and you will need to make your reservations and include your payment when you register. (If you will not be availing yourself of the breakfast/lunch option, you may ignore the preference form.)

**Program:** There will be a business meeting on Saturday, July 7, during which new members can be installed and all members will renew their vows. Our National Chaplain, the Rt. Rev. Philip M. Duncan, II, will be the speaker that evening, followed by the Gathering Dinner in the hotel restaurant. You will receive a schedule of activities that includes opportunities to serve in the Prayer Garden and the Convention chapel as well as in other ways as our plans develop.

**Internet Access:** If you wish to have an Internet connection in your own room, the hotel has a daily charge of \$11.95. There is free access in the main lobby and in our Hospitality Room.

**Questions? Problems with a room reservation?** Contact Bev Ruebeck at [b.ruebeck@att.net](mailto:b.ruebeck@att.net) or **317.490.3212**.

**Episcopal Women *Grow • Connect • Support • Serve***



# The Episcopal Community

*Marked as Christ's Own For Ever*

## Registration Form for National Gathering 2012

Name (*as you want it to appear on your nametag*) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Circle (*if applicable*) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:** Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

I will be at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel/ \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel/ home

the nights of (please circle): July 1 July 2 July 3 July 4 July 5 July 6 July 7 July 8 July 9

July 10 July 11 for a total of \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Food allergies or special needs (dietary or physical): \_\_\_\_\_

Other needs (like a roommate): \_\_\_\_\_

May we share your name, address, phone number, email address on a roster of participants?  Yes  No

Please mail this form, filled out completely, with a check for \$25 plus the cost of whatever you choose for the breakfast/lunch option made out to **The Episcopal Community** to:

Kathleen Funk  
P.O. Box 6219  
Pahrump, NV 89041

There will be no refunds of the reservation fee after June 23.

**Episcopal Women** *Grow • Connect • Support • Serve*

## Preference Form for the Breakfast/Lunch Option

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates you will want this option: \_\_\_\_\_

For convenience and lower expenses, we propose to make materials for simple breakfasts and brown-bag lunches available in our hospitality room at the Sheraton, to which all members of the Community will have access during General Convention in July 2012. There is a \$10 fee per day for this option, to be paid with your registration. In order to help the committee establish a shopping list for this service, it would be helpful if those of you who are planning to utilize this option would answer some questions to guide our planning.

If you were to open the cupboard or refrigerator door to fix yourself breakfast, what would you hope to find there

If you included cereal in the previous answer, suggest three that you would find acceptable.

What kind of milk for your cereal: regular homogenized, 2%, 1%, skim, lactose-free, soy?

If you included yogurt, what type/flavor?

If you were to pack yourself a simple lunch to take to the exhibit hall, the chapel, or wherever you expected to spend your day, what would you hope to include?

If you don't drink regular or decaf coffee, what would you rather have?

When choosing wine, do you prefer red or white, either, or neither? Or would you rather have beer?

Any other preferences or special needs? (We'll do the best we can to oblige you.)

**Please return this page with your Registration Form if you want to participate in this option.**



The Rt Rev Philip Duncan  
National Chaplain

## Lent four blocks away

When I was in my last year of seminary, I took the train home for a long weekend to visit my parents. When I got off the train I stood

looking across the street to where the bakery was and

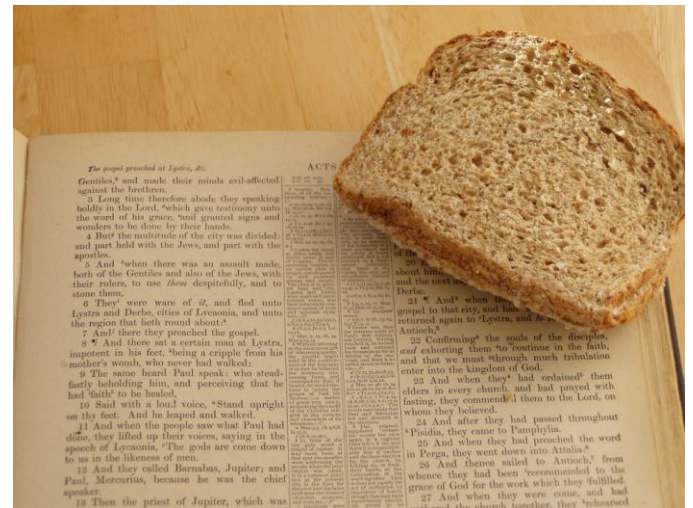
there it was not. The empty building was there, but the sign over the top of the building, the window filled with good stuff was empty and the wonderful smells of fresh baked and baking bread were gone. It was in fact the latter that first alerted me to the fact that something was very wrong. How could this be? On the walk home I had numerous scenarios running through my head. They went broke when I had gone to college and seminary, they had died, they retired and moved to Florida, they were very ill, and the list went on.

I finally got home and into the house greeted the family and said, "Well, I was going to pick up some fresh rolls and bread at the bakery but it is gone. What happened?" My mother without looking up from her kitchen skillet said, "Yes it is wonderful. They bought the place just down the street here and it is a better location for them and all of us." So much for all my depressive thoughts.

All these years later I still remember that time. For me Lent is something like that when I do not take the time to focus on the reality and what I know and what the facts are and what they are not. For some, Lent is

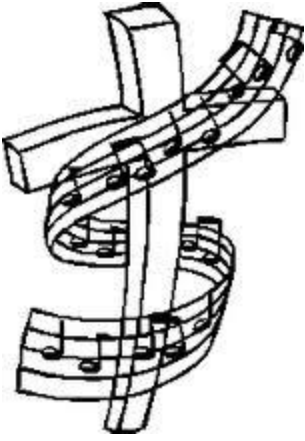
about doom and gloom and for others perhaps it has little or no value. Lent is a time to take stock in what we are about and what God is calling us to and from. That train ride was in the end not empty but full of family and friends and even the baked bread I was going to bring home. I just had to listen to those who had the information before creating a completed story that was not based in reality. Lent is based in the reality of Jesus and our relationship with Our Lord and one another. Take time this Lent to make a good beginning with intentional time given to prayer, reading, study, work, play and rest. Spend time listening to music, really listening to the notes and words. Use the time preparing for the story of our salvation, Holy Week and the Great Triduum and finally the Resurrection of Our Lord.

This year I am going to open my heart and mind and hands to working with the poor in our community. This year I am going to bake bread, savor the smell of the bread baking, eat it a little at a time and share it with others. Lent, the time to get ready and prepare for the Lord who died that we might have full life in his resurrection. Bread anyone?



“Lent is the time for trimming the soul and scrapping the sludge off a life turned slipshod. Lent is about taking stock of time, even religious time. Lent is about exercising the control that enables us to say no to ourselves so that when life turns hard of its own accord we have the stamina to yes to its twists and turns with faith and hope.... Lent is the time to make new efforts to be what we say we want to be.”

Sister Joan Chittister's book, [The Rule of Benedict: Insight for the Ages.](#)



## WE PRAISE YOU FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

*Tom & Stephi McDonnell (written for The Episcopal Community)*

### (Chorus)

C                    F                    G                    C

We praise your name, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

F                    G                    C

We worship You, Creator, Savior, Giver of Life.

F                    G                    C

(We) confess that Jesus Christ our Lord was crucified

F                    Dm7                    G                    G                    C

And celebrate his glorious resurrection. (Repeat...2<sup>nd</sup> ending ...his glorious resurrection.)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Verse

C                    Am    C                    F                    Dm7                    G

Marked as Christ's own forever, renewed in the power of the Spirit;

C                    Am                    C                    F                    G                    F                    G

Lead us into the fullness of your peace that we may be a witness to your redeeming love. (Chorus)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

C                    Am    C                    F                    Dm7                    G

Give us all inquiring minds, discerning hearts and wills to persevere,

C                    Am                    C                    F                    G                    F                    G

(And your) gifts of joy and wonder that we may grow connected in your redeeming love. (Chorus)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

C                    Am    C                    F                    Dm7                    G

Grant us the grace to live with patience, humility and hope,

C                    Am                    C                    F                    G                    F                    G

And live out our baptismal covenant, by serving as the ministers of your redeeming love. (Chorus)

Stephi McDonnell (a new member) and her husband Tom have written this song for The Episcopal Community. Andi Silberman, a member of the Circle of Leadership, has known Stephi and Tom for many years and was very familiar with their musical talents (Tom is frequently the head of the music team for Cursillo). She asked them if they would consider writing us a song. Below is a link to the sound clip of the song. Thank you Stephi and Tom for sharing your gifts with us.



## BAPTISMAL COVENANT STUDY 5

by Sue Schlanbusch

*I will with God's help strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.*

If we believe that our Creator God has made each person in His image, and given them special gifts to be shared within the Body, then we need to model our lives to be respectful of this miracle of generosity. Accepting that our God has a purpose for everything and everyone He has made is key, to living our lives with others. Therefore, we must always accept the fact that we do not, as a child of God, have the right to deem who and what circumstances are our responsibility and which are not. We need to understand that we have so many people in our country, to say nothing of in the world, who are hungry and dying because they lack basic medical care who are naked because our bulging closets are not emptied. We have heard from childhood that Jesus chooses to live with the poor, the outcasts, and the naked, there is Christ Jesus, and the question is, where are we? Striving to bring justice and peace to these kinds of people is what you and I are called to do. Sometimes it can be done with money; sometimes it must be done with our hands, joined with many others to alleviate the pain of God's people. When will we ever learn that our brothers and sisters are all the people he calls us to serve? Anywhere on this planet where someone is hungry, thirsty, sick or sad, we are to there to be Christ to them. Is this an overwhelming job we are called to do, yes it is sometimes!! What it means bottom line is that we are called to BE "sacrament" to God's children. As His Body is broken to be shared in the Eucharist for all of us, we are also called to be broken, to be opened up so that Christ's healing love may be poured out through us to those in need. When we fully understand the number of people in the daily circle we move in, who are hungry, naked, sick, and lonely. Then and only then we will understand that we are called and judged by Jesus every day, to care for those less fortunate than we. .WE ARE ALL His children, and he loves us all equally. We are called and equipped to be the healers and reconcilers in this wounded world. May we ever be aware of this mandate to strive for justice and peace among all of God's children and realize deep within our hearts and souls the need to respect every child; God has created in His image? When that day comes we will be taking our part in bringing in the Reign of God.

Discussion questions for your thoughts, or with your family members and friends;

1. What are you doing now to help justice to be done for those who are part of your life? (Not just family)
2. What does respecting someone's dignity mean to you? Share ways you do that.

### ***The Episcopal Community to be responsible for the Prayer Chapel at General Convention***



The Rev Canon Dr Gregory Straub, Secretary of the General Convention contacted The Episcopal Community and asked:

*No group has stepped forward to request this responsibility for the upcoming convention of the Prayer Chapel. When Patti Joy Posan and Sue Schlanbusch called on me, they asked that I consider ways in which The Episcopal Community might support the General Convention. Would it (The Episcopal Community) be interested in taking on this responsibility?*

General Convention Prayer Chapel is a place where convention attendees recharge, reflect and contemplate. Pasty Tilley, a member of the Circle of Leadership agreed to Chair the Committee for the Prayer Chapel at General Convention. She will communicate directly with Canon Straub and will update us all as plans move forward. What an honor for The Episcopal Community.

**From the Spiritual Advisor...**

*I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun-*

*I am the life that will never, never die-*

*I'll live in you if you'll live in me  
I am the Lord of the dance, said He.*



*The Rev. Becky Lepley*

These words by Sydney Carter from the hymn *Lord of the Dance*, set to the "Shaker Tune," express my feelings as I contemplate preparing for Lent and Easter once again. Always, it seems, even after over 60 times of going through this, I find that my mind is being stretched beyond my own vision. My concept of God is and will always be too small. I must follow Jesus beyond the familiar or wallow in my own ignorance. I believe that this process is infinite as God in Christ is infinite and will continue into the next life. God will not run out of surprises. Halleluiah!

This is one of the reasons that we hammered out a method for accountability in our rule-of-life guidelines. Opening ourselves to change is difficult. Human beings resist change and growth. If we can only hide from them, we seem to think that we can hide from our own mortality. Of course, our mortality comes upon us with or without our participation. Basically, ready or not, change comes. Our choice is whether that change will be growth or just rotting.

That method of accountability is to report to our Spiritual Advisor how we are doing compared with how we thought we would be doing in our Rule of Life. Although the growth of our community will necessitate the sharing of this responsibility with regional/diocesan Spiritual Advisors, for right now this means sharing your progress with me. So that I would not be overwhelmed, we asked that this be done around each one's birthday. I was reminded of this when Sue Schlanbusch sent me her report. Thank you, Sue!

It was a delight to share in Sue's thoughts and I treasure this responsibility. We both were blessed by this experience. In light of this, I share with you a few thoughts about my own progress with my Rule of Life.

I have been using a little book called *Celtic Prayers from Iona*, by J. Philip Newell. It has brought a rhythm to my piety. The sense of obligation in my prayers has been replaced by a sense of being fed. Instead of my daily morning and evening prayer duty, it had become a time when I am opening myself to God's pouring into me what I need to live. If I cannot take the time to do this, I am hungry and impoverished. I look forward to new ways of opening myself to God, with God's help.

When you are ready, please share your progress in your Rule of Life with me. My e-mail is [revlepley@yahoo.com](mailto:revlepley@yahoo.com)

If you would rather do this verbally, call my home phone: 810-765-1296. Sometimes I am away, but I will return your call as soon as possible,

Love and Blessings,

(the Rev.) Becky Lepley





**The Lenten devotional booklet is now completed and may be found on The Episcopal Community's website under Monthly News.**

The watchwords of The Episcopal Community have been truly applied through the creation of this booklet.

All who have read, prayed, and meditated over assigned scripture passages and written a devotional, and then all who will read the scriptures and the devotionals have intentionally chosen to grow, connect, support and serve. It is our choice now to further serve by sharing this resource The Community has created— sowing the seeds and putting the results in God's hands.

Each of us knows our own environments. Consider where you may be a witness to others. Do not be as concerned about whether the seeds will grow (that is God's job), but where you can plant the seeds. Examples you may use include:

- Reposting the daily devotional from The Episcopal Community's facebook page to your own.
- Downloading and printing copies of the booklet for people who do not have access to computers,

for family members, for friends outside your church and for parish friends (even if your parish has its own Lenten devotional booklet).

- Checking with your parish priest to see if a link to TEC's website may be printed in your church's bulletin or newsletter regarding the booklet or printing hard copies for the parish.
- Asking directors of facilities where you may have a ministry to see if they would like to have some copies of the booklet. (We printed copies for an assisted living facility last year, and the director used the booklet for a daily meditation with the residents).

If you do print the devotional booklet for others, it lasts longer with a front and back cover of card stock—preferably in a purple color. To use less paper, it is better to print on the front and back of each page after the preface—a margin has been left on both sides of each devotional to accommodate this. Three staples work best to hold the booklet together.

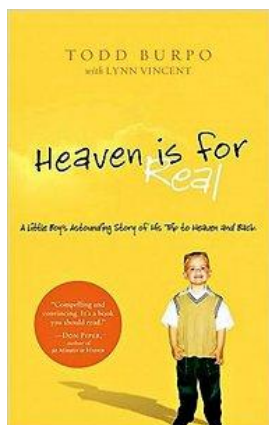
Thank you all for the opportunity and the privilege of getting to know each of you, with whom I emailed and spoke, a little better. May God bless you richly as you sow those seeds!

Stephanie McDonnell

The Episcopal Community

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## BOOK REVIEWS



### **Heaven Is for Real** by Todd Burpo.

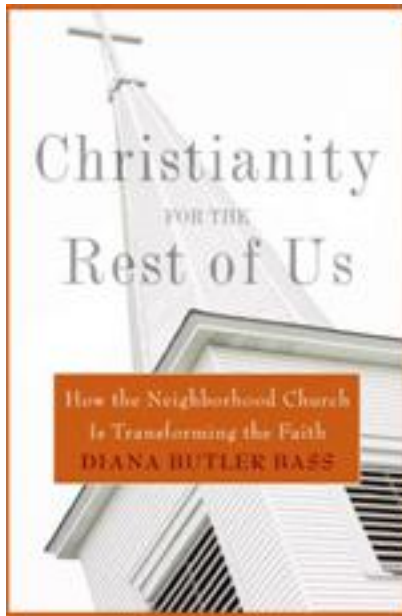
When Colin, not yet four years old, told his parents he left his body during surgery—and authenticated the claim by describing exactly what his parents were doing in another part of the hospital while he was being operated on—he talked of visiting Heaven and

related stories told to him by people he met there whom he had never met in life, sharing events that happened even before he was born. He also

astonished his parents with descriptions and obscure details about Heaven that matched the Bible exactly, though he had not yet learned to read.

With disarming innocence and the plainspoken boldness of a child, Colton tells of meeting long-departed family members. He describes Jesus, angels, how really, *really* big God is, and how much God loves us. Retold by his father but using Colton's uniquely simple words, *Heaven Is for Real* offers a glimpse of the world that awaits us, where as Colton says, "Nobody is old and nobody wears glasses." Let this book change the way you think of eternity, offering the chance to see and believe like a child.

*Reviewed by Sue Schlanbusch*



***Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church is Transforming the Faith***  
by Diana Butler Bass.

If you want to learn about emerging church in mainline Protestant churches, this book is a good place to begin.

Diana Butler Bass is an author, speaker, and scholar, specializing in American religion and culture. In this book, Bass describes churches that dispel the image of declining mainline Protestant churches. These are churches quietly thriving in an American culture that is post-Christian, post-modern. Centuries ago St. Benedict instructed leaders of monasteries to focus on deepening spirituality, which would, in turn, help grow their communities. At the core of these renewing twenty-first-century churches is a lively spirituality, which draws people to them as places for their spiritual journeys.

Although these churches represent a diverse mixture of denominations, locations, and forms of worship, they all engage in practices from earliest Christian traditions. Bass describes them as ten signposts of renewal: hospitality, discernment, healing, contemplation, testimony, diversity, justice, worship, reflection, and beauty. Congregations may place more emphasis on some over others based on church customs and talents such as testimony or beauty in art and music.

Most of these practices are very familiar from our study of *St. Benedict's Toolbox* and our commitment to the Rule of the Community, especially hospitality which is essential in offering space where radical change of mind and heart can take place. Hospitality leads to transformation in the host as well as the guest and is the first step in developing strong relationships seen in these church communities.

Bass observed many spiritual nomads and tourists who became pilgrims dedicated to being incorporated

into the body of Christ and to following Jesus – The Way – on their pilgrimages toward God. Being part of practicing communities helps to sustain individuals on their life pilgrimages. Emerging churches are very engaged in nurturing relationships in the midst of a fractured culture. They are also very mission directed and answer the call to serve and to bring about social justice locally. This is the opposite from top-down structural changes of the 1960's and 1970's. Over time, transformation comes to individuals, church communities, and society.

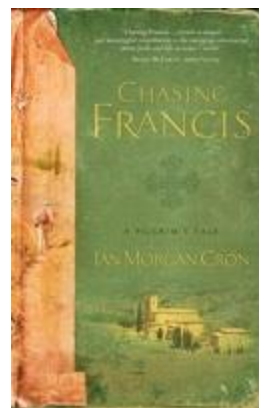
The title of this book is intriguing. Bass sketches out the development of the religious right and the religious left during the latter half of the twentieth century. The “rest of us” are those who are not aligned with either of these. Bass calls the emergent church “a new, generous, practicing sort of postmodern Christianity, a kind of Christianity that is embracing and redefining tradition while enacting justice in the world.”

I encourage you to read this book. You will see many connections between the communities it describes and the mission The Episcopal Community has set out to fulfill.

Another book by Diana Butler Bass, an enjoyable book of church history from the point of view of the “person in the pew,” is *A People's History of Christianity, The Other Side of the Story*.

Other books on the emerging church you may want to read are Brian D. McLaren's *A Generous Orthodoxy* and Phyllis Tickle's *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*.

*Review and recommendations by Janet O'Brien*



***Chasing Francis***

By Ian Morgan Cron  
(Navpress, Colorado Springs, CO, 2006, ISBN 13: 978-1-57683-812-9)

Partly because of the very fact that we are all Episcopalians and partly because our initial study of an exploration of the Rule of Benedict, we of The

Episcopal Community tend to think of ourselves as a Benedictine group. Yet the Episcopal Church honors other traditions as well, and we should not neglect them. In this thoroughly engaging novel about the Franciscan approach to a life of faith, perhaps we can gain some perspective and added direction for our

spiritual practice without any great intellectual exercise. This is great recreational reading with an educational thread running through it. Chase Falson, the protagonist and narrator, is founding pastor of the largest contemporary evangelical church in New England; more than 3,000 people come to worship every Sunday at Putnam Hill Community Church. He is successful beyond his wildest imagining. Yet something is shaking his foundations, and he has lately begun seeing a psychiatrist. He lies awake at night questioning everything he's believed in for the past 20 years. Shortly after a tragic death in his church community, he really goes "off the rails" and confesses to his congregation in a Sunday sermon that he has lost his faith. In the ensuing uproar, his board of elders decides he needs to take some time off—a leave of absence. Uncertain where to turn, he calls his Uncle Kenny, who years ago left the conservative Baptist fold and became a Franciscan priest, an earth-shaking decision Chase likens to the Pope becoming a Mormon. Now retired from a career as spiritual director to priests, Kenny divides his time between friaries in Assisi and Rome, and it is many years since they've had more than a passing word.

Kenny invites Chase to visit, and not knowing what else to do with his enforced leisure, Chase agrees. Five days later he is in Florence, and the two begin a pilgrimage around Italy for the purpose of acquainting Chase with the life and work of Giovanni de Pietro de Bernardone—Francis of Assisi. In Chase's view, Francis is a Catholic saint from the thirteenth century who's famous for holding up concrete birdbaths in people's backyards, and he fears Kenny has defrauded him by bringing him all the way to Italy to meet a dead man. However, he's there, he has nothing better to do, and Kenny is an engaging companion with interesting friends, and thus he stays.

Kenny bases Chase's itinerary on the thesis that when one knows there's something missing in one's spiritual life, one goes to sacred places where God has made himself known to others—a spirituality of place. When Chase is uncertain about whether Kenny's plans are right for him, Kenny tells him, "Don't worry, God will show up." This is a story of transformation: Chase is looking for a new way to follow Jesus, and he finds it through the companionship of Francis of Assisi as well as assorted others. Cron, an Anglican priest, makes it an entertaining read as well as an enlightening one.

*Reviewed by Florence Krejci*

**Even though many centuries have passed since his words, it would be difficult to find more appropriate sentiments regarding Ash Wednesday this Lenten Season.**

(St. John Chrysostom, (347ad-407ad)

"Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.  
If you see a poor man, take pity on him.  
If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast,  
but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands  
and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.  
Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.  
Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

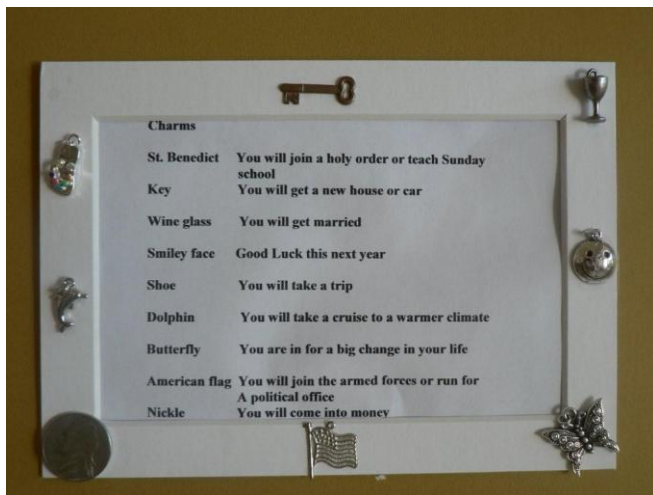
Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.  
Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes,  
but bite and devour our brothers?

May He who came to the world to save sinners,  
strengthen us to complete the fast with humility! Have mercy on us and save us."

Amen."





## Cupcakes, and Icing, and Charms, Oh My!

Just how long does it take four women to stuff charms in 114 cupcakes? Since this was uncharted territory, the ladies of the Mary-Martha Circle of The Episcopal Community of Holy Nativity Episcopal Church were getting ready to find out.

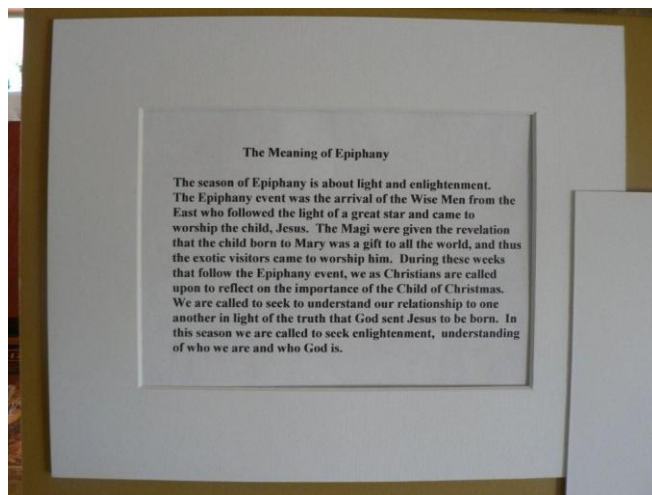
The whole project started when our then-new Deacon Bob gave one of his first sermons, on Epiphany. One of the members of the Circle thought it would be nice for us to recognize Epiphany as a service project to the church. So, after inquiring as to what the church normally did for Epiphany (nothing special), we decided to take it upon ourselves to have an Epiphany celebration with an Epiphany cake with charms in it. Research on the internet resulted in a lot of recipes and traditions that were much more Mardi Gras than Epiphany. So we spoke to the priest from a neighboring parish that had done an Epiphany celebration and requested some ideas. He gave us a list of charms and what they meant, and then at the end of the conversation added, "...and whatever else you want to add."

We were now full of ideas and surging ahead at full steam. First, we decided that cupcakes would be less messy and (the nurse in me thought) less germly than a large cake. So Marilyn decided to practice cupcake baking and charm insertion with her granddaughter as an experiment to see what worked best. The final decision was to not bake the charm into the cupcake but insert it later.

Next was the chore of finding the "charm" to insert into the cupcake. We all looked in different locations and were finding buttons, metal charms, and glass beads that had the shapes we wanted. We even decided to put a St. Benedict's charm in one to the

cupcakes and decree that the person who received that charm would join a Holy Order.

Our next meeting was slated for Friday, January 6, 2012, to meet at the church kitchen, each of us with two dozen cupcakes, and we would insert a charm into *nine* of the cupcakes so nine members of our congregation would have a "charmed prediction" for the coming year. That was the plan, until at church on New Year's Day the information got misprinted and the announcement about the Epiphany Celebration for the Sunday after Epiphany stated that EVERY cupcake would have a charm in it! You should have seen the looks on the faces of the ladies of the Circle as they each got to that part of the announcements in the bulletin. Needless to say, we did some scrambling, and by the Friday meeting we had 114 charms.



Our resident artist Donna made a poster explaining the story of Epiphany and what each of the charms meant. Four of us made it to the Charm and Icing Marathon. Two other members who could not make the meeting sent their cupcakes ahead of time. And if you have two ladies wrapping charms in parchment, one slitting the cupcakes and stuffing the charms in, and one icing the cupcakes, it only takes two-and-a-half hours. Of course, Edyth, our icing queen, had to teach Donna, the artist, how to ice when her hands started wearing out. Once they were safely wrapped and stored, we congratulated ourselves on having done what we thought was impossible the previous Sunday.

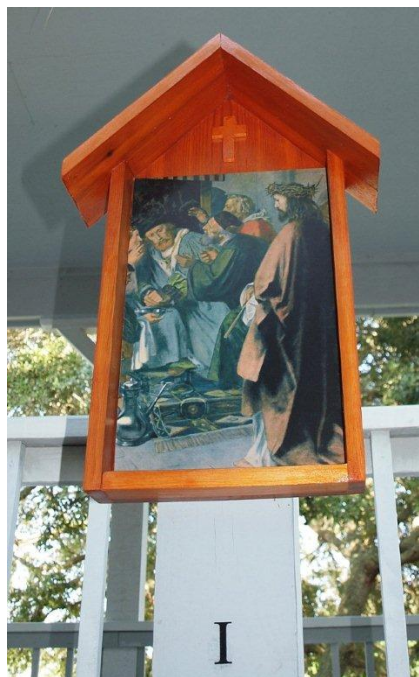
All in all, it was a learning experience and hopefully we will be better prepared for next year. After the early service, Father Tom explained to everyone at coffee hour why we were having the cupcakes and the symbolism of the gifts (charms). It was interesting to

watch the members of the church dig into the cupcakes and run to the poster to see what the charm meant. Since 30 of the cupcakes did not have charms, we labeled them as such, and there were some church members who were not willing to take a chance on a charm. I even heard one member say he was going to eat a plain cupcake as it “would be my luck I’ll get the

St. Benedict’s charm and have to teach Sunday school!”

So what could have been a disaster turned out to be a fun time and, I think, a blessing for everyone involved!

*Reported by Laura Johnson, Scribe*



## **Our Circle plans to share the Stations of the Cross at St Francis with the residents and visitors to Dauphin Island**

### **Lenten Offering from St. Francis Circle**

This is what our Chapter plans to do during Lent this year. We are excited to be able to share these Stations with our Dauphin Island residents and visitors.

The Sisters of St. Francis Circle, St. Francis Church, Dauphin Island, AL, are making available each Wednesday afternoon through Lent a walk for reflection and prayer. We will host the walk among our gardens, which house the fourteen Stations of the Cross.

The Stations were installed last Autumn, dedicated to our organist, who died very suddenly but who loved and relished his copies of the Stations. We thought introducing them during Lent to our Island community would be a gift of service. After the walk, participants are invited to attend Evening Prayer.



*View from the Rocking Chair—WOW!*

## **LENTEN RESOLUTION**



Florence Krejci

accomplished that which I set out to do.

I may be the only person in the world who still irons—even *likes* to iron! Oh, I don’t iron every week or even every month, but when I do get around to it, it gives me great satisfaction. It’s my version of making the rough places plain: I’m not taking the tops off hillocks so the king’s chariot can have a smoother ride, but I am making wrinkled and creased surfaces smooth, maybe even silky. I realized this when I wore an all-cotton shirt that I’d steam-pressed and it dawned on me that I really wasn’t satisfied with how it looked. So into the laundry it went, and this time I dampened it and really *ironed*, not just pressed. It looked so nice that I hung it on a doorknob for a day or so, just to enjoy the sight of it!

Okay, maybe that’s sick; I can visualize you rolling your eyes. It’s true, though, and I confess to it: It makes me feel successful to have mastered those puckers. It now looks almost pristine, and I’ll feel much better wearing it. I

I wonder if maybe Lent is like ironing, a time to make rough and rumpiled areas a little



less so. I'm already mentally examining my personal rule of life with an eye to how it needs improvement, and I will put the modified version on paper in March, my birthday month, to discuss with the Spiritual Advisor. There's that feeling of resolution, of trying harder to get it right. St. Benedict said it in his monastic Rule: "Always we begin again." So did the old maxim that says if at first I don't succeed, I'll try and try again. (I've never put those two together before. I wonder if the adage grew out of the Rule of Benedict, however indirectly?) Lent can be a time of giving up guilty pleasures or of adopting better practices, and I like to think I emphasize the latter. So rather than a hair shirt of penance, maybe I'll be wearing a silky-smooth one of good spiritual practice. Hey, I like the metaphor: Let's get out the ironing board and see if by Holy Week, I can hang a new-and-improved relationship with God on the doorknob. I have no doubt that would please my Creator!

All blessings,

Flo

*View from the Rocking Chair* will be a semi-regular feature of our newsletters, written by Florence Krejci, a WOW (wise older woman) from Los Angeles.



**The Council of Women's Organizations in the Episcopal Church met at the Episcopal Church Center in NYC January 13, 2012. Sue Schlanbusch and Elizabeth Hart, Co-Conveners of The Episcopal Community attended this gathering.**

## LENTEN READING SUGGESTIONS

***Bread and Wine, Readings for Lent and Easter*** - From the world's best-loved spiritual writers, here is an unparalleled gathering of reflections for Lent. A time of self-denial, soul searching, and spiritual preparation, Lent is a fitting season for daily reading and reflection. Grouped around such themes as temptation, crucifixion, resurrection, and new life, Bread and Wine can be dipped into at leisure or used as a guide to daily devotions--and returned to at any time year for spiritual revitalization. Selections include writings by C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, Philip Yancey, Madeline L'Engle, Henri Nouwen, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, John Donne, Thomas Merton, St. Augustine, Mother Teresa, John Updike, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and many others.

***Christians at the Cross, N T Wright*** - Anglican bishop N. T. Wright is a respected ecumenical voice among Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox Christians. When Wright preached to the members of a

mining community in northern England who had suffered grievous losses, he reflected on Jesus death and resurrection, encouraging the people to unite their pain with the journey of Christ to the cross. The wisdom of his biblical reflections, gathered here, apply to anyone who is suffering and offers a passage to hope through Christ and his victory over death. ISBN: 978-1593251420

***Journey into Light, Lent 2012*** –Includes reflections by Joan Chittister on the Sunday gospels of Lent and easter, on daily scriptures of the 40 days of Len, discussion questions for each week, photo meditation each week. ISBN 9781890890919

***A Crucified Christ in Holy Week*** – Raymond Brown. In *A Crucified Christ in Holy Week*, Father Brown treats the Gospels, written thirty to sixty years after the life of Christ, as reflecting considerable theological and dramatic development and not simply as literal accounts of historical events. ISBN 9780814614440

The following link was shared with us by Neva Rae Fox, Public Affairs Officer, the Episcopal Church, NYC. This is the link to **the Anglican Communion Lenten program**. It can be downloaded for printing, and it's also available in Spanish. <http://www.aco.org/ministry/theological/bible/lent.cfm>

The next issue of The Episcopal Community newsletter is scheduled for June 1, 2012. Deadline for submissions is May 15, 2012. Please submit articles as follows: Calibri font, 11pt, no formatting, captions for pictures.
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Links:

The Episcopal Community – <http://theepiscopalcommunity.org>

Book of Common Prayer - [http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/formatted\\_1979.htm](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/formatted_1979.htm)

The Episcopal Church - <http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/index.htm>

Worldwide Anglican Communion - <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/index.cfm>

The Daily Office - <http://www.missionstclare.com/english/>

The Lectionary - <http://satucket.com/lectionary/>

Episcopal Life on Line - [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/episcopal\\_life.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/episcopal_life.htm)

St Benedict's Toolbox - <http://www.stbenedictstoolbox.org/>

Community of Reconciliation - [http://www.nationalcathedral.org/worship/cor\\_discover.shtml](http://www.nationalcathedral.org/worship/cor_discover.shtml)

The Friends of St Benedict - <http://www.benedictfriend.org/>

Episcopal Church Women - <http://ecwnational.org/>

St Bernard's Abbey on Line Prayer Chapel - <http://monasterycandleshop.com/vcandle/>

Monasteries of the Heart - <http://monasteriesoftheheart.org/>

Bentevision (Joan Chittister) - <http://www.benetvision.org/>