



# Discerning Hearts

Newsletter of The Episcopal Community

*"We are marked as Christ's own for ever."*

Volume: 2024 Issue 02

## Humility

A Reflection on The Rule of Saint Benedict  
Sister Greta Ronningen, CDL



Benedictine spirituality is founded on a life of *ora et labora* or prayer and work. It is a framework for a life of holiness and offers stability in troubling times. The Rule of St Benedict also specifically spells out the need for humility and obedience. These are not popular concepts today, in fact grandiosity and personal

freedom are the celebrated attributes in the media. But I propose that many women already live humbly and obediently. We are socialized from our earliest days to not take up too much space, to serve others with patience, to not be too loud, and to put the needs of others first. Men, in general, are encouraged to be dominant and powerful, and not to show weakness or emotion.

Of course, I am writing in generalities. Some women are dominant, and some men are humble and sincere. But what a world it might be if the words of Mary in her most beautiful song, The Magnificat, came to pass:

*He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
And has lifted up the lowly. Luke 14*

St Benedict was writing to his men about the need of humility and obedience as he could surely see that the men needed to let go of their hunger for power and control. His brilliant Rule is an enduring path for men to walk as they seek to be more Christlike, to learn to put God first, and to humbly accept last place. But do Latina housekeepers who wash the floors of others need to be schooled on humility? Do first grade schoolteachers need to learn to be patient and obedient to God? I propose that many women know in their bones what humility is and rather need to be told of their inherent value in God's eyes. And how wonderful it would be if the meek were celebrated in our society instead of overlooked.

And indeed, the world might benefit from recognizing the paradigm of "Power Over" dynamics. Those with power have dominated and oppressed those without throughout time. I propose that it is critical that we transform to a world that values a new more Christlike paradigm of Power - a "Power With" or "Power in Service of the People." Imagine, a world where the least are lifted up and the mighty cast from their thrones.

*Sister Greta is an Episcopal priest and a founding member of Community of Divine Love. Originally from Kalamazoo, Michigan, she spent much of her youth in New Mexico. She holds a master's degree in Spiritual Formation from Claremont School of Theology. She does healing and reconciliation work with inmates in the California State prisons. She was the co-director of Prism Restorative Justice and chaplain in the L.A. County jails for 13 years before*

*relocating with the community to the central coast in 2021.*

*A yoga teacher with over 40 years of experience, she co-founded Yoga Works in 1986. Greta is a writer, public speaker, and retreat leader. She is the author of **Free on the Inside**: Finding God Behind Bars (2016).*



## Candlemas

Though it seems the dead of winter  
this dark and dreary night,  
'tis, in truth, the time of birthing  
and the coming of the light.  
St. Brigid comes a-calling  
on this eve of Candlemas,  
so gather seed and bless them  
to be scattered in the grass.  
Brigid the hedgerows  
and wanders down each lane.  
She blesses every hearth fire  
and stirs new life again.  
The Imbloc's in the cow's teats  
to feed each new born son,  
and the corn doll's dressed and waiting  
for the sun god's warm return.  
St. Brigid comes a-calling,  
this mother, daughter, spouse.  
Her presence brings a blessing  
to every hearth and house.

(William Deans, 2011)

## Celebrating our Heritage

"In February 2010, The Episcopal Community was incorporated. Officers elected, a National Chaplain appointed, as well as a National Spiritual Advisor. With these positions in place, their request to be recognized by the Presiding Bishop was granted. The journey began and continues to gather others into this nurturing life discipline."

This year we celebrate our fourteenth anniversary. Although not as old as some Episcopal communities, we are still the one community that is exclusively for Episcopal women who wish to follow the Rule of Benedict and live out their baptismal vows within a non-residential community. We hope in honor of this anniversary you will consider a gift to one of the community's funds. Donations may be made through PayPal at the [link below](#).



## Membership Dues Update

Out of 47 members, 32 have sent in their 2024 dues. That is 68% of our membership! Thank you for your generosity. If you have overlooked your payment over the holidays, perhaps now is a good time to click on the PayPal link below or mail your check. If you need help, please contact Merry Keyser, treasurer at [treasurer@theepiscopalcommuntiy.org](mailto:treasurer@theepiscopalcommuntiy.org). All information will be kept confidential.



## February Birthdays

Monica Phillips



Edyth Brown

## Compline Schedule

04 Feb - Patti Joy Posan

11 Feb - Barbara Harris

18 February - Becky Taylor

25 Feb - Barbara Willis

The community offers compline over Zoom each Sunday Evening at 5PM CST. Please join us! If you would like to lead compline, please contact Please contact Becky Taylor at [bekatay@me.com](mailto:bekatay@me.com)



## Lent 2024

February 14<sup>th</sup> is Ash Wednesday this year. It is fitting that the Lord of Love should begin his journey for our redemption on Valentine's Day, a day that symbolizes love for so many. This Lent, why not walk the Way of Love as we prepare for the greatest of gifts, our salvation through our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Below are some suggestions, click on any of the pictures to order.**

### Selected as the Community's Lenten study:

#### *Will You?* by Amanda Perkins McGriff



Amanda Perkins McGriff's book is a 5-week study for small groups that takes us through our Baptismal vows. **The Community will meet on Zoom, Sunday evenings at 5PM Central to discuss.** Volunteers are needed to lead a session or two during Lent. If you would like to help, please contact Becky Taylor or Christina Butterworth.

When we are initiated into the church with the water of baptism, we (or our sponsors) answer a series of questions called the Baptismal Covenant. The first three questions echo the words of our creeds, our beliefs about God and the church. The last five questions focus on action. They each begin with the words: "Will You?"

These "Will You" questions articulate how we are to animate our baptism, to follow Christ's example in our relationships with others, our communities, and the world. These questions move from a "gathering in" to a "sending out"--they are a call to embrace and practice evangelism by proclaiming the Good News of Christ in all we do and say.



A few additional (of the many) resources include:

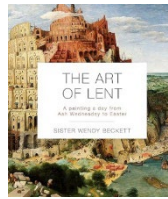
#### *Celtic Lent* by David Cole



This inspirational book takes the reader through the 40 days of Lent to the celebration of Easter through the eyes and beliefs of Celtic Christianity. Drawing on primary sources of pastoral letters, monastic rules and the theological teaching of the Celtic church, the author presents a different perspective on the cross of Christ and draws us to see our own life journeys with a new and transforming vision.

## The Art of Lent

Sister Wendy Beckett



This delightful book describes and interprets a series of forty full-color paintings for each day of Lent. Artists often address subjects that our culture seeks to avoid, and the brilliant and perceptive reflections from nun and art historian Sister Wendy Beckett will help you to read these paintings with a more discerning eye and encounter deeper levels of spiritual meaning than may at first appear.

## Have a Beautiful Terrible Lent

Kate Bowler Lent 2024



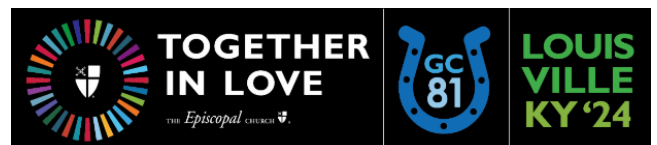
Lent is full of hard truths. And it is a perfect moment for spiritual honesty. We can look on this tragicomedy with love and bemusement as we wait for the someday that will be God's promised future. There, God's kingdom comes. God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And in the meantime, there's this . . . our beautiful, terrible days.



## Event Calendar 2024

Meetings are on Zoom unless otherwise noted.

- **Sunday evening Compline**, weekly at 6:00 PM Central
- **Friday Morning Prayer**, weekly at 9:00 AM Central
- **February 18 – Lenten Book Study** –5:00 PM Central
- **March 3 – Installation** of Vicki Hightower and Phyllis Hunt, Church of the Holy Nativity, Panama City, FL, 8:00 AM Eastern
- **April 11 – Executive Committee** 4:00 PM Central
- **April 25 – Circle or Leadership** 4:00 PM Central
- **June 23-28 - GC81** Louisville, KY



## Your contributions make a difference!

Payments may be made through PayPal, (use the drop-down tab to select a fund or to pay your dues) or by check mailed directly to The Episcopal Community, P.O. Box 242, Sewanee, TN 37375. When paying by check, please designate which fund or annual dues in the memo line.



## Recipe of the Month

### Lemon Ricotta Pancakes



*By Genevieve Ko for The New York Times. Jenny Huang for The New York Times. Photo: Jenny Huang for The New York Times*

#### Ingredients

Yield: 8 to 10 small pancakes

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup/102 grams all-purpose flour  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons baking powder  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon fine salt  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup/50 grams granulated sugar  
1 lemon  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons pure vanilla extract  
3 large eggs  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup/170 grams whole-milk ricotta  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup/61 grams buttermilk, preferably whole milk  
2 tablespoons/28 grams unsalted butter, melted, plus room-temperature butter for cooking and serving  
Blueberry Syrup or other toppings, for serving (optional)

#### Preparation

Whisk the flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. Heat a griddle or large nonstick pan or well-seasoned cast-iron skillet over medium-low.

Add the sugar to a large bowl, then finely grate the zest of the lemon directly over the sugar. Using your fingers, gently rub the zest into the sugar. Add the vanilla and whisk to evenly moisten. Add the eggs and whisk until foamy on top, then add the ricotta, buttermilk, and butter, and whisk until well blended. Add the flour mixture and gently stir until no traces of flour remain.

Generously butter the griddle, then drop a scant  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup batter onto it. Repeat, spacing the rounds at least an inch apart. Cook until the bottoms are golden brown, and the tops are bubbling, for 2 to 3 minutes. Flip and cook until the other sides are golden brown, for about 2 minutes more. Repeat with more butter and the remaining batter.

Serve warm, slathered with butter and blueberry syrup or other toppings if you'd like.

**Note:** *If you prefer soufflé like pancakes, separate the whites from the yolks and beat them to stiff peaks. Mix the yolks in with the wet ingredients, fold the whipped whites in after the dry ingredients are incorporated and cook as directed below.*