|  |
| --- |
| ***Worship Calendar***  **Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday,**  7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist With the Imposition of Ashes  **Sunday, February 18, First Sunday in Lent**  10:30 a.m. (Purple) Holy Eucharist  **Wednesday, February 21, Wednesday in Lent,**  7:00 p.m. Compline (Reckless Prayer – Daily Devotions)  **Sunday, February 25, Second Sunday in Lent**  10:30 a.m. (Purple) Holy Eucharist |

**2024 Envelopes -** If you need a new box of envelopes for 2024, please contact the parish office by email [sjtetopsail@nfld.net](mailto:sjtetopsail@nfld.net) or call 709-834-2336. We also have the option of Pre-Authorized payment or e-transfer. To learn more about these options please call the Parish Office.

**A Note from the Treasurer:** Please ensure your **envelope number is on** all financial **correspondence** so that we can credit your account for income tax purposes.

**Parish Office hours are Monday – Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**2024 Bulletins -** If you’d like to give a weekly bulletin to commemorate the life of a loved one or in Thanksgiving for an event in your life, please contact David in the office for the dates available.

**Parish E-mail List** – We have begun e-mailing the Sunday Bulletin on the previous Thursday and will be sending other information of Parish Life from time to time. If you would like to add your name to this Parish List, please call the Office or email us at [**sjtetopsail@nfld.net**](mailto:sjtetopsail@nfld.net)

***Service Roster:*** Sidespersons Sound Room

February 18th Audrey M. James S.

February 25th Rex H. Philip G.

March 3rd Betty P. Robert D.

|  |
| --- |
| Bishop: The Right Reverend Samuel Rose  Diocesan Administrator: The Venerable Charlene Taylor  Rector: The Reverend Jotie Noel, T.S.S.F. (Third Order, Society of St. Francis)  Parish Deacon:  The Reverend Lisa Cox  Organists/Choir Director: Stephanie Gavell, Amanda Dawe-Ledwell  Parish Wardens: Rex Hillier & Leanne Squire  Office Administrator: David Kelland |

Welcome to the Parish of

St. John the Evangelist

Conception Bay South, Newfoundland

**Feast of the Presentation**

**February 11, 2024**

****

[www.stjohntheevangelistnl.com](http://www.stjohntheevangelistnl.com/)

Facebook: SJTE Topsail

Office email: [sjtetopsail@nfld.net](mailto:sjtetopsail@nfld.net)

Office phone number: 709-834-2336

Address: P.O. Box 13033, CBS, NL, A1W 2K1

E-transfer: sjtetopsail@nfld.net

Rector Email: jotienoel@gmail.com

Rector’s Cell: 709-325-2366

**Our Parish Mission Statement**

**We believe in nurturing a community of faith dedicated to inclusion, support and sharing the story of God's love with all people regardless of the stage of their spiritual journey**

**Candlemas – Under Another Name**

*The Presentation of the Lord* officially occurs on February 2. Luke the evangelist tells us that Jesus was presented in the house of God, as the Law of Moses required. He also records how the Christ-child was greeted by Simeon and Anna, two figures who represented Israel’s longing to see the Redeemer promised by God.

The evangelist gave Simeon a song to sing, the Nunc dimittis, which acclaims Jesus as the saving Light of God. To symbolize the enlightening truth of Christ the western Church developed the custom of blessing candles on this feast — hence its other title, Candlemas.

The chief title of today’s feast, *“The Presentation,”* comes from the ancient Jewish law that every firstborn son had to be dedicated to God’s service. But the Law of Moses allowed parents to redeem their child by offering something else in his stead. In Jesus’s case, Mary and Joseph offered the redemptive substitute which the law appointed for the first-born of poor parents, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

Thus, paradoxically, the Redeemer himself was redeemed. Many Christian writers have delighted to see the deepening of this paradox in the story of Simeon. In the fourth century, Ephrem of Edessa wrote: “When Simeon the priest received Christ into his arms and presented him to God, he understood that he was not offering Christ, but was himself being offered.”

In celebrating the feast of the Presentation, the people of the Church become like Simeon, who cradled the infant Light of salvation in the crook of his arm and knew him to be as fragile as a candle-flame. In baptism, in meditating upon Scripture, and in the eucharist Christians cradle the same Light and take responsibility for the life of Christ in our world. And yet the paradox continues. Even as they hold Christ in their hands, they may discover that they are really in the crook of Christ’s arms, being presented by him in the sanctuary of God’s joy and glory. *For All The Saints*

*Blessed are you, O Lord our God,*

*for you have sent us your salvation.*

*Inspire us by your Holy Spirit to recognize him*

*who is the glory of Israel and the light for all nations,*

*your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ACC)*

**ACW QUIET DAY**

Our ACW invite you to join us **Saturday morning Feb. 17** for a **Quiet Time** in prayer, reflection and singing as we prepare for our Lenten Journey.

This will begin at 10:30 in the church and be followed by a soup lunch in the Hall.

Our theme, **“Shaped By Love”** will be demonstrated through props and dialogue and will reaffirm and reassure us that God’s love for us has no boundaries.

Both male and female are most welcomed to come along. Enjoy some time away from phones, TV’s and the busyness of everyday life.

Contact Shirley (709-368-9504) or Betty (709-834-4736) to let us know if you are attending so that we have plenty of soup and cookies to go around!

**Vestry - St. John the Evangelist Vestry Meeting**, **Thursday, February 15th at 7:00 p.m.** In the Parish Hall.

**Annual Meeting –** The annual meeting for the parish will be scheduled shortly; This is reminder for all groups and organizations to prepare their reports and submit them to the office as soon as is possible.

**Ocean Ranger Memorial** - Gonzaga High School will be holding its annual Ocean Ranger Memorial Prayer Service to remember those who lost their lives in the tragedy 42 years ago. The service will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. at the Basilica of St. John the Baptist.

**We invite prayers for those who are sick -** Patricia B., Elaine M., Benjamin C., Doug T., Tammy H., Jeanette P., Wally H., Trudy T., Brad L., Ruby H.

*Almighty and immortal God, the giver of life and health: We beseech thee to hear our prayers for thy servants for whom we implore thy mercy, that by thy blessing upon them and upon those who minister to them of thy healing gifts, they may be restored, according to thy gracious will, to health of body and mind, and give thanks to thee in thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Set Sail - Life on Board** - A Bible Study Series based on suggested Lessons for Season of Creation, “Let Peace and Justice Flow Down like a River,” will take place on **Wednesday morning, February 14, at 10:30 a.m.**

Join us for an hour of conversation and discernment.

**Parish Home Visits** – The dynamic of the times still provides many issues for clergy home visit ministry. As we continue to emerge out of the pandemic and still live with it, Canon Jotie is ready, willing, and able to visit you in your home. Under the circumstances, this offer comes with the understanding that he will respond to invitations. Please call him to invite him to visit your home if you wish for conversation, prayers, or Home Communion.

**The Laying on of Hands** – In preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, **Sunday, May 26,** **2024**, 10:30 a.m. we plan to start Confirmation Classes in late January. Confirmation Candidates should currently be in Grade 6 or older. Please contact the Church Office to register or for more information (709-834-2336 or [sjtetopsail@nfld.net](mailto:sjtetopsail@nfld.net)).

We are ready, willing and able to prepare adults for Confirmation if you may be interested. Please contact Reverend Jotie for details.

**Lent is Coming - The Discipline of Reckless Prayer**

The word **reckless** refers to a person or their action without thinking or caring about the consequences of an action. If we say that someone is **reckless**, we mean that they act in a way which shows that they do not care about danger or the effect their behavior will have on themselves or other people. Well indeed, you might ask **what this has to do with prayer?**

It is a good question. Many of us in our faith community pray using the prayers and forms set out in Anglican Books of Prayer, much like we do on Sunday when the community gathers. These prescribed and approved Orders of Service and Prayers keep us within a boundary and direct exactly what we say, think and believe.

**Reckless Prayer** references stepping outside these boundaries of words and form into a wilderness, an unfamiliar borderland. We seek to encounter the *“holy”* without the walls of prescribed words or actions. We seek to listen, to hear, to know, completely on our own without the filters (approved forms and words). Without the safety net of the censoring norms of the faith community we dare to bask in the presence of *‘the source of our being, the eternal word and the Holy Spirit’.*

**Our Mid-Week Lenten Observance, Wednesdays in Lent, 7:00 p.m.:**

Ash Wednesday, February 14 – **Turning from Ashes to Reckless Prayer**

Wednesday, February 21 – ***Reckless Prayer through Daily Devotions***

Wednesday, February 28 – ***Reckless prayer through Lectio Divina***

Wednesday, March 6 – ***Reckless Prayer through The Jesus Prayer***

Wednesday, March 13 – ***Reckless Prayer through Beathing***

Wednesday, March 20 – ***Reckless prayer Through Silence***

**Ash Wednesday** - The Imposition of Ashes - We will offer the imposition of ashes during the Eucharist. This will take place during the General Confession. Ashes are a symbol of purification and penitence. From the eleventh century onward, Christians came to Church on the Wednesday before the first Sunday in Lent to have blessed ashes (made of the palm branches of the previous Palm Sunday) put on their foreheads. The words used in the rite are penitential ones and suggest abasement before God if forgiveness is to be achieved. They are a reminder of our human mortality: ‘Remember, you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (cf. Genesis 3.19)’ It can be a spiritually powerful inauguration of the season of Lent.

Those who attend the service may or may not choose to receive the imposition of ashes. There may be multiple stations for the Imposition of Ashes.

**Bishop’s 2024 Lenten Letter**

Dear Beloved Disciples,

Lent offers us a precious opportunity to journey deeper into the heart of our faith, reflect on our relationship with God and one another, and renew our commitment to living as disciples of Christ. Many will engage in the Lenten disciplines of self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and reading and meditating on the word of God.

It is no coincidence that within the word ‘discipline’ can be found the root word ‘disciple.’ Christian discipline and discipleship are deeply intertwined concepts within the Christian faith.

Christian discipline lies at the heart of our Lenten observance. Through self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and reading and meditating on the word of God, we create space in our lives to encounter God more deeply, to listen attentively to the voice of God’s Spirit, and to discern God’s will for our lives. Let us approach these disciplines not as burdensome obligations but as pathways to greater intimacy with our Creator.

Discipleship, likewise, is central to our Lenten journey. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to walk in his footsteps, to embody his love and compassion, and to bear witness to his kingdom in our midst. It is a lifelong commitment to follow Jesus wherever he leads, even when the path is steep and the way is uncertain.

One of my failings as a Christian is not finding the time to spend with God deeply and meaningfully. I’m a busy Bishop with lots of business to occupy my time and mind. I confess that I’m not all that good at just “being” in the refreshing presence of God - I’d rather be “doing” the business of the Church.

So, for Lent this year, my discipline is to be still and present with God. I will try not to be too busy to pray, meditate, and find time to sit still and open my heart more fully to God every day of Lent. Because without the discipline of practicing stillness and openness with God, I cannot be a faithful disciple of Christ or a responsible Bishop to you.

In the fast-paced rhythm of our lives, it is easy to lose sight of the importance of intentional spiritual practices and the call to follow Jesus wholeheartedly. Lent offers us a sacred space to pause, reflect, and realign our lives with the teachings and example of our Lord. s we journey through Lent together, may our hearts be open to the work of the Holy Spirit, guiding us deeper into the mystery of God’s love and grace. May we emerge from this sacred season renewed in our commitment to Christian discipline and discipleship, ready to bear witness to the transforming power of the Risen Christ.

I conclude with the Prayer after Communion for Ash Wednesday:

**God of compassion,**

**through your son Jesus Christ,**

**you reconciled your people to yourself.**

**Following his example of prayer and fasting,**

**may we obey you with willing hearts**

With prayers for a blessed and meaningful Lenten journey,



The Right Rev. Samuel Rose

Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador