

The Guardian

MARCH 2020

ST. MICHAEL'S TUESDAY EVENING LENTEN SERIES

TREASURE IN CLAY JARS: THE PRACTICE OF RECONCILIATION TUESDAYS, MARCH 3–31

What is the mission of the Church? According to the Outline of Faith found in our Book of Common Prayer, *The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.* This is the ministry of reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation is at the heart of our faith as Christians, though we do not always realize it.

What does it mean to be reconciled with God and one another? How does that work in real life? What prevents us from being reconciled? What helps us? This series will explore the practice of reconciliation both on a personal scale (between ourselves and others, between ourselves and God) and on a corporate scale (between different nations and peoples). Please join us on Tuesday evenings during Lent as we as a community attempt to deepen our understanding and practice of reconciliation.

March 3: The Theology of Reconciliation, Mary Lindquist. What is reconciliation according to scripture? How does reconciliation relate to our Christian faith?

March 10: The Rite of Reconciliation, Duncan Hilton. What is the Episcopal Rite of Reconciliation (otherwise known as Confession)? How might one participate in this sacramental rite and how might it help bring about healing?

March 17: Reconciliation & 12-Step Spirituality, Jeff H. What is the story behind the 12-Step movement and why is Step 9 (making amends) so important?

March 24: Dignity, Reconciliation and the General Convention Taskforce on Communion across Difference, Tom Ely. The former Bishop of the Diocese of Vermont speaks about the importance of dignity in regard to working through conflict, as well as shares his experience working on reconciliation within the Anglican Communion.

March 31: Reconciliation and Restorative Justice, Meg Mott. Professor Meg Mott shares with us the story and vision of the restorative justice movement and helps us understand how tools of restorative justice can bring about reconciliation on a small and large scale.

All programs are located at St. Michael's Episcopal Church. Come to any or all parts of the evening. All are welcome.

Each Tuesday will include:

- Supper in the undercroft from 5:15–6 pm
- Program in the Meeting Room, from 6–7 pm
- Night Prayer in the Meeting Room, from 7–7:15 pm

LENT AT ST. MICHAEL'S

WENDELL BERRY AND THE SABBATH POETRY OF LENT

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. —Isaiah 14:7

In this Lenten devotional, biblical texts and simple, accessible practices walk hand-in-hand with Wendell Berry's poetic vision of sabbath and the natural world. All you'll need is your favorite Bible and Wendell Berry's *This Day: Collected and New Sabbath Poems*. Week by week, we'll walk through the woods together toward Easter morning, keeping sabbath as we go — with Wendell Berry as our guide.

This resource, created by the Saltproject.org, includes introductions to both the Lenten season and the ancient practice of sabbath keeping. You may pick up your copy of "Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent" at St. Michael's in the Common Room.



HELP NEEDED FOR THE LENTEN SUPPERS

At 5:15 pm on Tuesdays during Lent, we will gather for a community supper before the Lenten program. This year we will again have soup and homemade bread. We hope to also serve pizza and salad. We need help to make this happen! Please sign up if you can:

- Make a pot of soup (2–3 people to bring pots of soup to share)
- Make a salad
- Help set up at 5:00 pm (set tables and set out food)
- Help Clean up (clean up food and dishes)

Signup sheets are available in the Common Room. Thank you for your help!



ADULT FORUMS IN MARCH

This month, our Forums are all about "Difficult Things, Hard Choices."

March 1: "Truth Telling" — Does truth exist? Yes!
But, how do we engage the truth? How do we approach the truth in a way that we understand it as well as we can? And then, how do we tell this truth to someone in a charitable way? Let's talk about it! *Led by Zach Young.*

March 8: "Climate Change: Trouble Ahead? You Decide" — Bill Ames will lead the Forum. He writes, "We'll explore some contemporary thought including some places around the globe where changes and their consequences could be severe, including the USA. If you want some homework, go to comments by Greta Thunberg to the UN and other quotes available on the internet. I hope you will attend this Forum."

March 15: "When was the last time you put new soles on a pair of shoes, or fixed a toaster that wasn't working properly?" — We live in a consumer culture.

In fact, the strength of our economy depends on our willingness to spend money. *Come and talk with Nancy Ames* about making the hard choices about buying what we need versus what we want, and how that impacts both our own lives and the health of our planet.

March 22: "Aging" — The space between being completely independent and being ready for death for some is short, but for many of us it is longer than it used to be. There are some questions to ask — and to answer in advance as much as possible. What are your questions? Please bring them and the solutions you have come to. *Led by Janet Cramer and Linda Rice.*

March 29: "Looking Death in the Face, not as the Enemy." What does it mean to accept Death, fairness be damned! What does Christianity have to do with it? *Led by Phillip Wilson.*

THE ST. MICHAEL'S TAG SALE AS A MINISTRY

Have you ever wondered why the St. Michael's May and October Tag Sales are referred to as a "ministry" of the Church? Why not call it a "fundraiser?" Here are a few examples which might clarify the role of the Tag Sale in our community, as experienced by many who work at the Sale.

Most of us enjoy finding bargains and unique items at the Tag Sale, but there are also hundreds of people with limited resources from all around the Brattleboro area who look forward to our sale as an affordable way to buy clothing, shoes, linens, housewares and furniture for their whole family. On the day of the sale, people line up outdoors waiting for the Tag Sale to open at 9 am, then hurry in to shop. Young people just setting up housekeeping rely on our plentiful housewares department for dishes, pots and pans and many other items. Outdoors in the furniture department, parishioners have spoken of assisting people just out of prison or in other difficult transitions, helping them find furniture they need and then helping truck it to their homes.

Also, keep in mind that half of the money raised by the Tag Sale goes to support the Outreach Ministry's local initiatives such as the Drop-in Clinic, Groundworks Collaborative (for the homeless), and the Putney Foodshelf.

In addition to helping the Brattleboro area community by offering low-cost, good-quality merchandise, as well as delicious food, the Tag Sale offers fellowship and ways of connecting for parishioners who volunteer to help. There are many steps to organizing each Sale — sorting donations, preparing food, setting up the Sale, then selling and finally cleaning up the spaces afterwards. It is a huge task overall, but, with many people helping, it is satisfying, manageable and fun!

PLEASE JOIN US!! Currently, there are many ways to be involved in preparing for the **SPRING TAG SALE** which will be bigger and more fun than ever (more on that next month!), and is scheduled for Saturday, May 2!

HELP PREPARE FOR THE SPRING TAG SALE!

- **Every Monday 2–4 pm** — come to the downstairs of the Church (near the parking lot door) and help sort clothes. Just show up or contact Liz Vick, ebethvick@gmail.com or Charlene Kemp at charkemp@outlook.com.
- **Every Tuesday 2–4 pm** — come to the downstairs (same place) and help sort housewares. Contact Sherry Stimmel, sherrys@iglide.net
- **Volunteer to help pick up furniture** when you are available. Contact Daniel Dobson, dbdrunner@dobsongroupinc.com
- **Donate** baked goods or chili to be sold to workers and shoppers. Contact Craig Newbert at 802-246-4530 or barefootpole@yahoo.com.
- **Donate** things we can sell! (see the guidelines below)

GUIDELINES FOR TAG SALE DONATIONS

- **Clothing** — SPRING AND SUMMER, adult and child. Must be clean, no stains or rips, good condition.
- **Linens** — good condition, no stains, clean.
- **Housewares** — must have all parts, clean, unbroken, in good condition.
- **Toys** — puzzles or games with all the pieces. Please, **NO STUFFED ANIMALS!**
- **Shoes** — only lightly worn, excellent condition sandals, shoes, hiking boots.
- **Books** — books in good condition are welcome as long as they have not been stored in a damp basement. No magazines, text books or encyclopedias.
- **Jewelry** — in good condition. Please contact Charlene Kemp about valuable jewelry donations at 254-2083/ email charkemp@outlook.com or leave jewelry with Jeanie in the office.
- **Furniture** — big items — can be housed at our storage barn if you can't keep them until April 27. Please check with us first about any upholstered furniture. For more information, and pickup help, please contact: Daniel Dobson dbrunner@dobsongroupinc.com 1-425-785-8262
- Sorry, we absolutely **cannot** accept any **ELECTRONICS, MATTRESSES, LARGE APPLIANCES**, or anything that is soiled, worn, musty or broken.

Thank you!

NEWS OF THE PARISH

Dear St. Michael's

It has begun to feel as if the Discipleship and Discernment Ministry has branched into a handful of ministries stemming from the ongoing discipleship groups created more than two years ago and last year's missional training. Here's what's happening in each of the "branches."

Six Discipleship groups continue to meet with about 30 people regularly attending in total. By the first of March, I will have visited each group this winter to hear what has happened in their groups this year. I'll process what we've heard from each of the groups with the Leadership Team members (Christy Fritz, Jeff Hiam, Adwoa Lewis-Wilson) who've been accompanying me on some of the visits to discern a process across the groups to celebrate and reflect on what's happened in the groups and to discuss how to continue.

The Discernment for Lay People Team (Christy Fritz, Cary Gaunt, Joanne Patalano) designed and led a two-day retreat at Hallelujah Farm on Ignatian spirituality and discernment practices the last weekend in January. In February we met to discuss on how to build on the camaraderie and learning from the retreat. The retreatants were especially interested in an ongoing monthly group to support one another with discernment.

The exploration of a L'Arche community deepened with a small group of people from St. Michael's and the wider community (Steve Guerriero, Peter Johnson, Barbara Lee, Judith Reichsman, Saint Rosner, Stephen Spitzer, Brian White, Mandy White) convening in early February to submit an application to the national L'Arche office to express their interest in committing to study L'Arche's mission and history through this summer. That smaller group will meet once a month. The monthly social gatherings for the wider community of folks interested in L'Arche also continued with a comedy improv afternoon on Feb. 23 led by Robin Zegge at St. Michael's.

Jean Smith, Joyce Vining-Morgan, and I continue to meet weekly in Bellows Falls at the community justice



Desire & Discernment Retreat.

center as part of the Circle of Support and Accountability (COSA) program. The church has also supported the "core members" (the men transitioning out of prison) with clothes and other items that they cannot afford shortly after release. Out of our research around the opioid crisis in Brattleboro last year, Pastor Matt Miller and congregants from the Community Bible Chapel also are helping with COSA groups in Brattleboro and Springfield.

The Morning Prayer Group celebrates its one-year anniversary this Lent. It began as an experiment last Lent to engage in prayer in the Episcopal tradition more deeply. A year later there is still Morning Prayer every weekday at 8 am. It is open to anyone and there is a handful of folks who also pray Evening Prayer in their homes.

I continue to co-lead a singalong monthly at the Gathering Place with Peter Johnson. Be in touch if you have gifts as a musician and song leader that you'd like to share there, as I think about how the ministry might continue beyond my time at St. Michael's.

Many folks have been asking about my future plans. They are still up in the air as I begin a conversation with the Diocese of Vermont and also add the elements to my discernment of married life and Bethany's career. I will keep you posted. I'm grateful for the parish's support in so many different ways.

Duncan

NEWS OF THE PARISH

Dear Beloved St. Michael's Community,

I send you greetings from Nazareth and on behalf of our Lord Jesus Christ! I know it has been a long time since I have written you but I want you all to know that you are regularly in my thoughts and prayers. As I flew across the Atlantic Ocean bound for the Holy Land, I felt it was time to write you all with a brief update on what's been happening with in my life and ministry.

Since entering the ordination process to become a Vocational Deacon in 2016, to becoming a Candidate for Holy Orders last spring, I have steadily grown in my personal, professional, and spiritual life. Over the last few years, my ministry has taken me in several amazing and unpredictable directions. As the Program Director of Jerusalem Peacebuilders (JPB), I now oversee a diverse portfolio of interfaith reconciliation programs that bring together hundreds of Jews, Christians, and Muslims each year, both in the Holy Land and here in the USA through in-school and summer opportunities. Based in Houston, TX, I balance my time between JPB, attending the Iona School for Ministry, participating in a local prison ministry, and serving as a chaplaincy intern at MD Anderson Cancer Center. Both my heart and hands are full, and I feel I have learned so much since my early days as a spry young man moving to Brattleboro for graduate school and finding a church home at St. Michael's.

Right now, I am immersed in the experience of serving as a chaplain and learning how to be an effective pastor. Indeed, it is one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences I have ever had in my life: to be present with people who are suffering from cancer, celebrating one's life, commemorating another's death, and witnessing in love through it all. It is a true privilege and honor to enter into and learn from these sacred encounters with our neighbor.

Looking ahead, 2020 will include significant formation and discernment as I approach applying for hopeful ordination. I plan to visit you this spring and eagerly await the occasion to join you all again in worship and fellowship.

God bless you all in your walk with the Risen Lord.

*In Christ,
Jack Karn*

WALKING/HIKING MINISTRY

On the trails with God and each other — new walking/hiking ministry?

Sarah Benton

I thought I would try this again! After fracturing my kneecap early in 2019, this new ministry did not go to plan but aren't we lucky we can always start again. What I have learned is that there are some of us who are interested in gentle walking up to some of us who would like to hike on easy to moderate trails and some of us interested in everything in between.

As the temperatures begin to warm up and the days are getting longer, I love being outside. After two knee

replacements and being able to do more physically, one of my goals is to hike and be out in God's creation. I think these would be great intergenerational ways of being together once a month or even more.

Please get in touch with 1) Interest and at what level and 2) Would you be willing lead/assist from time to time, by email at swbentonvt@gmail.com or by phone at 579-2185. I will set up a time for us to meet and engage in conversation in early April.

JANUARY VESTRY MEETING REPORT

Vestry members present: Carolyn Taylor-Olson (Sr. Warden), Ricky Davidson (Jr. Warden), Janet Brocklehurst, Judy Davidson, Imogene Drakes, Mark Horton, Jeanette Landin, Christopher Wesolowski, Bruce Lawrence (Treasurer), Carol Beninati (Clerk)
Not Present: Christy Fritz

We began by Vestry members sharing their satisfactions and challenges as members of the Vestry with Steve Guerriero who will be facilitating the February retreat. Outgoing Vestry members also shared reflections on their three years on the vestry and appreciation was expressed by all for their service.

Bruce Lawrence gave the Treasurer's report for Dec 2019 YTD Expenses and Income which shows our income ending 5% higher than anticipated and our expenses for the year coming in at exactly 100% of projections. Pledge income @102%.

Judy asked about whether the investments in our endowment fund still contain oil stocks. She was told that the committee had gotten rid of tobacco and weapons but still had 3 oil companies. Judy wondered about exploring divesting our endowment of oil stocks given the climate crisis we are in and this will be discussed further.

Pledge Update: Goal: 140 pledges and \$260,000
 Received: 141 pledges for a total of \$261,000

Duncan Hilton gave a report to the Vestry on activities, like COSA groups and L'Arche, in the Ministry of Discipleship and Discernment in the last few months. Adwoa Lewis — Wilson discussed the benefits of the discipleship groups for their members and the deepening honesty in the 8:00 morning prayer groups that have been going since the summer. The Vestry expressed much appreciation to Adwoa for her help in creating the Advent Prayer book with prayers written by parishioners

Jeff Lewis presented a summary of the comments that arose from the MDD small groups held in November. People were very positive about the changes they have

seen in the church since the Sabbatical and during the 2 ½ years that Duncan has been heading the Ministry of Discipleship and Discernment The summary will be presented at the Annual meeting. One concern many people had was who could take Duncan's place? A discussion was held about the positive benefit there was in having a part-time person/priest to support Mary in so many ways and about the financial costs. Jeff and Daniel Dobson are going to look at our finances and develop a 3–5 year plan to help us see more clearly. The vestry will also be discussing what are the different roles an additional staff person would fulfill. Imogene suggested that the Vestry might ask themselves "What are we missing?"

The vestry is having a retreat on Feb 7 and 8th to discuss next steps in the MDD program and next steps gathered from the Mission Discernment conversation on Jan 11. Over 40 people participated in thoughtful conversations about our shared values and the many issues in our community that concern us.

The Vestry agreed to do a forum on Sunday Feb 9 to update the parish on our retreat.

Carolyn announced the slate of candidates for the vestry: Nancy Ames, Rebecca Olmstead, and Jared Rediske. They will be voted upon at the Annual meeting on Jan 26 and will be commissioned on Feb 2.

Committee Reports:

- **Listening Corner:** Ricky reported that one parishioner wants to discuss planned giving at a forum and wants to talk with the vestry first.
- Ricky reported from **Building and Grounds** that Vince Johnson is looking for 3 bids for the roof repair and for solar panels.
- Janet reported some events being planned by **Social Justice:**
 1. Film January 30 here: "Healing Justice" from the Sacred Ground series here. People outside parish are welcome.

Continued

NEWS OF THE PARISH

2. Feb13: a talk from a man who was wrongly imprisoned for 17 years, here at St. Mike's. It will be open to the public.

- **Pastoral Care:** Mary reported on Betsy Bates' condition and asked for prayers.
- **Thank you cards:** Written to Caleb for Christmas pageant; Sissi and Janet for Christmas dinner; Steve

Guerriero, Cliff and Wylene Wood, Laurie Kaiser, Rosie Wojcik for Elder Luncheon. Thanks to Christopher for his wonderful singing there.

Mark offered a closing prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by
Judy Davidson*

WHY I PRAY MORNING PRAYER

One year ago at the beginning of Lent, a few of us, wanting to make a "good start" of Lent, committed to doing daily Morning Prayer and we decided to pray Morning Prayer together in community. Every morning in the Chapel from 8–8:35 am or so, we gathered and learned anew this ancient rite. While we made mistakes and hit some wrong notes while trying to chant some of the canticles and find the right page numbers, the structure and rhythm of Morning Prayer eventually became familiar.

By the end of Lent, we decided perhaps we could keep going through the Easter Season and at the end of Easter, it had become an integral part of life for me and others. We have continued and are now celebrating our one year anniversary of praying daily Morning Prayer in the Chapel on weekdays. While I don't make it to the chapel for Morning Prayer every day, the practice has become part of my rhythm of life and I wanted to share why I have found this practice meaningful.

Part of what I love about this practice is that beginning my day with prayer helps "frame" my day. While I often wake up with my mind full of what I need to get done, prayer helps me to enter my day with a different perspective. Praying the Psalms and the prayers that people have said for thousands of years makes me feel joined with the great cloud of witnesses and our brothers and sisters in Christ over time and space. I also appreciate the beauty of the language that is in the

traditional prayers and canticles. The more I pray these words, the more they seem to become a part of me.

Morning Prayer also offers a dedicated time for me to hear and engage scripture. Every morning we hear from a mostly continuous reading of two books from the Bible – one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament – which keeps me rooted in the sacred stories of our faith. In addition, there is a dedicated space within Morning Prayer for intercessions and thanksgivings, which allows me to remember how I have been blessed and to pray for those people and larger issues in our community and our world that are on my heart.

Finally, there is something magical about praying together in a small community. In the prayer of St. Chrysostom we say, *You have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them.* I appreciate the small and faithful way that Christ shows up for us two or three gathered together to begin our day.

Sound like something you would like to make a part of your life? Please join us any weekday in the Chapel at 8 am. Perhaps make a commitment to say Morning Prayer once a week through Lent, just to begin to make a habit of it. You may be amazed at how it changes your life!

Mary D. Lindquist

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES

A Dictionary for Episcopalians

by John N. Wall

Cowley Publications, Boston 2000 • 7" x 9" 142 pages

The entry is “Non-stipendiary priest.” The alarming accompanying instruction is “See tentmaker” (St. Paul was a tentmaker). A tentmaker, the reader discovers to his relief, is merely a priest who earns a living in a secular vocation and who exercises ministry in that setting as well as in part-time work in a parish. The heartbeat having returned to its normal rate, the reader plunges onward.

The perusing eye falls upon Venite, one of the invitatory psalms appointed to be said or sung at Morning Prayer. The name derives from the Latin word for “come,” but, in the delightfully quirky tradition of the Episcopal Church, it is pronounced not, as one might expect, veh-nee-tee but veh-nigh-tee. More than one young cleric has fallen afoul of this peculiar pronunciation only to be embarrassingly corrected by doddering and crotchety elder parishioners.

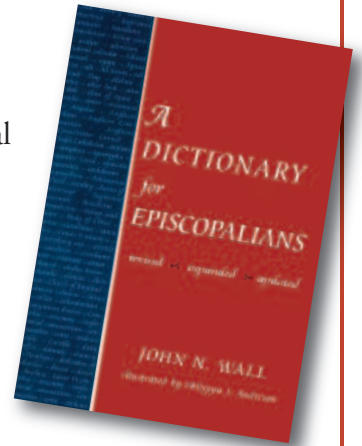
Narthex pops up next, not to be confused with anthrax which is something altogether different, and it is the chamber between the door to the church and the nave. The nave, a term derived from the Latin for ship, is the space between the narthex and the chancel; it is where we sit on Sunday mornings. In the jolly old Gothic days, the nave was the church of the laity and had its own altar and the chancel the church of the clergy. In the Reformation, the nave altar was forsaken for a rood screen, an ornamental screen separating the nave from the chancel. In its early days, St. Michael’s had a rood screen. The chancel is the area around the altar. Chancel choir refers to a chancel within which the choir is seated. Within living memory, our choir was seated in the chancel. One of the best architectural examples of a chancel choir nearby can be seen at St. Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire. But we wander astray like lost sheep, let us continue our perusing....Thurible is the vessel within which incense is carried. It has a perforated lid allowing smoke of the smoldering incense to escape when the vessel is swung by its chains. The thurifer swings the thurible. There is no verb to describe the action; thurf perhaps ?

While in a distributive mode, let us ponder the aspergillum. It is a tube with holes at one end and a handle at the other and is used to sprinkle holy water on the altar and upon the congregation. This is an act called asperges and signifies baptismal renewal.

Shall we consider vestments?

For the Daily Offices (Morning and Evening Prayer, etc.) the cassock (a long neck to ankle black vestment), surplice (a knee-length white vestment with wide sleeves and sometimes called a cotta), and a stole (a long, narrow band of fabric worn around the neck and secured with a cincture, a thick cord with knotted ends worn as a belt over the cassock and surplice). For the Eucharist, in addition to the aforementioned, the celebrants are adorned with a chasuble, poncho-like in cut and worn over the alb (a cassock in the color white or neutral), stole and cincture, and a cope (worn in liturgical processions, it is a semi-circular cloak in the colors of the season).

Exhausted from his extensive perambulation through the dictionary pages, this humble reviewer now resorts to restorative refreshment in a glass of non-communion wine or, better yet, something bourbonic, not to be confused with bubonic. *RRA*



EXPLORING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

March 1: Genesis 2:15–17, 3:1–7; Psalm 32;
Romans 5:12–19; Matthew 4:1–11

March 8: Genesis 12:1–4a; Psalm 121;
Romans 4:1–5, 13–17; John 3:1–17

March 15: Exodus 17:1–7; Psalm 95;
Romans 5:1–11; John 4:5–42

March 22: 1 Samuel 16:1–13; Psalm 23;
Ephesians 5:8–14; John 9:1–41

March 29: Ezekiel 37:1–14; Psalm 130;
Romans 8:6–11; John 11:1–45

MARCH 2020 CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

March 2	Susan Kochinkas
March 3	Christine Hart, Kiersten McKenney, Callan McDowell
March 5	Joshua Fritz
March 6	Wayne Cook
March 7	Ladd Osborne
March 9	Martin Leggott
March 10	Gabe Reynolds
March 11	Teri Robinson, Marie Lawrence
March 14	Mimi Lilly
March 15	Benson Bobrick, Jeffrey Hiam
March 16	Chris Chapman
March 19	Karen Guthrie
March 20	Bob Walker
March 22	Bruce Lawrence
March 24	James Wilmott, Joan Pinilla, Margery McCrum
March 25	Kate LeBlanc
March 28	Tom Woodbury, Elizabeth Moore
March 30	Craig Newbert
March 31	Jan Bennett

ANNIVERSARIES

March 7	Elizabeth Vick & Craig Hammond
March 12	Nancy & Jeffrey Durborow
March 23	Kate & Dana McGinn

LEADERSHIP

VESTRY

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The Guardian

a Christ-centered community of practice awakening to the abiding presence of God



OUR WORSHIP TOGETHER

SUNDAYS	8:00 am	Quiet service of prayer and Holy Communion
	10:15 am	Prayer, music, and Holy Communion, with childcare
WEEKDAY MORNINGS	6:00–7:00 am	Silent hour in chapel
WEDNESDAYS MORNINGS	8:00–8:30 am	Morning Prayer
WEDNESDAYS	12:00–12:30 pm	Brief service of prayer and Holy Communion
THURSDAYS	5:30–6:00 pm	Contemplative service of chanting, silence, and prayer
SATURDAYS	8:00–9:00 am	Centering Prayer