

*Transforming
Lives Through
Jesus Christ*

SWORD POINTS

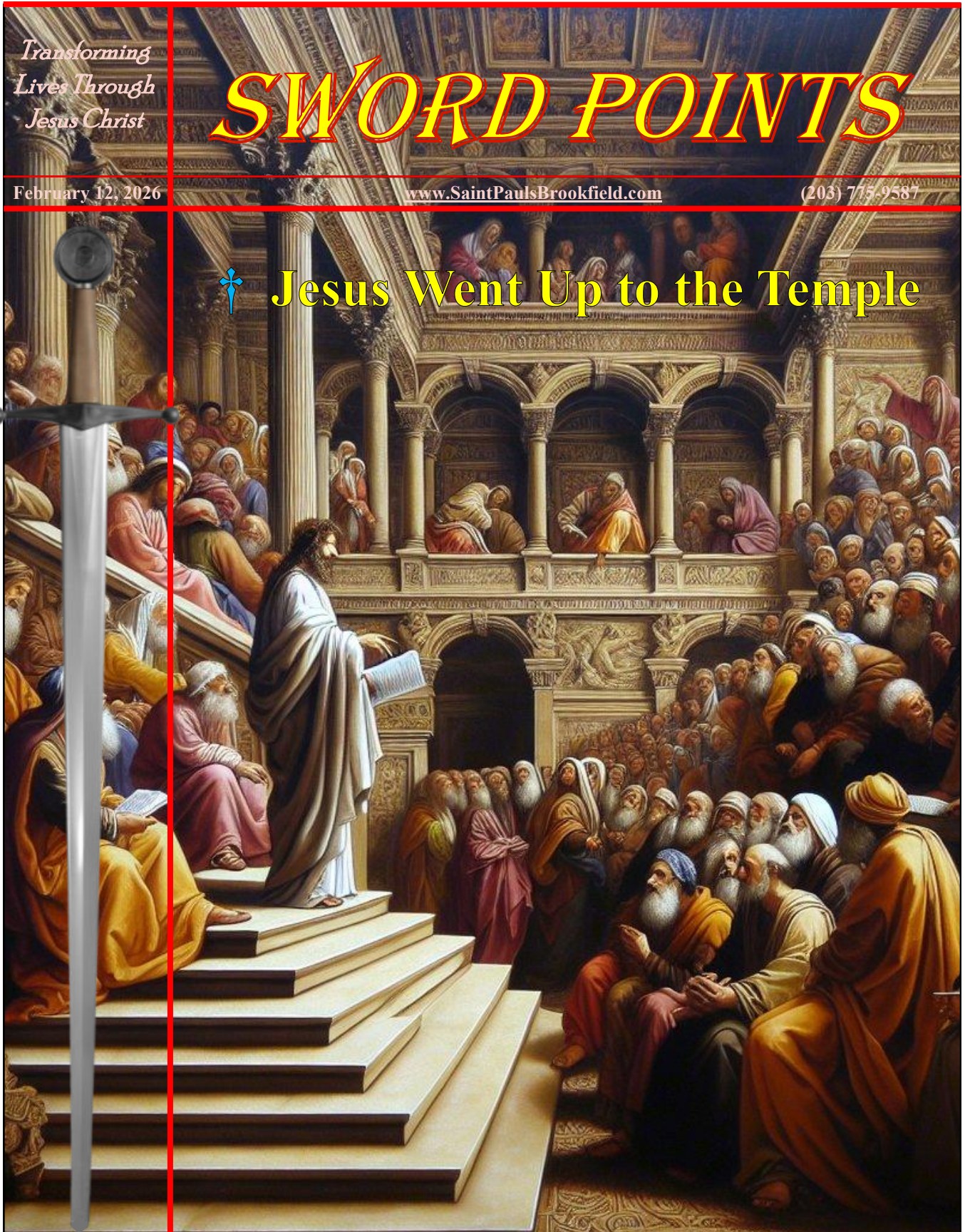
February 12, 2026

www.SaintPaulsBrookfield.com

(203) 775-9587



Jesus Went Up to the Temple



† Out of His Heart Will Flow Rivers of Living Water



On the final and most important day of the festival, Jesus stands and cries out that anyone who is thirsty should come to him and drink, promising that those who believe in him will receive “living water,” a reference to the Holy Spirit, who would later be given. His bold proclamation stirs the crowd: some are struck by the authority and hope in his words and declare that he must truly be the Prophet foretold in Scripture, while others go further and say he is the Messiah. The passage captures both Jesus’ self-revelation and the divided, searching response of the people who hear him.

† Lent Begins In Ashes

On Ash Wednesday we are reminded of our mortality and sin. It is not a time for groveling; rather, it is a time for reality, for genuine humility, for repentance and forgiveness and renewed commitment to following the ways of Jesus. Lent is a season of preparation, and we are already looking forward to Jesus’ passion and death for us and then to Easter.

One of the oldest names for Lent is “the forty days,” meaning the days from Ash Wednesday to Easter less the Sundays that can be observed as anticipations of Easter, days of rest from fasting or other disciplines in order to strengthen ourselves. “Forty” is a kind of generic number in scripture and calls quickly to mind significant biblical stories: the forty days of Noah’s flood ([Genesis 7:12](#)); Moses’ forty days on Mount Sinai ([Exodus 24:18](#) and elsewhere); and the forty days that Nineveh was given to repent ([Jonah 3:4](#)). We particularly think of the forty years that Israel was in the wilderness, tempted by Satan ([Mark 1:13](#)).

During the forty days of Lent God’s people are invited again into a wilderness experience, not without temptation, to fast in one way or another, to pray and to seek in hope and trust to follow and serve their Lord. With the people of God in ages past, we are on a pilgrimage through a wilderness of renewal and faith to the promised land and of following Jesus on the way to agony, passion, and death - and then new life.

*Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with thee to mourn our sins
And close by thee to stay.*

(The Hymnal 1982, Hymn 142)

These themes will repeat themselves throughout Lent; journey, pilgrimage, wilderness, preparation, honest reflection, repentance, forgiveness, humility, renewal, following Jesus. Use this time to invite others to join you in this journey of renewal and faith.



† Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper - Mardi Gras Extravaganza

Everyone is invited to Saint Paul's Annual Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday, February 17th, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Come celebrate the final moments before Lent begins with

pancakes and games, beads and balloons!

A freewill offering

will be accepted.



SHROVE TUESDAY

† This Week at St. Paul's

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|--|
| Thu, Feb 12 | - 9:30 am | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| | - 7:30 pm | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary |
| Fri, Feb 13 | - 10:00 am | - St. Paul's Walking Group, Fairfield Hills, Newtown |
| Sat, Feb 14 | - 7:30 am | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:00 am | - PraiseMoves, Crocker Hall (Zoom) |
| Sun, Feb 15 | | Last Sunday after the Epiphany |
| | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Adult Class, Guild Room |
| | - 9:30 am | - Newcomers Class, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:30 am | - Holy Baptism & Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 11:45 am | - Sunday School, Classrooms |
| Mon, Feb 16 | - 7:00 pm | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall (YouTube Live) |
| Tues, Feb 17 | - 9:30 am | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room |
| | - 5:30 pm | - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Crocker Hall |

Ash Wednesday

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|--|
| Wed, Feb 18 | - 10:00 am | - Ash Wednesday, Imposition of Ashes (YouTube Live) |
| | 11 to Noon | - Drive-Thru Food Collection |
| | - 11:30 am | - Noonday Prayer , Guild Room |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Ladies Evening Bible Study (Zoom) |
| | - 7:30 pm | - Ash Wednesday, Imposition of Ashes (YouTube Live) |
| Thu, Feb 19 | - 9:30 am | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| | - 7:30 pm | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary |
| Fri, Feb 20 | - 10:00 am | - St. Paul's Walking Group, Fairfield Hills, Newtown |
| Sat, Feb 21 | - 7:30 am | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:00 am | - PraiseMoves (Zoom) |
| | - 11:00 am | - St. Paul's Quilters, Crocker Hall |

First Sunday in Lent

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|---|
| Sun, Feb 22 | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - "Low Anthropology" Forum with Todd Brewer, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:30 am | - Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 11:45 am | - Sunday School, Classrooms |
| | - 1:00 pm | - Lenten Series, Session #1, Crocker Hall |
| | - 2:00 pm | - <i>Les Misérables</i> Movie, Crocker Hall |



The Priest-in-Charge **WEEKLY**

Fr. Nate, our Priest-in-Charge is distributing a weekly e-mail to communicate things directly from his desk to yours. **Connection, communication, and care** are among the highest priorities of his new ministry, and he wants to make sure there are

regular touch points between us. If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **already receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, you don't have to do anything - you're already included on the list! If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **DO NOT receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, or if you want to opt out, write Fr. Nate at priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com and let him know.



Holy Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes

Ash Wednesday, February 18th

10:00 am & 7:30 pm

† "Low Anthropology" Book Study

Last year, Fr. Nate invited our parish into a new yearly practice of doing "book studies" as a companion to our Lenten journeys. For our book study this year, we'll be reading Low Anthropology by Dave Zahl.

The phrase "low anthropology" names a realistic, honest account of what it means to be human - fragile, inconsistent, anxious, hopeful, sinful, and loved. That makes this book **especially fitting for Lent**, a season of self-examination, when we are invited to tell the truth about ourselves before God rather than imagining ourselves better, stronger, or more self-sufficient than we are.

At the same time, this is not a book about despair or self-improvement. **Ultimately, *Low Anthropology* is a book about mercy.** It reminds us that Christianity meets us where we actually are and announces grace there. Accessible, perceptive, and surprisingly gentle, it offers a hopeful vision of the Christian life rooted not in perfection, but in God's compassion.

Each week, Fr. Nate will e-mail out reflection questions on this book, and you will have two options on how to use these questions:

(1) **Individual Reading** - You're welcome to read the book on your own, and use the reflection questions by for personal prayer and reflection.

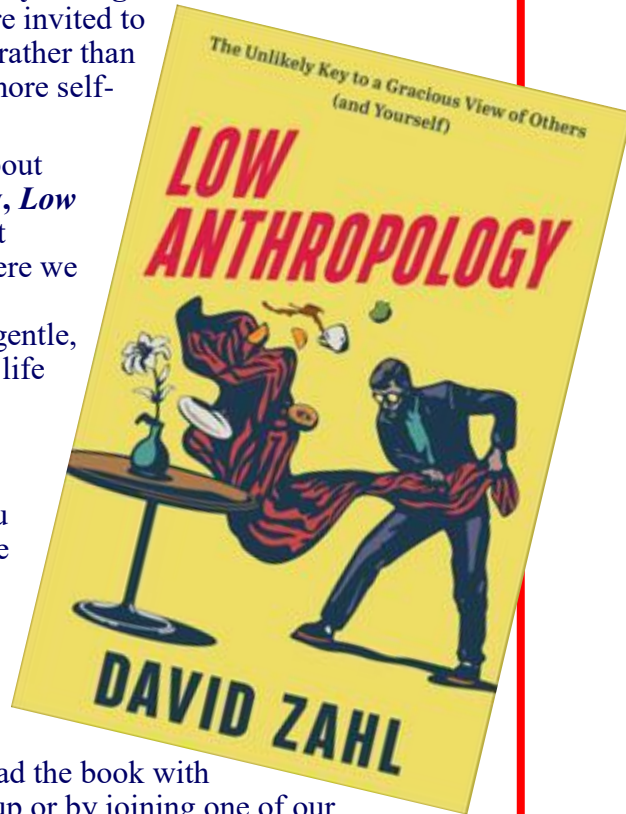
(2) **Group Reading** - You can also read the book with others - either with an existing small group or by joining one of our Lenten book groups, led by Fr. Nate or another parish leader. These groups will meet weekly during Lent:

- **Wednesdays** beginning February 25 at **12:00 noon** (in-person)
- **Thursdays** beginning February 26 at **7:00 pm** (Zoom)
- **Sundays** beginning March 1 at **9:30 am** (in-person)

A limited number of copies of the book will be provided by the church for those who **sign up by February 22.**

E-mail Fr. Nate (priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com) if you would like to be a part of one of these book groups and let him know which time you would like to join us.

We hope you'll consider joining us as we take up this shared Lenten practice together.



✠ Lent Kickoff Sunday



Lent Kickoff Day – Sunday, February 22nd

We invite you to join us as we begin our Lenten journey with a special day of worship, reflection, and community.

We are delighted to welcome The Rev. Dr. Todd Brewer, editor of *Mockingbird*, as our guest preacher for the day. Todd will also lead a forum in between the services to launch our parish-wide Lenten book study on *Low Anthropology*. In addition, Dave Zahl himself will be sending a special video greeting to the parish to encourage and inspire us as we enter this season of reflection and renewal.

Later in the afternoon, we will kick off our Lenten Soup Supper Series with a focus on *Les Misérables*, exploring its rich themes of redemption and grace.

Schedule for the Day: First Sunday of Lent, February 22

Morning

8:00 am: The Rev. Dr. Todd Brewer preaches at the Traditional Service

9:30 am: Forum with The Rev. Dr. Todd Brewer on *Low Anthropology*

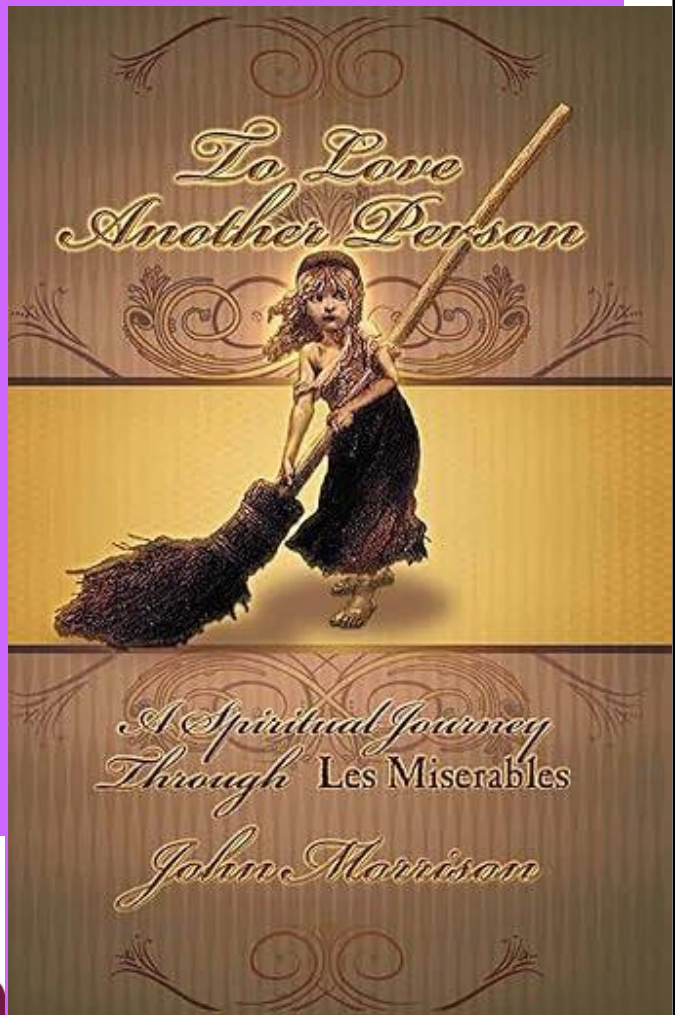
10:30 am: The Rev. Dr. Todd Brewer preaches at the Contemporary Service

Afternoon

1 - 1:45 pm: Lecture with The Rev. John Morrison, "Another Day, Another Destiny: *Les Misérables* as Journey Home"

2 - 5:30 pm: Movie screening of *Les Misérables* with popcorn, snacks, and drinks provided

Whether you join us for the morning, the afternoon, or the full day, we hope you'll be part of this meaningful start to Lent - a chance to reflect on our humanity, encounter God's mercy, and prepare our hearts for the journey ahead.



Lent





† **Ih-pis-kuh-puh l / Dik-shuh-ner-ee**

(*Episcopal Dictionary*)



† **Cross**

/ **bap-tiz-uhm** /

Cross - The instrument of Jesus' death and the central symbol of the Christian faith. It represents Jesus' offering and sacrifice of his life in love for us and our salvation. The cross thus symbolizes the Christian life, especially in terms of love, generosity, and sacrifice.

The cross itself was a vertical stake in the ground which often had a horizontal piece attached at the top or just below the top of the vertical piece. Death on a cross was both execution and extreme torture. The victim to be executed on the cross would be attached to it until death. At times an inscription would be attached to the cross to state the victim's crime. Crucifixion was a shameful death that carried with it a considerable stigma in Jesus' day. Jesus' death on a cross is described in the New Testament gospels ([Matthew 27](#), [Mark 15](#), [Luke 23](#), [John 19](#)).

The cross has been the traditional focus of Christian piety. The practice of making the sign of the cross on the forehead dates from the second century. Devotion to the cross was spurred by the alleged finding of the true cross of Jesus' crucifixion in the fourth century. Use of altar crosses dates from the fifth century, and use of processional crosses dates from the sixth century. During the middle ages, large crosses, or roods, were placed on beams at the dividing point between the chancel and nave of the church. Designs for crosses became very ornate, and some crosses were decorated with jewels.

Crosses are used in Christian art and architecture, and worn as an expression of personal piety. Crosses are found in a variety of shapes and sizes. A crucifix is a cross with a figure of the crucified Christ. A Christus Rex is a cross with a figure of the risen Christ in glory. A Jerusalem cross is a cross with four small crosses in between the arms of the larger cross.

The Prayer Book Good Friday service allows a wooden cross to be brought into the church after the solemn collects. The cross is placed in the sight of the people, and appropriate devotions may follow (*Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 281-282). Hymns in *The Hymnal 1982* that express devotion to the cross include "When I survey the wondrous cross" (474), "In the cross of Christ I glory" (441-442), and "Lift high the cross" (473).



LENTEN SERIES

† St. Paul's Lenten Program

Les Miserables: More than Merely a Mega-Musical A Road to Redemption

If you have followed at all any entertainment news, you will have discovered that the world-wide smash production of "*Les Miserables*" is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a global tour. The musical adaptation of Hugo's 19th century classic has already had gala performances to honor 10th and 25th anniversaries and it would not be a surprise to suspect that planning for the 50th is likely in its initial stages, much to the delight of fund raisers at PBS.

Many of you may have read Hugo's novel, perhaps even more are familiar with the glorious music of the stage production and have attended performances on Broadway or in the West End or on the road - it has been performed in high schools and colleges across the country. (And I've seen it at least thirty times.) There is one song, a choral spectacular, "One Day More," that brings together all the major characters and expresses a major theme not present predominantly in the original French version of the musical : THAT OF GOD'S ROLE IN THE DRAMA - "Another day, another destiny, this never ending road to Calvary... Tomorrow we'll discover what our God in heaven has in store."

Les Miserables is an intensely theological work of art as the reader/theater-goer journeys with Jean Valjean along the road to Calvary, to forgiveness, to redemption, to paradise, and this journey renders it a fitting work for study and exploration during Lent. What follows is an outline for the journey that you and I will undertake together.

- **Sunday February 22** (Session 1) - 1-1:45 pm. "Another Day, Another Destiny: Les Miserable as Journey Home"
- **Sunday February 22** - 2-5:30 pm - watch the movie - popcorn, snacks, and drinks available
- **Wednesday February 25** (Session 2) - 7-8 pm - "The Bishop and the Convict: The First Step"
- **Wednesday March 4** (Session 3) - 7-8 pm - "Fantine and the 'Lovely Ladies': The Poor and the Rejected"
- **Wednesday March 11** (Session 4) - 7-8 pm - "Jean Valjean and Javert: Grace and Mercy vs. Law and Justice"
- **Wednesday March 18** (Session 5) - 7-8 pm - "Love as Patriotism - Love as Romance - Love as Prayer"
- **Wednesday March 18** (Session 6) - 7-8 pm - "Seeing the Face of God: Beyond the Barricades"

† *Art in the Christian Tradition*

An Arrest,

by Christian Ludwig Bokelmann (1844-1894),
oil on canvas, painted in 1881,
© Christie's Images

We associate the word 'arrest' with criminal activity. Arresting is seizing someone by legal authority and taking them into custody. Usually this is followed by interrogation about a situation that the person has been suspected of being involved with. As a procedure in the criminal justice system, an arrest requires good cause. We read in Sunday's Gospel that while some of the Jews wanted to arrest Jesus to get him out of the way, no reasonable, clearly defined cause had yet been established for an arrest. It is an alarming reading, as John the Evangelist paves the way here for what was about to happen soon: 'his time had not yet come'... A small word 'yet', but one that carries so much weight in this last sentence of our Gospel reading



This canvas by German genre painter Christian Ludwig Bokelmann depicts a policeman on a flight of stairs making an arrest. We don't see the accused. We see only the public aspect of the arrest and how appalled the bystanders are. Looks of shock, disappointment, surprise can all be seen on the facial expressions of the friends and family who are looking on. The scene is set on an Autumn day, the bare trees just having shed their last leaves. In the central foreground fresh milk churns and freshly cut cauliflowers just stand there, alone, neglected, probably put there only moments ago by the accused after a day's work. The painting shows the public humiliation an arrest brings. That is exactly what some of the Jewish authorities were after with Jesus: to publicly humiliate Christ. They would soon get their way....

† **Cloud of Glory**

[Exodus 24:12-18](#) - [Psalm 2](#) - [2 Peter 1:16-21](#) - [Matthew 17:1-9](#)

Moses was called up the mountain and the raw power of God descended to meet him there. We know from the appearances of God throughout the Bible that the cloud was a theophany - a manifestation of God. He appeared as the cloud both in this passage and in [Exodus 34 5-7; 29-35](#) on Sinai. Again, in Exodus he was the cloud that filled the tabernacle ([40:34-35](#)). Even in Isaiah's prophecy of the day of the Messiah, the cloud in Zion was the presence of God ([4:1-6](#)). If the cloud indicated the presence of God, who then is this Moses?

Moses is the mediator between God and his people Israel. Through Moses, God convinced Pharaoh to release Israel from bondage. Through Moses, God parted the sea and washed away the oppressors. Through Moses, God led the people through the wilderness and offered Israel a covenant. Through Moses, God gave the Law and instructed the people to build the tabernacle for his presence among them. In short, Moses is the great redemptive figure of the Old Testament, and Moses is called into the cloud as the chosen redeemer of God's chosen people.

In Scripture, God's appearance and his redemptive action go hand-in-glove. God appeared to Moses in a cloud during the Exodus, the central redemptive event for the Hebrew people. God also appeared to the prophet Isaiah at the beginning of his ministry, which also included the redemption of Israel, this time from Babylon ([Isa. 6:4-5](#)). Gideon had a vision of God before he led 300 men in the rout of the Midianites ([Jdg. 6:11-7:25](#)), thus freeing Israel from oppression. Even the liberating defeat of the Philistines by Samson was preceded by the appearance of God to his parents ([Jdg. 12](#)). From these and other passages it becomes clear that the visual appearance of God in the Old Testament is integrally connected to his redemptive plan.

God calls his chosen redeemer into the cloud.

On another mountain, 1,200 years after Moses, God descended as a cloud heralding the next and final step in his redemptive plan for his people. Jesus climbed the mountain with three disciples: Peter, James, and John. There Jesus appeared, shining forth with the divine glory and discussing God's final salvific step with Israel's redeemer, Moses, and with Elijah, the herald of the Messiah. Jesus is the final and eternal Redeemer of all faithful people. As one would expect from the study of the Old Testament, the cloud descended upon the mountain and on the chosen Redeemer, and a voice pronounced the awesome truth: "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!"

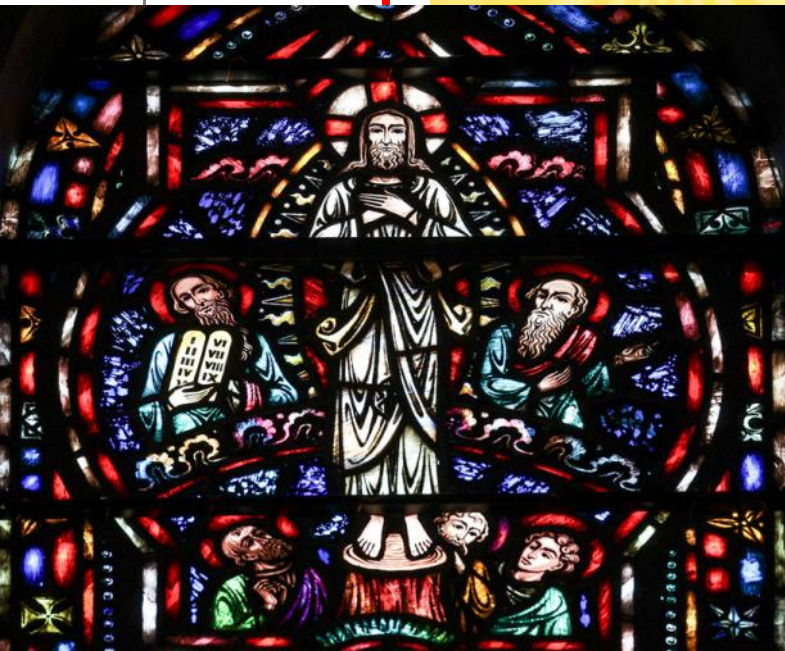
This statement is the essence of the Christian faith, the central message of the entire Bible. This is the old, old story that we are called to pass down through the church. This is the truth. Jesus is our salvation. Obey him and live.

Within three years of the Transfiguration, on Mount Zion Jesus was lifted up on the cross and died for our sins. Suddenly the sky was dark, the storm of raw power was unleashed and the earth quaked. So impressed was the Roman centurion that he proclaimed a truth he otherwise could not have known: "Truly this man was God's Son!" ([Matt. 27:54](#)).

As it is written: "I know that my Redeemer lives" ([Job 19:25](#)). He is Emmanuel, God with us ([Matt. 1:23](#)). How can we know for sure? In the Bible, the cloud has repeatedly told us so.

Look It Up - Matthew 17:7-8

Think About It - When the cloud departed, the disciples were left with Jesus alone. What does that mean for us?
- by The Rev. Dr. Chuck Alley, *The Living Church*, 2026



*Transfiguration |
Lawrence Lew, OP |
Flickr*

✠ Transforming Saints of God

Thursday, February 12th

Theodora

Empress, c. 867

Theodora was a ninth-century Byzantine empress who has long been commemorated as a saint in the Orthodox Churches for her role in the restoration of icons following the iconoclastic controversy. Although in theory that conflict had been settled in favor of the veneration of icons at the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, in practice disagreements remained strong, and the iconoclastic party included many prominent members of society, including within the imperial family.



A young noblewoman of Armenian descent, Theodora was married to the young emperor Theophilos in the year 830. Although both were sincere Christians, the couple had strong disagreements about religious matters. Theophilos was an iconoclast and believed that the veneration of icons was idolatry. Theodora, however, maintained her own practice of venerating images in spite of her husband's opposition. On one occasion, when a servant reported to Theophilos that his wife had been seen venerating icons, she sweetly informed him that she had merely been "playing with dolls." Two of her icons are kept in a monastery on Mount Athos to this day, where they are referred to as "Theodora's dolls."

In spite of this theological conflict, the couple seem to have had a largely happy marriage, and had five daughters and two sons. Theophilos, however, died very young at the age of 29, and Theodora's life changed considerably. Her young son Michael was only a toddler and was too young to assume leadership, and so she ruled the Byzantine empire as his regent from 842

until 855.

One of Theodora's first acts as regent was to summon a synod of bishops to revisit the question of icons and iconoclasm. The practice of icon veneration was restored, and the synod ended in a procession that carried icons back into the Hagia Sophia.

Despite this victory, however, Theodora was noted for the particular gentleness with which she treated her theological opponents. She negotiated strongly with the church to ensure that her late husband would not be condemned as a heretic, and pursued a moderate policy of accommodation with clergy who had been iconoclasts. This was strongly opposed by more extreme factions within the church who wanted to see them denounced and punished as heretics, but Theodora remained firm in her attitude of respect for those who had held differing opinions. This ultimately led most of the iconoclastic party to gradually accept the majority view and to remain within the church.

Theodora is therefore remembered not only for her role in restoring the veneration of icons to the church but for her firm and diplomatic insistence upon reconciliation with those who had held opposing views, which made this one theological controversy that ended in reconciliation rather than in schism.

Theodora ruled as regent until her son came of age in 855. In 857 she retired to the monastery of Gastria, and seems to have died there some time after 867.

† Transforming Saints of God

Friday, February 13th

Absalom Jones

Priest, 1818

Absalom Jones was born enslaved to Abraham Wynkoop, a wealthy Anglican planter, in 1746 in Delaware. He was working in the fields when Abraham recognized that he was an intelligent child and ordered that he be trained to work in the house. Absalom eagerly accepted instruction in reading. He also saved money he was given and bought books (among them a primer, a spelling book, and a bible). Abraham Wynkoop died in 1753, and by 1755 his younger son Benjamin had inherited the plantation. When Absalom was sixteen, Benjamin Wynkoop sold the plantation and Absalom's mother, sister, and five brothers. Wynkoop brought Absalom to Philadelphia, where he opened a store and joined St. Peter's Church. In Philadelphia, Benjamin Wynkoop permitted Absalom to attend a night school for Black people operated by Quakers following the tradition established by abolitionist teacher Anthony Benezet.

At twenty, with the permission of their masters, Absalom married Mary Thomas, who was enslaved to Sarah King, who also worshipped at St. Peter's. The Rev. Jacob Duche performed the wedding at Christ Church. Absalom and his father-in-law, John Thomas,

used their savings and sought donations and loans primarily from prominent Quakers, in order to purchase Mary's freedom. Absalom and Mary worked very hard to repay the money borrowed to buy her freedom. They saved enough money to purchase property and to buy Absalom's freedom. Although he repeatedly asked Benjamin Wynkoop to allow him to buy his freedom, Wynkoop refused. Absalom persisted because as long as he was enslaved, Wynkoop could take his property and his money. Finally, in 1784 Benjamin Wynkoop freed Absalom by granting him a manumission. Absalom continued to work in Wynkoop's store as a paid employee.

Absalom left St. Peter's Church and began worshipping at St. George's

Methodist Episcopal Church. He met Richard Allen, who had been engaged to preach at St. George's, and the two became lifelong friends. Together, in 1787, they founded the Free African Society, a mutual aid benevolent organization that was the first of its kind organized by and for Black people. Members of the Society paid monthly dues for the benefit of those in need. At St. George's, Absalom and Richard served as lay ministers for the Black membership. The active evangelism of Jones and Allen significantly increased Black membership at St. George's. The Black members worked hard to raise money to build an upstairs gallery intended to enlarge the church. The church leadership decided to segregate the Black worshippers in the gallery without notifying them. During a Sunday morning service, a dispute arose over the seats Black members had been instructed to take in the gallery. The ushers attempted to physically remove them by first accosting Absalom Jones. Most of the Black members present indignantly walked out of St. George's in a body.

Prior to the incident at St. George's, the Free African Society had initiated religious services. Some of these services were presided over by the Rev. Joseph Pilmore, an assistant at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The Society established communication with similar Black

(Continued on page 13)



Take a Hanger Fill a Hanger



We are holding our annual Coat Drive to benefit the various agencies in Danbury supported by the Jericho Partnership. **"Take a Hanger"** from the rack we'll have at the back of the church this weekend. Check your closets for those unused coats. And **"Fill a Hanger."** Bring it back to St. Paul's and we'll get that coat on the back of someone who needs it.

(Continued from page 12)

Absalom Jones

groups in other cities. In 1792 the Society began to build the African Church of Philadelphia. The church membership took a denominational vote and decided to affiliate with the Episcopal Church. Richard Allen withdrew from the effort as he favored affiliation with the Methodist Church. Absalom Jones was asked to provide pastoral leadership, and after prayer and reflection, he accepted the call.

The African Church was dedicated on July 17, 1794. The Rev. Dr. Samuel Magaw, rector of St. Paul's Church, preached the dedicatory address. Dr. Magaw was assisted at the service by the Rev. James Abercrombie, assistant minister at Christ Church. Soon thereafter, the congregation applied for membership in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania on the following conditions: 1) that they would be received as an organized body; 2) that they would have control over their local affairs; 3) that Absalom Jones would be licensed as lay reader, and, if qualified, be ordained as a minister. In October 1794, it was admitted as the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. The church was incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1796. Bishop William White ordained Jones as deacon in 1795 and as priest on September 21, 1802.

Jones was an earnest preacher. He denounced slavery and warned the oppressors to "clean their hands of slaves." To him, God was the Father, who always acted on "behalf of the oppressed and distressed." But it was his constant visiting and mild manner that made him beloved by his congregation and by the community. St. Thomas Church grew to over 500 members during its first year. The congregants formed a day school and were active in moral uplift, self-empowerment, and anti-slavery activities. Known as "the Black Bishop of the Episcopal Church," Jones was an example of persistent faith in God and in the Church as God's instrument. Jones died on February 13 in 1818.



Here is an update about St. Paul's ongoing food-related ministries serving our community:

Drive Thru Food Collection - occurs every other Wednesday from 11 am - noon. We have now held 152 food drives since April 22, 2020! Last time our trucks delivered to the Victory Christian Center, Danbury and the Jericho Partnership in Danbury.

Our next food collection, will be next Wednesday, February 18th and will support the Christian Victory Center in Danbury, and the Jericho Food Pantry in Danbury.

Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and to the many volunteers who have helped to load the trucks and deliver food to the pantries.

Next Drive- Thru Food Collection Wednesday February 18th

*Help us,
Help others*



If you would like to request Altar flowers for a particular Sunday in Memory of a friend or loved one, please fill out an envelope located in the back of the church or send an email request to dszen@yahoo.com or contact David Szen.



**Altar
Flowers**

ANDREW PETERSON



Resurrection Letters TOUR



Walnut Hill Community Church

156 Walnut Hill Rd, Bethel, CT | Mar 28, 2026 | 7 pm

find tickets at andrew-peterson.com/tour





by Kirsten Peterson, Organist & Choirmaster

Greetings!

This Sunday marks the last Sunday after the Epiphany, sometimes called Transfiguration Sunday. Jesus' transfiguration happens when he goes up on the mountain to pray, and Peter, James and John witness something extraordinary: Jesus starts to glow and they see him conversing with Moses and Elijah, two past prophets. Wow!

Our opening hymn for Sunday is one of those hymns written specifically for the Transfiguration, "O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair." (Incidentally, the actual Feast of the Transfiguration is August 6, but it can be celebrated at other times of the year, such as the last Sunday after the Epiphany.)

O wondrous type! O vision fair of glory that the Church may share, which Christ upon the mountain shows, where brighter than the sun he glows!

With Moses and Elijah nigh the incarnate Lord holds converse high; and from the cloud, the Holy One bears record to the only Son.

With shining face and bright array, Christ deigns to manifest today what glory shall be theirs above who joy in God with perfect love.

And faithful hearts are raised on high by this great vision's mystery; for which in joyful strains we raise the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.

O Father, with the eternal Son, and Holy Spirit, ever One, vouchsafe to bring us by thy grace to see thy glory face to face.

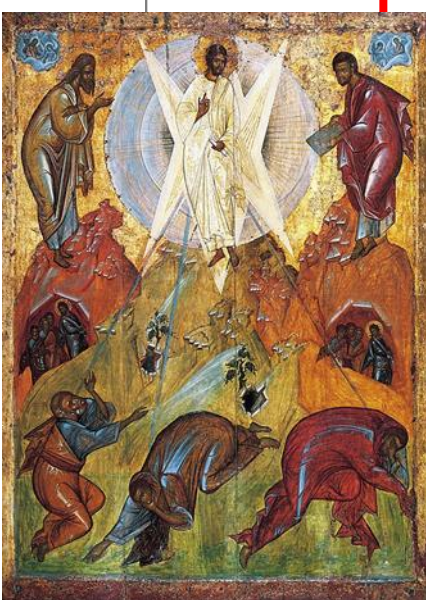
The words are from an anonymous 15th century Latin hymn, translated into English by John Mason Neale (1818-1866). As Philip H. Phatteicher explains in his book *Journey into the Heart of God: Living the Liturgical Year*:

In devotional language a "type" is a foreshadowing, an image that will be brought to fulfillment at a later time. So in the Transfiguration of Christ we see an anticipation of the glory that the Church will enjoy at the consummation. Christ, on the mountain between heaven and earth, shows today what the blessed here will one day enjoy there.

Musically, this is a stunning hymn. The tune WAREHAM is based on an 18th century melody by William Knapp (1698-1768). It was harmonized in the 19th century for its use in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1875), and the descant (which we won't be singing) was added in the 20th century by Sydney Hugo Nicholson (1875-1947). This hymn is as it appears in our hymnal, therefore, spans about five centuries of adaptation!

As this Sunday also marks the last Sunday before Lent, and the last Sunday we will sing/say "Alleluia" until Easter. Phatteicher states that during the Middle Ages "...its discontinuance developed into a ceremony of farewell to the word and even its burial,

(Continued on page 17)



Icon of the Transfiguration by Theophanes the Greek, 15th century.

(Continued from page 16)

Choir Notes

until its resurrection at Easter." We will effectively "put away" the Alleluia on Sunday with the 11th century Latin hymn: "Alleluia, Song of Gladness":

*Alleluia, song of gladness, voice of joy that cannot die;
Alleluia is the anthem ever raised by choirs on high;
In the house of God abiding thus they sing eternally.*

*Alleluia thou resoundest, true Jerusalem and free;
Alleluia, joyful mother, all thy children sing with thee;
But by Babylon's sad waters mourning exiles now are we.*

*Alleluia though we cherish and would chant for evermore
Alleluia in our singing, let us for a while give o'er,
As our Savior in his fasting pleasures of the world forbore.*

*Therefore in our hymns we pray thee, grant us, blessed Trinity,
At the last to keep thine Easter, with thy faithful saints on high;
There to thee for ever singing alleluia joyfully.*

Phatteicher offers a great explanation about how we should read this hymn:

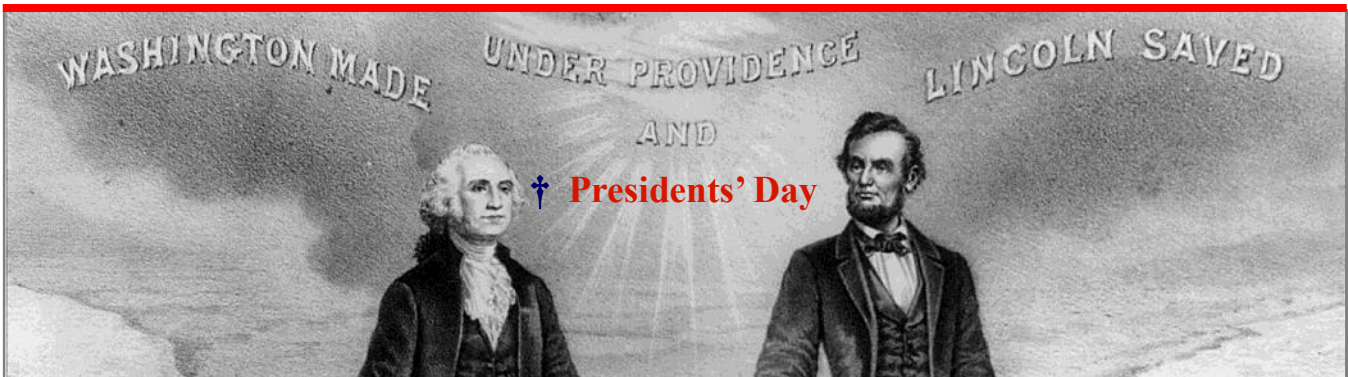
Toward the end of the second stanza the word "But" marks a sharp transition as the reality of a fallen world intrudes on the picture of the joys of heaven. "Alleluia" that has been repeated at the beginning of the first and third lines of the first three stanzas is delayed in the final stanza until the last line, anticipating its absence from the Lenten liturgy but concluding the hymn with the hope of heaven and its unending joyful praise.

Your video for the week features verses 1, 3 and 4 of "O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair." Enjoy!



✠ Good Stewardship Begins At Home: *Our Home*

Please remind all who use our home to be good stewards by turning off lights, closing curtains, turning down thermostats, cleaning up after themselves and locking doors when they are leaving, especially as cold weather and dropping temperatures consume more energy.



Presidents' Day. It's just another excuse for a three-day weekend, right? What exactly are we celebrating on this day?

The Father of America, George Washington, was born on February 22, 1732. Following his death in 1799, February 22 became an unofficial day to remember his life and legacy. However, in 1879, an Act of Congress made it a federal holiday for offices in the District of Columbia. Six years later in 1885, it was eventually expanded to include all federal offices. After celebrating Washington's Birthday for almost a century, the Holiday Uniform Act of 1971 moved the day of remembrance to the third Monday in February, therefore granting the American worker a three-day weekend.



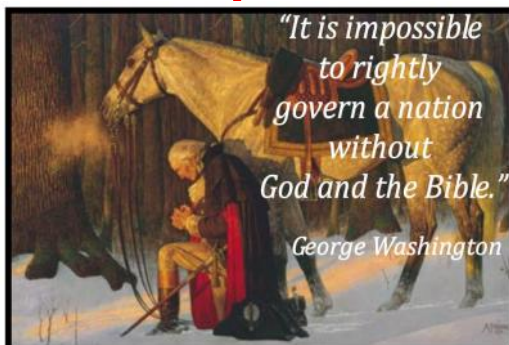
Throughout the years, this holiday has been unofficially renamed as Presidents' Day. It now has become a day for many to recognize the birthday of Washington, the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln (born on February 12), and the Office of President in general.

It has been argued, and rightfully so, that Washington and Lincoln were the two greatest presidents in American history. Christians owe these two men a great deal of gratitude. Their firm support of religious liberty and freedom of conscience led to the greatness and uniqueness of our republic. Washington and Lincoln never envisioned a secular public square, but one that was heavily influenced by people of faith. The two presidents understood and publicly acknowledged the active, providential hand of God in all the affairs of our nation.

In his [Farewell Address](#) of 1796, Washington said, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports." He frequently encouraged a new nation to humbly seek the guidance and provision of the "great Lord and Ruler of Nations." Washington ensured all Americans, regardless of their creed, that they would flourish in this land of religious

freedom. His list of accomplishments is grand, but it is the one thing he refused to do that might be the greatest accomplishment of all - his refusal to be crowned as king. In a world that was enamored with the greatness of Kings and Queens, Washington exercised incredible humility and integrity. Even the title "His Excellency" made him far too uncomfortable. Washington was convicted that there was only one Sovereign in America and His throne resided in Heaven. This may be his most enduring legacy, truly worthy of remembrance.

As for Lincoln, his reliance on the Word of God would shape his challenging yet monumental presidency. His faith guided his



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(Continued from page 18)

Presidents' Day

convictions to fight for the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery. In his second address, speaking to a war-weary people, Lincoln delivered these powerful words: "Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." The last portion of his quote is taken directly from Psalm 19. Lincoln believed that the only hope for a nation ravaged by a civil war would be God alone granting us a "new birth of freedom."

On this Presidents' Day let's take a moment to thank God for the lives of these two presidents in particular. They were providentially used to establish not a perfect union, but a more perfect union where freedom and flourishing abound. A nation that under the Hand of Providence, would enjoy the free exercise of religion in private and in public.

We should also use this day to pray for our current president. As people who believe



in the doctrine of sovereignty, we affirm that our infallible God appoints fallible leaders. These are leaders who need to be lifted up before the throne of grace to receive a wisdom that is above the sun. Alexis de Tocqueville, the French diplomat and historian, toured our nation in the 19th century on a quest to discover the greatness of America. He concluded that the greatness was not found in

Washington, D.C., but instead in the houses of worship all across our land. Pray that our president would follow in the footsteps of the great men who went before him, preserving the religious liberty that has always been a hallmark of America. This is the enduring legacy of both Washington and Lincoln. It should be the cause of great celebration this Presidents' Day.

The U.S. Constitution famously prohibits any religious test or requirement for public office. Still, almost all of the nation's presidents have been Christians and many have been Episcopalians or Presbyterians, with most of the rest belonging to other prominent Protestant denominations.

Historically, about a quarter of presidents - including some of the nation's most famous leaders, such as George Washington, James Madison and Franklin Roosevelt - were members of the Episcopal Church, the American successor to the Church of England. Presbyterians are the next largest group, with eight presidents, including Andrew Jackson and Ronald Reagan. Unitarians and Baptists (the latter including Bill Clinton and Harry Truman) are the groups with the third-largest share of presidents, each with four. There also have been four presidents who identify as Christian without a formal denomination, including Trump and his predecessor, Barack Obama.

Although about one-in-five U.S. adults are Catholic and Catholicism has long been one of the nation's largest religious groups, John F. Kennedy was the only Catholic president until Biden. Almost all of the presidents can be characterized as Christian, at least by formal membership. Some are thought to have been deists, or irreligious. No president thus far has been an Atheist, a Jew, a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Hindu, a Sikh or an adherent of any other specifically non-Christian religion.

For many earlier presidents, formal church membership was forestalled until they left office; and in several cases a president never joined any church. Conversely, though every president from Washington to John Quincy Adams can be definitely assigned membership in an Anglican or Unitarian body, the significance of these affiliations is often downplayed as unrepresentative of their true beliefs.

The pattern of religious adherence has changed dramatically over the course of United

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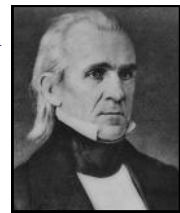
Presidents' Day



States history, so that the pattern of presidential affiliations is quite unrepresentative of modern membership numbers. For example, Episcopalians are extraordinarily well represented among the presidents, compared to a current membership of about 2% of the population; this is partly because the Episcopal Church had been the Church of England before the American Revolution and was the state religion in some states (such as New York and Virginia). The first seven presidents listed as Episcopalians were all from Virginia.

St. John's Episcopal Church, just across Lafayette Square, north of the White House, and built in 1815–1816, is the church nearest to the White House, and its services have been attended at least once by nearly every president since James Madison (1809–1817). Another Episcopal church, Washington National Cathedral, chartered by Congress in 1893, has been the scene of many funeral and memorial services of presidents and other dignitaries, as well as the site of interfaith presidential prayer services after their inaugurations.

George Washington frequently displayed a humble and gracious respect towards God in his personal letters and public speeches. He served as an Anglican vestryman and warden for more than a decade and a half at a time when everyone in politics in Virginia had to be Anglican. James Monroe was raised in a family that belonged to the Church of England when it was the state church in Virginia, and as an adult attended Episcopal churches. William Henry Harrison was a vestryman of Christ Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, Ohio after resigning his military commission in 1814. Franklin Pierce after leaving office was baptized, confirmed, and became a regular communicant in St. Paul's Episcopal Church, in Concord, NH. Chester A. Arthur, upon his wife's death in 1880, commissioned a memorial window for the south transept of St. John's, Lafayette Square, visible from the White House and lighted from within at his behest. George W. Bush was raised in the Episcopal Church but converted to Methodism upon his marriage in 1977.



James K. Polk

Did you know that ... James K. Polk came from a Presbyterian upbringing but was not baptized as a child, due to a dispute with the local Presbyterian minister in rural North Carolina? Polk's father and grandfather were Deists, and the minister refused to baptize James unless his father affirmed Christianity, which he would not do. Polk had a conversion experience at a Methodist camp meeting when he was thirty-eight, and thereafter considered himself Methodist. On his deathbed, he summoned the Rev. John B. McFerrin, who had converted him years before, to baptize him.

Did you know that ... William McKinley is the only president to include exclusively Christian language in his Thanksgiving Day proclamation?

Did you know that ... Theodore Roosevelt always stated that he was Dutch Reformed; however, he attended Episcopal churches where there was no Reformed church nearby? (His second wife Edith was Episcopalian from birth.) As there was no Dutch Reformed church in Oyster Bay, New York, he



Christ Church Oyster Bay

attended Christ Church (Episcopal) Oyster Bay when in residence there, and it was in that church that his funeral was held.

Did you know that ... Dwight Eisenhower was instrumental in the addition of the words "*under God*" to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954, and the 1956 adoption of "*In God We Trust*" as the motto of the USA, and its 1957 introduction on paper currency? He composed a prayer for his first inauguration, began his Cabinet meetings with silent prayer, and met frequently with a wide range of religious leaders while in office.



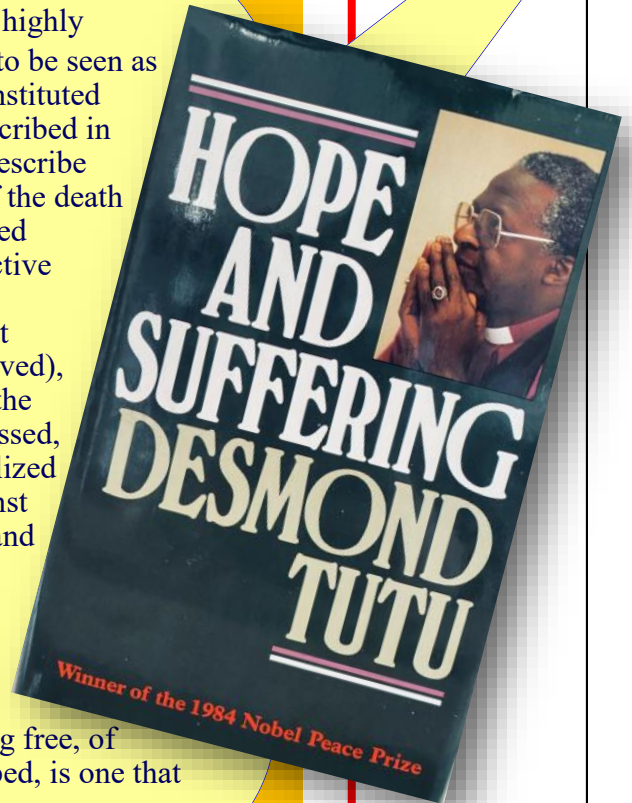
Did you know that ... Henry A. Wallace, former vice president of the United States, predicted before the Brookfield Improvement Society in **St. Paul's Crocker Hall** that "in time people will turn their eyes back from outer space to the earth and its fruits" in June, 1959?

† Thought for Reflection

- from Fr. John Morrison

"This act of saving a rabble of slaves, this highly political act called the Exodus in the Bible, came to be seen as the founding event of the people of God, what constituted them his people, and other divine events were described in light of this even, as the Christians were later to describe everything in their salvation history in the light of the death and resurrection event of Jesus Christ. God showed himself there as a saving God, as a doing, as an active kind of God, not one who was fond of delivering eloquent speeches, as a gracious God (they did not deserve to be saved, they could not merit being saved), and he showed himself to be a God of liberation, the great Exodus God, who took the side of the oppressed, the exploited ones, the downtrodden, the marginalized ones. He was no fence-sitter. He took sides against the powerful on behalf of the widow, the orphan and the alien - classes of people who were often at the back of the queue, at the bottom of the pile.

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our Fathers, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ was known then first as the God of the Exodus, the liberator God, and the theme of setting free, of rescuing captives or those who have been kidnapped, is one that runs through the Bible as a golden thread.



Desmond Tutu, *Hope and Suffering*, pp. 79-80, 81

Phishing Scams - Don't fall for them! Please do not respond to any message from Fr. Nate or St. Paul's by email or any other method of communication that asks you to purchase something (often a gift card) or asks for a "favor." **Delete these messages, do not reply, do not click links in the messages, mark them as Spam or Junk.** If there is any doubt about the veracity of a text or email, contact Fr. Nate by e-mail at (priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com) or the office



† Wednesday Morning Healing Service

Our mid-week Wednesday morning 10 am Holy Eucharist with healing prayer, now has about 50 worshippers weekly.. With live music and a brief homily, this service is just what you need to sustain you through the week. Come join us and check it out or watch on YouTube Live.

Our Men meet weekly to study on Monday nights. They are currently dissecting the Gospel of John. Join them each Monday night at 7 pm in Crocker Hall. All the studies are available live on YouTube.



||| A THIRD OF US

† **Praying for the 1/3 of our world that are still unreached with the Gospel.**

Fuuta Torro

Country: Guinea-Bissau | Population: 388,000 | Language: Pulaar | Main Religion: Islam | Evangelical: less than 0.01%

The Fuuta Torro are likely descendants of the Fulani and Wolof tribes. While most Fuuta Torro are illiterate, many are bilingual in Arabic. They live in small rural villages of round houses made of clay or rough bricks with straw roofs. Their primary diet consists of rice, millet, sorghum, fish, nuts, and fruit. Traditional society consists of four social classes with 12 castes in each. Social status rarely changes, and marriages are only within their class divisions. The Fuuta Torro first accepted Islam in the 11th century, and they view everything and their own identity through their rigid Islamic beliefs. They are extremely reluctant to leave the world they know. They maintain their pre-Islamic beliefs in spiritism and the use of magic charms, amulets, and witchcraft. Pray for efforts by believers to share Jesus with them. Ask God to open the hearts and minds of the Fuuta Torro to the Gospel.



† Women's Wed Evening Bible Study

The Women's Evening Bible Study is part of the parish -wide study on the Gospel of John, each Wednesday, at 7:00 on Zoom. All women are welcome. For more information contact Kathy Whipple at kthyw49@gmail.com.

They will continue to meet on Wednesdays during Lent.



† St. Paul's Walking Group!

Our St. Paul's walking group is racking up the miles, chilly as they may be! Their next walk will be the Fairfield Hills Loop in Newtown, Friday, February 13th at 10:00 am. Plan to meet in the parking lot located on Keating Farm Road (by the Flagpole and Pickle Ball Courts). We will plan to meet 10:00 am at the parking lot next to the club house. Sign up with Ron Switzer (rjswit@msn.com) to be on the mailing list.



† Sunday School Info!

ATTN: PARENTS OF ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS:

Sunday School classes now start at 11:45 am each Sunday. Bring the students directly to their classrooms.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Feb 15th 8 am - Crocker's
Feb 22nd 8 am - Durkin's
Mar 1st 8 am - Sarver's

10:30 am - Amy Boyce
10:30 am - Switzer's
10:30 am - Heidi Duckett



**COFFEE HOUR
HOSTS NEEDED**

Contact Beth Beck at 203-482-3110 or bkolwicz@yahoo.com



✠ **Adult Class**

Being Real – The Power of Vulnerability and Transparency is the title of our current Adult Christian Formation series. Perhaps when you hear the word vulnerability or transparency you get uncomfortable. However, the only way we can grow as Christians and be authentic believers is to recognize what we truly need and be open to God and to others. When it comes to transparency, God is not asking us to do something that He hasn't already done himself! Please join us in the Guild Room each Sunday morning at 9:30 for this intriguing and challenging 5-part series.



✠ **Exodus**

The Old Testament reading this week is from Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament, which is part of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Jews refer to these books as "The Torah." At times, they are referred to as "The Law," although "Torah" means *teaching*. Exodus centers on the rescue of God's chosen people from captivity in Egypt and the making of the great covenant, or agreement with God, at Mount Sinai.



† So, Who Was St. Valentine?

This is a day we love to remember, but we don't know why. We'll never really know exactly who he was or what he did, but the stories surrounding this popular saint have contributed to the Valentine's holiday traditions. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus. Although there are two main stories about St. Valentine, it is possible they evolved from the life of one man.

Some believe that he was a Catholic priest and physician in Rome who was beaten to death under the Christian persecution of Emperor Claudius II, who ruled from 268 to 270 A.D. Some accounts say that before he was martyred, he was thrown in jail where he befriended the jailer's blind daughter and restored her sight. The day of his execution, he left a note for this girl to thank her for her friendship and signed it "From your Valentine." Some accounts say that he rubbed ointment in her eyes on several occasions or prayed for her incessantly to heal her. The other legend is that he left a blossom in his farewell note, and that blossom healed her. This note may have been the first valentine.

The second, and perhaps more well-known, story is that St. Valentine was a priest who married couples during the reign of Claudius II, who outlawed marriage in order to keep his soldiers focused on war rather than wives. This priest was eventually caught and martyred. Some say that while he was in jail, lovers slipped notes and flowers into his cell to thank him for believing in marriage and love.

Both St. Valentines are believed to have been martyred on February 14. It's interesting to note that, in ancient Rome, February 14 was the day honoring Juno, the queen of the Roman gods and goddesses, who was also the goddess of women and marriage. February 15 was the start of the Feast of Lupercalia, during which Roman boys drew the names of Roman girls from a jar in order to choose a partner for the festival. In the early Christian church, the Roman priests tried to Christianize the pagan holiday by placing the names of saints in the jar so that those choosing would draw a patron saint for the year instead of a maiden's name. Pope Gelasius declared February 14 the day to honor St. Valentine in 496 A.D. During the Middle Ages, popular thought was that birds paired midway through February, thus February 14 lent itself to being a day for lovers. In England and France, St. Valentine was one of the most popular saints. Many traditions developed, such as children dressing up as adults and going from home to home singing verses like:

*Good morning to you, valentine;
Curl your locks as I do mine ---
Two before and three behind.
Good morning to you, valentine.*

Flowers, poems and small gifts have been a Valentine's Day tradition for centuries. The oldest known Valentine was given by the Duke of Orleans to his wife after he had been taken prisoner by the English in 1415.





HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Tanya Goodman & Toni Foster celebrate today. Denise McCormick blows out candles on Sunday. Have a blessed day everyone!



RFB®

Presents

COFFEE WITH JESUS

A Secret Mission



What can I do for you today, Jesus?



Well, that's refreshing, Lisa.

Keep your eyes open. You'll know it when you see it.



Oh, this is exciting! It's like I'm on a secret mission!

Who knew following you could be such fun?



I never intended it to be drudgery, Lisa

CoffeeWithJesus.com

† The Only Way Out Is Really the Only Way In

Exodus 24:12-18

Ancient stories sound odd to modern ears. The glory of the Lord in thick clouds and a devouring fire on the top of the mountain sounds a lot like lightning and even if a close one warrants an “Oh my God!” we understand lightning in scientific terms. The ancients saw God’s hand at work in the timing of what we know as a naturally occurring phenomenon. But then we “moderns” often do the same thing by giving extra-ordinary meaning to everyday events as when instead of turning left we turn right and a chance encounter bears blessings. So apparently we’re okay with the children of Israel camped before the mountain giving glory to the Lord for what may well have been Mt. Sinai having a little volcanic hiccup and spewing some smoke. It’s Moses entering the cloud of mountain top devouring fire that defies explanation. He was a reluctant leader in the beginning and even though he carried on a barefoot conversation with a burning bush he was always looking for a way out. Of course, the Lord provided that through signs and wonders, not the least of which was the parting of the sea, but that’s not what Moses had in mind. In some ways God has worn down this reluctant leader, so that when summoned to come up to the mountain and camp Moses obeys and does not complain. Maybe a faith that follows without complaining or seeking a way out has less to do with spiritual discipline and more to do with God wearing us down, so that like Moses, the only way out is really the only way in.



† Greeters Needed

Greeting people in a warm way makes them feel good about their presence in church.
At St. Paul’s, we are always looking for people who feel called to serve in this important ministry. If you are interested in becoming a greeter, please contact Pam Szen (prszen@gmail.com) or David Szen



Ash Wednesday is quickly approaching. Why not take these next few days to pray about how we might strengthen our disciplines of prayer and study, community worship, care for others, and perhaps, even more generous responses to “the least and the lost” among us?

† Readings for This Sunday

(Click on the red links for the readings)

Indescribable Visions

Exodus 24:12-18

In the Hebrew scripture lesson Moses is called up to Mount Sinai, and the glory of the Lord appears. There he is to receive commandments written on stone tablets. The Lord's presence is essentially indescribable, but is known in the cloud and fire. The cloud both hides and reveals the Lord's glory, and the scene suggests the awesome majesty of a volcanic mountain.



Psalms 2

God is sovereign in all the earth and shall prevail. The one who rules from Zion will be God's own Son.

2 Peter 1:16-21

This lesson presents the apostle Peter as he recalls his vision of Jesus in majesty on the holy mountain and the heavenly voice that announced this was God's beloved Son. Peter was among those who were eyewitnesses to this revelation. It makes more sure the prophetic message that is like a lamp for us. But no one should make this prophecy a matter solely of their own interpretation, for it has come through the Holy Spirit.

John 7:1-3,8,14-16,37-40,43-44; 8:12-16,28,38-39,53-59

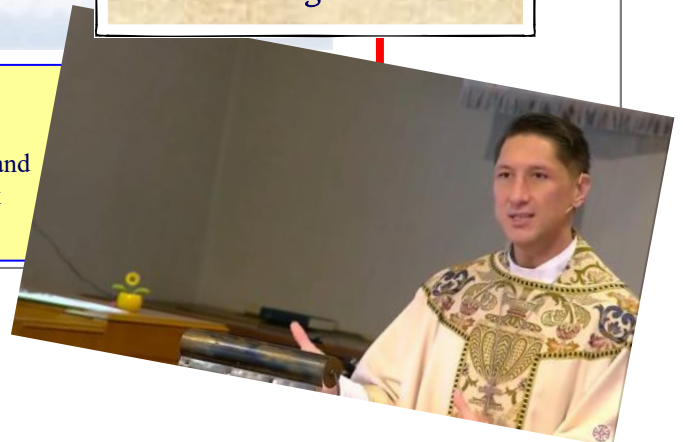
Jesus moves quietly during the Feast of Tabernacles but teaches openly in the temple, insisting that his authority comes from the Father and inviting all who thirst to receive the living water he gives. His words divide the crowd - some believe he is the Prophet or the Messiah, while others reject him. He declares himself the light of the world, challenges the Pharisees' judgments, and contrasts their earthly assumptions with his heavenly origin. As tension rises, he tells them they do not live as Abraham's children and reveals his pre-existent identity, provoking an attempt to stone him as he slips away.

John 7:37-39

In John, "thirst" has the double meaning of literal thirst for real water and physical life; and "spiritual" thirst for a real relationship with God and eternal life. Thus, those who come to Jesus and trust him will have floods of life flowing out of them.

† Sermon Shorts

The Gift & the Giver. To replay all our sermons, audio and videos follow this link for the [Sunday Sermons](#). Check out our [Sermon Archives](#) as well.



† Your Prayers Are Requested For...

It is such an intimate time when praying for the health and well being of others and such a privilege. O God, as your Son drew apart to be in prayer with you, we offer our prayers for the transformation of the world and the church, praying for:

.....Ed Licence, Gail Winkley, Barbara Hock, Tom & Nancy Maxwell, Larry Coleman, and other parishioners convalescing in extended care facilities.

.....St. Paul's Fairfield; St. James', Farmington; St. David's, Gales Ferry; St. James', Glastonbury; St. Luke's, Glastonbury.

.....Revival at St. Paul's and the greater Danbury area.

.....For church musicians: organists; choirs & choir directors; community chorister programs; parish & diocesan committees on liturgy music & worship.

.....For the Peace of Jerusalem. - *Psalm 122:6*

.....Clayton Ferry, Jim Megura, Peter Scalzo, Sr., Peter Scalzo, Jr., Doris, Karen, Beverly Hall, Roger, Cynthia, Heidi Pinheiro, Dale Mitchell, Ruth, Blake, Cliff, Evelyn Kirner, Jane Sedor, Jim Beck, Larry Wanzer, Bob Finn, Paul Kovacs, John Crisalli, Erin LaBrake, Walter, Amy Boyce, Elana and Veronika.

.....the people of [Ukraine](#); the people of the [Grand Duchy of Luxembourg](#); the people of [Turkey](#); the bishop, clergy and laity of the [Diocese of Tasmania](#) - The Anglican Church of Australia; and our sister and brother members of the [Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus \(EECMY\)](#).

.....For the Church: that we may persistently seek greater holiness and never be satisfied with merely fulfilling the letter of the law.

.....[Victory Christian Center](#), Danbury and their Food Pantry, which is the recipient of our food basket collections for the month of February.

.....[St. Paul's Lutheran Church](#), Danbury, a church partner of the Jericho Partnership.

.....Our missionaries, Will & Becky McLaughlin and their family, and their ministry in Cambodia; the Holy Spirit will provide them with words that communicate effectively in the Cambodian culture and language.

.....[In Times of Conflict](#).

.....that our faith grows and we generously share out of love and not out of obligation.

.....For moral theologians and ethicists: that the Spirit will lead them to a deeper understanding of the wisdom of God so that they can share the values that will lead believers to live the Gospel more faithfully.

.....For the grace to let go of hurts and wounds: that God will free our minds and hearts from the pain of what others have done to us and help us forgive and pray for them.

.....For healing: that God will heal the sick, give hope to those preparing for surgery, comfort the parents of sick children, and strengthen all who care for the sick.

.....[Peace Among the Nations](#).



Where Is the Real Mount Sinai?



In 2025, a single drone was allowed to fly in Saudi Arabia. Could this be a coincidence? Even more unsettling is the location - it aligns with ancient descriptions of the mountain where Moses stood before God, where the Ten Commandments were given.



Just For the Joy of It!

(And Christian Fellowship)

Random Fact of the Week!

Did you know ... that at Hagemeister Park, the Green Bay Packers' first stadium, fans would line the field or sit in their parked cars to watch games?



"FIRST COMES FAT TUESDAY, THEN ASH WEDNESDAY, FOLLOWED BY TEMPTATION THURSDAY."



"I wasn't always as religious as I am now. For years I thought the Ten Commandments were a doo-wop group from the 1950's!"

 Find us on
Facebook

 Follow us on
Twitter

 Find Us On
Instagram

Watch
us on **You Tube**



Ecclesiasticus 43:27 - We could say more but could never say enough; let the final word be: 'He is the all.' - 30 -