

St. Alban's Life

Celebrating our time together

Lent and Easter

March, 2024



After the snow in February, we packed a lot into March. We moved the Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper to mid-Lent, observed Palm Sunday and Holy Week (very early this year) and rejoiced to celebrate Easter and saw the first daffodils bloom, bringing beauty and joy.



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March 10th was a Second Sunday with younger worshipers in mind. Rebekah visited the PrayGround, Pam Van Siclen played flute piece with Mary DeLibero by J.S. Bach, and our youngest acolyte held the missal.

Then Rebekah had us form groups to tackle a “quiz”.



Scoring and prizes was fun for all. Hint: the Bible does not give the names or gender of the Magi.



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Second Sunday continued with recognizing birthdays (someone was 5), bringing the food donations to be blessed, and family communion.

But we were not done.



Activities continued with pancakes and more, postponed from Shrove Tuesday, when snowy weather got in the way. The food "hit the spot" even if the event was not "spot on" the proper day.



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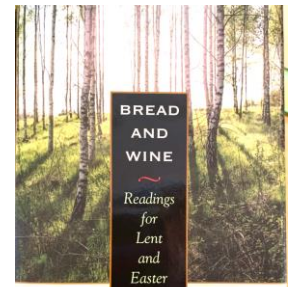
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Palm Sunday began in the Parish Hall, followed by a procession into the church, as is our custom.



Rebekah read a thought provoking piece by Fleming Rutledge and then we celebrated the Eucharist in remembrance of the Last Supper, part of the Gospel for this day.



Arnold • Augustine • Berry • Buechner • Chesterton
Eckhart • Gibran • Kierkegaard • Lewis • Meriton
Muggeridge • Norris • Nouwen • Pascal • Rossetti
Sayers • Tolstoy • Updike • Wilde • Yancy • and others

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The Common Criminal

Fleming Rutledge

WHEN JOHN THE BAPTIST was languishing in prison, he sent a message to Jesus asking him to explain himself. Apparently John could not understand why Jesus had not begun to exercise his Messianic authority and power in the way that John thought he would. Jesus replied with a definition of his ministry and then said, "Blessed is he who takes no offense at me" (Matthew 11:6). Yet, we are repeatedly told throughout the four Gospels, people did just that. Here is the story of two women who took offense at him.

The first woman (let's call her Sally) told me she was having trouble finding an Episcopal church that she liked. I suggested that she try St. Such and Such.



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Palm Sunday concluded with a reading, in parts, of the Passion of Christ, according to Mark. The congregation said "Crucify Him!" and we left the church in solemn silence.

On Maundy Thursday, Caroline Coolidge sang the "Pie Jesu" from Fauré's Requiem. Later in the service we did symbolic foot washing as described in the Gospel reading.



Lastly, we watched as the altar was stripped of its "garments" in preparation for the events of Good Friday.



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Our joyous Easter Day featured the beautiful and fragrant altar decorations by the Flower Guild, some festive bell ringing during the closing hymn, Rebekah's Easter message, and lots of "Alleluia's" both in word and in print with the colorful banners around the church.

Our choir sang an offertory anthem by Robert Powell, "Come let us with our Lord arise."





We celebrated the day with a festive, sung Holy Eucharist and afterward gathered at the front for a joyful rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus from "The Messiah" by Handel.





Other events included the continuation of a Bible Study series using the Epistle of the day, led by Connie and Rebekah.

Parishioner and priest John Van Sicle was our celebrant and preacher for March 3rd when Rebekah was away.



On the 17th, we used a Litany of Healing in place of the usual Prayers of the People. Then after communion, there was an opportunity for individualized healing prayers. This was much appreciated and more than half of the congregation came forward.

