



ST. PATRICK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

February 2024

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Breaking Bread

In a recent sermon when I spoke about Jesus' calling us to repent and believe the good news, I said, "the word Jesus used... means, literally, to change your mind. Think differently."

As we come to Lent, I'd like to focus again on this "thinking" aspect of repentance. Those who studied French or Spanish will remember that those languages use words like "penser" and "pensar" for "to think." So to re-pent literally means, to re-think. The things we think lie behind what we do or say.

To pay attention to our thoughts, then, would be good advice. For example, what happens if we are always thinking, "Nobody loves me." Or, "I deserve a little fun." Or, "everyone does it." Or, "no one else cares, why should I?" Etc?

What happens if we act on such thoughts? It's hard to predict exactly since everyone is unique. One thing is certain, however: if we did a little re-thinking first, the outcome would be different. Maybe someone does love me. (There's always Jesus!) Or, is the fun I really think would be fun now, be something I'll feel good about in the morning? And is it really true that every last person does this? Or, is it really the case that no one else cares? Careful thinking on these questions could be fruitful for sure.

Re-thinking such thoughts is, I believe, very much in line with what Jesus invites us to do, when he calls on us to repent and believe in the good news. Lent is a great time to practice the skill. One of the traditional Lenten disciplines that can help is charitable giving. Finding out more about the needs of others, and what good-hearted people are doing to help, changes how we think. We think less about ourselves, for starters. The range of things we could be doing to be helpful broadens out. Giving helps us re-think our motivations.

For this reason I'm very pleased that we will have a such a great series of speakers who will tell us each week about good works their organizations are doing. A list of them appears elsewhere in the Shamrock. We are all invited to get behind their good works by a special collection each Sunday.

I'm also looking forward to a weekly time of group Lectio Divina each Sunday after services. This ancient practice of holy reading immerses us



spiritually in Christ, both by hearing the Word and by listening to one another's encounters with the Word. This series will surely help us all re-think how we think about God in our lives.

Finally, something I have re-thought personally has to do with St Patrick's day (March 17). This always falls in Lent. I have been reluctant to give up one of the Sundays in Lent to celebrate it in our worship service. But I have slowly come round to seeing how helpful it could be to our communal life to do that. So this year instead of reading the lessons for the Fifth Sunday in Lent, we'll be reading the ones for Patrick, and singing some lovely Irish hymns, and changing the liturgical colors too. There will be food and fellowship afterwards, and Karla Smolen has agreed to show pictures from her recent trip to Ireland.

Here's what I think: even in Lent we deserve a little fun. What do you think?

Blessings for your Lenten journey, yours faithfully,

Donnel+

Highlights from the Annual Meeting

On January 28th, we held our church's annual meeting. There are several pieces of business that happen during this meeting. The vestry presents the budget for the upcoming year. New vestry members are voted on and accepted as the upcoming leadership group for the church. Kimi Nebres and Beth Schomberg are new members added to the vestry to replace Karla Smolen and Jerry Southwood as their term of service has expired. The roster of attendees for the annual conference is also agreed upon during this meeting. All of the above items were fulfilled at the annual meeting, except that we are still looking for one more person to attend the annual conference representing St. Patrick's this fall. Currently, we have Father Donnel, Tom LePage and Ann LePage as our delegation. We still have room for one more person to join this group and get a better understanding of what happens at the Diocesan Convention, and what important decisions are made that could affect our church in 2024 and beyond.

It was noted in our annual meeting that we are running our church on a shortfall of pledges and will have to take money out of an investment



account to continue operations this year. The budget led to discussion of the needed growth of members and what we might want to do to attract new members this coming year. We are requesting prayer and input from the congregation as we try to ensure the security of our church's financial position in 2024.



New Vestry Members:

Recently, I had the pleasure of interviewing our new vestry members: Kimi Nebres and Beth Schomberg. Our church has a firm foundation, and we are pleased to add the talents and unique perspective that both these new leaders will add to our vestry. I am sharing some of our conversation in the two sections below, but please make time to get to know these two women better, if you have not already done so. I am sure that you will be as impressed and as excited as I am.

Karla Smolen





Kimi Nebres

Kimi has been a Registered Nurse (RN) since 1984. She has worked in many areas, but one of her favorite assignments was working in the Labor and Delivery areas. She has also taken on other diverse challenges in her healthcare career. She has worked with hospice care. She has written policies and procedures for a medical rehab center catering to the homeless population. And she has been a business owner and taken on the responsibility of providing in-home care with a staff while owning a franchise of Comfort Keepers in California.

Her spiritual journey has been just as diverse. She was a part of YWAM in Texas, and felt a calling to work in the mission field. This calling was one of the reasons that she pursued her nursing degree - knowing that it would be helpful in the mission field. She then felt led to continue working with healing - but it was participating in local healing ministry. She then realized the need that so many had for emotional healing, and she pursued and obtained her Master's degree in Pastoral Care and Counseling.

As far as her geographical background goes, Kimi grew up in Whitefish. She also participated in the Exchange Student program and spent one semester in Norway. After graduating High School, she attended Northern MT college in Havre. Then it was on to Los Angeles prior to finally landing back in MT in Woods Bay.

She and Bob have been married for 5 years, but have known each other for many more years. (As teens they met at Camp Marshall.) Their family consists of 4 children and 7 grandchildren (with one more on the way.) Very exciting times for their family!

In her vestry role, she would like to look at ways to serve the congregation where we are today. She feels that a healing ministry could have an



impact on our congregation if others are led to move in that direction. She wants to be sure that if we embark on a healing ministry that it is a shared vision.



Beth Schomber

After 30 years, Beth recently retired from teaching college level Chemistry. She taught at the University of Washington and several community colleges (including Northern VA Community College for 20 years.) Early in her career, she also worked at a startup in WA that was in the mining industry.

Beth was born in Southern California. Her parents, Lee and Larry Murphy were Montana natives with family and friends in the Ferndale area since 1934. In 1972, they moved back to MT, and Beth attended the Ferndale school, with her father teaching there, as well. (The future site of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church.) In 1975 she transitioned to the Bigfork schools, as the Ferndale school was merged with the Bigfork school system.

Beth graduated from Valparaiso Univ. (Valpo) in 1986. (Again, her father's influence was strong, since he graduated from Valpo in 1956.) She then went on to Seattle and earned her PhD at the University of Washington. She has lived in Washington, Florida, California and Virginia, but Montana has always felt like home to her. With her parents living in Bigfork, MT, she came back to MT for visits. When she and Paul, her husband, were ready to retire, they wanted to come to a place that was away from the politics, crowds and threats of Washington DC, and Montana was calling her back home. She and Paul, her husband, love the beauty, the familiarity and mostly the people. It also gave Beth a chance to be with her father in his final days, as his health was failing.



In talking with Beth about her vision for the growth of our church, she is excited to help St. Patrick's to find even more ways to serve and help others find our welcoming community. One of the opportunities that she is excited about is our potential involvement in ACES (the Bigfork afterschool program.)

Lenten Collections

Every year, as we prepare for Lent, we "re-think" where we spend our extra money, as we focus on the ultimate sacrifice that Christ made for us. This year, we are focusing on different charities (local and global) that are making a difference in the lives of others, and that we want to support. We will have guest speakers each week who will explain the mission and the focus of that charity. Last week, we kicked off the season with Ann Tucker joining us from the Bigfork Food Bank.



The whole lenten schedule of charities is listed below:

Feb 18 Bigfork Food Bank: Ann Tucker, former Executive Director

Feb 25 Episcopal Relief & Development: Tom LePage

March 3 Nate Chute Foundation: Brad Ray, Executive Director

March 10 St Nicolas school in Haiti: Barb Myers, St Nicolas team at Christ Church, Kalispell

March 17 Flathead Warming Center: Tonya Horn, Executive Director and Co-Founder

March 24 Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem: Fr O'Flynn



Special Easter Services

St. Patrick's will hold special services for:

Maundy Thursday - March 28th, 7pm

Good Friday - March 29th, noon

Easter Sunday - March 31st, 10am

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

<u>February</u>		<u>March</u>	
Gene Gribben	13	Tom LePage	1
Mark Smolen	21	Father Donnel O'Flynn	1
		Diana Blankenship	9
		Caroline Knapp	16
		Patty LaBlonda Saville	17



Anniversaries:

Jeanne and Jerry Southwood
Jackie McKennan and Scott Waldo

February 10
February 14



Contact Us

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St. Patrick's Vestry 2023:

Tom LePage, Sr. Warden

Peter Robinson, Jr. Warden

Jerry Southwood, Treasurer

Nancy Winder, Clerk

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Kimi Nebres

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