

# The Messenger

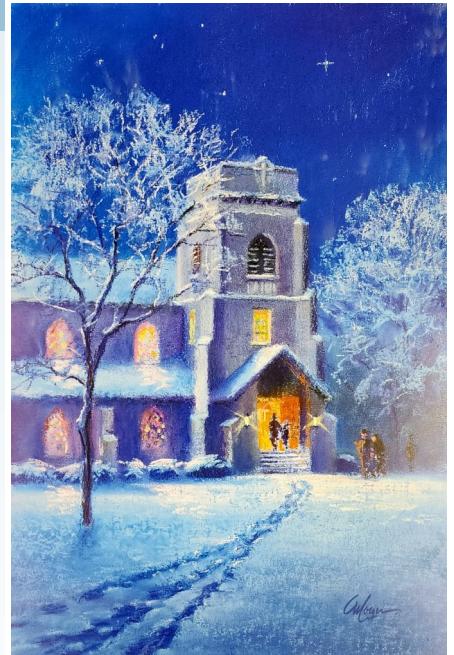
## A Note from our Interim Rector

This is the first installment of a two-part series, which will conclude this coming Holy Week.

When I came into the Episcopal Church in the early '80s, my first Holy Week experience was nothing less than life-changing. The week of services that we sometimes take for granted may seem more like an endurance test of time and emotion, rather than a serious walk with Jesus and the Boys. At Church of the Redeemer, those services were *packed*, with the explanation that this week (in the South, mind you) was that *this is how Episcopilians do a Revival!* Worked for me: Easter was the most glorious I had ever experienced. What seemed to make the difference in this small parish's life was their attendance at Holy Week services. They were *dedicated* parishioners who lived with a palpable sense of being *pilgrims*—and that made all the difference. In parishes where attendance is, at best, spotty, there is little life. Redeemer was alive and still is.

What made the difference in this small, but growing mission congregation? It boiled down to every person feeling a sense of *personal and congregational pilgrimage, especially during Holy Week.* It didn't hurt that most were also *Cursillistas*, who understood the value of pilgrimage. The people knew that we would be walking with Jesus! We all held the sense that our faith was taking us to someplace even more wonderful, where we had never been before.

At this point in my own pilgrimage, I simply can't imagine anything but the massive, week-long drama that the Church walks us through during Holy Week: we begin with Palm Sunday's procession; Maundy Thursday's commemoration of the first Eucharist, complete with our version of an Early Church *Agapé Meal*, stripping of the altar and an all-night "garden" prayer vigil before the Sacrament; Good Friday's Veneration of the Cross follows; the climax is the Great Vigil of Easter, wherein we recap our salvation history and experience theolog-



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## Vestry

Peter Jennings, Sr. Warden
Neil Swift Jr. Warden
Gayle Archey, Treasurer
Rich Ecke, Clerk
Barb Eliason
Pat Holt

cal darkness-to-light movement, with its baptisms and first use of the “A-word” since Lent began! By comparison, our 8 am & 10:00 am Easter Eucharists seem ho-hum.

Where'd we get these services? We can be thankful for them, largely due to a diary, or collection of letters, written by a late 4<sup>th</sup> century nun, named Egeria.

This was a watershed century for the Church: in 313 the Emperor Constantine made the Church legal when he, himself, became a Christian convert, in the heat of battle at a bridge outside of Milan. Soon after, his mother, Helena (who was later sainted) also became Christian. And, as the Emperor goes, so goes the empire! Soon after, the First Council of Nicaea produced the Apostles' Creed in 325, and the roots of the Nicene Creed developed some 55 years later. It was during this century that religious pilgrimage to the Holy Land became all the fashion for anyone who could afford such time and travel.

Egeria was one such pilgrim, and I will be lifting her up both this month and next. In all likelihood, she came from a family with means. By this time, religious orders had sprung up in many places; apparently, Egeria was *also* a nun from Gaul, on the NW coast of Spain. Because of her faith (and means), she was able to make a 3-year pilgrimage to the Holy Land—primarily to Jerusalem, with side trips to Constantinople, Egypt, and more. We know about her, because her somewhat fragmented letters were found in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, bound in the back of an unrelated manuscript in a monastery library.

In the fragments we *do* have—apparently, about two-thirds of the original—of her lengthy diary-letters back to her sisters in the convent, we read highly-detailed descriptions of places and people she encountered. Her letters contain copious detail about the bishop, his mode of teaching & content, and meticulous descriptions of their contemporary worship. Her words evoke our five senses! Throughout her writings, her sense of awe and thankfulness pervades the work. **The Holy Week services we now observe are, largely, based on Egeria's record. Now you know!** The actions we now do—they did.

Right after her conversion, St. Helena, mother of the Emperor became fascinated with collecting relics for veneration, including “the true cross.” St. Helena also took on the task of having “stational churches” built at significant intersections of places and times in Jesus’ life, with particular attention to Jesus’ final week’s experiences. In her extensive building program, however, Helena came close to draining the Empire of funds before she died in 330. Later, Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem was asked by the Emperor to write appropriate “stational liturgies,” especially for “the Great Week,” as they called it. Egeria made copious observations and notes, and we are recipients of those treasures.

During the remainder of Lent I invite you to google Egeria and read up on her. Several books are available: **John Wilkinson's *Egeria's Travels, 3rd edition, Reprinted with Corrections 2002***, as it really is a page-turner! Another recent edition, by **McGowan and Bradshaw: *The Pilgrimage of Egeria: A New Translation of... also appears useful.***

Plan your pilgrimage of Holy Week now!

Until next month...

Glen +

### FISH Activities

Category	Jan 22	2022 YTD	Jan 23	2023 YTD
Families (non-singles)	32	32	42	42
Singles	35	35	38	38
Adults	81	81	111	111
Children	39	39	38	38
Meals	1,800	1,800	2,235	2,235
Lbs. of Food	4,273	4,273	5,468	5,468

Thanks to volunteers: Barb Eliason, Gayle Archey, Gregg Holt, Shad Bailey, Gail Bernard, and Jack Corcino who served during Incarnation's week of January 23-27. We were also assisted every day by faithful volunteer, Cassie Wilson, who is very helpful to all volunteers

Chuck Jennings, FISH Coordinator for Church of the Incarnation

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### **21st ANNUAL LOAVES & FISHES DINNER**

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**AN EVENING OF GOOD FOOD, SILENT AUCTION  
AND RAFFLE  
FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2023  
OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1326 1ST AVE. NORTH**

**SEATING: 4:30 AND 6:00  
FREE WILL OFFERING  
ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT FISH**

**CALL 727-4304 OR 761-5009 FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

If anyone wishes to donate any items for the Silent Auction, these items should be delivered to Our Saviors Lutheran Church (which is located at the corner of 1st Avenue North and 14th Street) by the close of business on March 23rd.

**Lenten Quiet Day**  
**“Prayer—An Urge off the Heart”**  
**The Rev. Robin Biffle, Leader**  
**Saturday, March 11; 10 am—3 pm**

Join us for a quiet day in Lent on Saturday, March 11. There will be prayer, and meditation, led by The Rev. Robin Biffle. We will convene in the Nave at 10 am. Lunch will be provided.

If you would like to attend, please contact the church office at 406-453-4167 or incarnationgreatfalls@gmail.com no later than March 8, so that we can plan for our lunch, and materials.



## Schedule for March

Date	Musicians	Lector	Lector	Worship Leader—8 am	Worship Leader—10 am
<i>March 5 Lent 2</i>	Melissa Smith	Camee Dohrman	Mary Ann Cosgrove	HE I -The Rev. Lori Hale Babcock	HE II -The Rev. Lori Hale Babcock
<i>March 12 Lent 3</i>	Lana Furdell	Rich Ecke	Cheryl Quintero	Trudy Nelson	Barb Eliaison
<i>March 19 Lent 4</i>	Holly Neibauer	Sara Quay	Peter Jennings	HE I The Rev. Glen Gleaves	HE II The Rev. Glen Gleaves
<i>March 26 Lent 5</i>	Shad Bailey	Jeff Brainard	Patti Liston	Sara Quay	Camee Dohrman

## Holy Day

### The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

We celebrate the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on March 25th. This is the Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Son of God, marking his Incarnation. The Annunciation is called Euangelismos (Evangelism) in Greek, literally meaning, “Spreading the Good News”. Incarnation means, “The union of God and man in the person of Christ”.

The angel Gabriel came unto Mary and said, “Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women”. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, “Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.” He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” And the angel answered and said unto her, “The Holy Ghost (some of us refer to the Holy Ghost as the Holy Spirit) shall come unto thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible”. And Mary said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” And the angel departed from her.

A disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Spero

#### ECW

After Easter let's begin again! Let's start with socials (maybe a couple), then have a proper meeting that includes electing officers, etc. In the meantime, write to the church email ([incarnationgreatfalls@gmail.com](mailto:incarnationgreatfalls@gmail.com)) if you have ideas for events, fundraisers or anything you would like to see ECW do !

We are in the process of ordering home communion kits. Thanks to all who sent in your votes!

I am putting together some welcome bags for newcomers (more on that next month). Lots of opportunities to look forward to.

Thank you and blessings to all. Sara Quay, President



## From the Senior Warden

Dear Friends,

As we hurtle through space around the sun in our still-expanding universe, I find strength in the relative weightlessness of our worries and challenges in the grand scheme. In the vestry meeting last Sunday, we humored and humbled ourselves in a short watch party of Monte Python performing their song “Always Look on the bright side of life”, from the movie “The Life of Brian”. It occurs, of course, during the crucifixion scene! I recommend it. Laughing at ourselves, gauging the universe and confronting our mortality comprise a trinity of healthy perspectives that will help with any existential challenge. In this case, I refer to that critical, perennial effort of defining ourselves, fulfilling our needs, addressing the needs of others and recruiting more comrades along the way, all at once.

To that end, this coming weekend we find ourselves at a prayed-for step along our projected path that we weren’t sure if or when we might take. March 2-7, Incarnation will joyfully welcome a candidate for the full-time interim Rector, Pastor Lori Babcock, from Towson, MD. It will be a fun- and substance-filled 5 days with opportunity for all to spend time in fellowship and worship with Pastor Lori. In many other dimensions of our journey, we continue to make progress and benefit from the adage, “luck favors the well-prepared”.

Under Neil Swift’s guidance, the facility improvements continue to accumulate. Our stewardship program is showing great results in the balance sheet. Programming as supported by both Clergy and laity has been active and effective, in short, inspirational, in worship, bible study, pastoral care and fellowship. Can you feel it? I can, and it never ceases to amaze me how a small group of committed people (that’s all of us) can be so productive. I close with more Monty Python wisdom. “When you’re chewing on life’s gristle, don’t grumble, give a whistle, and this’ll help things turn out for the best, and...” Words to live by. Looking forward to the next steps together.

Yours in faith,  
*Peter*



## *Outreach Opportunities in February*

**Housed Great Falls is seeking volunteers** for the Cold-weather Drop-in at First United Methodist Church. Individuals are encouraged to only sign-up one day per week. Orientation will be provided to new volunteers. If the forecasted temperature is greater than 32 and rain, snow, or wind is not forecasted, you will receive email notification that the Drop-in has been canceled for the night. We will post weekly forecast and dates open on the Housed Great Falls and various church Facebook pages.

<https://signup.com/go/uwaQEkf>

### *FISH*

We continue to support FISH with our donations of time and food. There is a large box in the Narthex into which you can drop your food donations. If you are interested in donating your time during our assigned weeks, please contact Chuck Jennings at 406-788-7659 or 317charlesjennings@gmail.com. Thank you!

### *Family Promise*

Family Promise needs: Blankets, macaroni & cheese microwave cups, bottled water, laundry detergent pods, soup (pull top cans), Chef Boyardee (pull top lid), socks (new in all sizes), toilet paper, 8-1/2 x 11 office paper, coffee pods (regular and decaf), saltine crackers, sanitizing wipes, bathroom cleaning supplies, light gloves (all sizes), hot chocolate, 3 tab file folders, paper towels, deodorant, larger trash bags, single sheet sets, dish soap, pillows, kitchen garbage bags, large bar soap.

- ◆ Tickets for the SOC HOP Family Promise Fundraiser Event are available!
- ◆ Tickets available starting March 1st at [www.familypromisegf.org](http://www.familypromisegf.org) or at Kaufmans located Downtown at 411 Central Avenue- \$40 per person (\$42 if purchased online) or \$400 for a table of 8
- ◆ Sponsors are welcome and will receive additional recognition at the event, in our advertising and promotions, and will receive a table for 8 at the event. Call our office for details.
- ◆ Hamburger, hot dogs, and fries' dinner is included in the ticket price.
- ◆ 50's attire is encouraged – there will be dancing!
- ◆ Doors open at 5 PM

Church of the Incarnation will be providing a basket for the silent auction!

## **WISH LIST**

Office needs: office chairs

Church: Mesh system (internet signal boosters)

## The Rev. Lori Hale Babcock

Will Celebrate and Preach at both services Sunday, March 5.

The Rev. Lori Hale Babcock is our candidate for the full-time interim position. She is coming this weekend to meet our wonderful congregation, so that we all might determine if we are a good match.. Pastor Lori is an Episcopal priest who understands her call to ministry is to serve God's people as pastor in times of joy and sorrow and to preach, teach, and guide us to deeper relationship with God and one another. She has exercised her ministry both within and beyond the walls of the church having served in parish ministry for ten years and as a healthcare chaplain for the past six.



Prior to her call to ordained ministry, Pastor Lori worked in marketing and non-profit management and was a certified mentor for the Education for Ministry program offered through the University of the South.

She was born and raised in York, PA but relocated to Maryland to attend college. She married John a musician and teacher who served in the United States Navy/Naval Academy Band for twenty-two years and now teaches middle school music in Baltimore. Currently they reside in Towson with their dogs Sunny and Jack. Their four children: Grace, Max, Nathaniel, and Tessa have flown the nest. A perfect day for Pastor Lori is to curl up on the couch with a mystery novel and her dogs.

There will be a reception (meet & greet) following the Sunday 10 am service.  
Please plan to attend.

### Church of the Incarnation

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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

