



the evangelist

NEWS & EVENTS OF THE CHURCH OF S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

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CALENDAR

DATES TO NOTE

February 2nd:
Candlemas
Sung Mass, 6 PM

February 5th:
Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Supper
6 PM

February 6th:
Ash Wednesday

February 12th:
Vestry Meeting

February 13th:
Stations of the Cross

February 18th:
Prayer Group

Church of S. John the Evangelist

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February 2008

LENT'S OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

February 6, 2008 is Ash Wednesday this year. (2008 has the earliest date possible for Easter and, consequently, for Ash Wednesday as well.) What do you think of Lent in your honest heart of hearts? Do you think of Lent as a bore on your conscience and as a drag on your "real life"? Or do you accept Lent as a way to grow in the Christian faith and life and so to become richer, fuller, more mature men and women? In its historic origins Lent was set up as a time to prepare for Holy Week and Easter, as a period more fully to live out the implications of our baptisms into the life of Christ.

The purpose of Christian life is to allow our hearts, minds, and wills to grow ever more ready and adept to receive the saving power of our Lord's Incarnate life. The word "change" is in the air in this election year 2008. The power to change our lives and actions has been in the spiritual and theological air since the resurrection and the very foundation of the Church.

A serious Christian can never be a re-actionary "stand-Patter." All Christian's are called to begin to accept revolution in their lives and wills, a revolution which will bring on this earth the promise of the Messiah, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

Lent aims at no less a goal than this, the triumph in our lives, as individuals and as a Church, of the risen life of Jesus, our Lord. To this end all Christian devotion, study, and discipline in Lent, and beyond it, is directed.

*In Christ,
Fr. Norman Catir +*

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

I would like to thank all who helped during the week of Fr. Tuck's funeral. Special thanks to the Men's Club and the Women's Guild for the assistance in the collation on Saturday. It was a true testimonial to the love and care of Fr. Tuck and his family. A special thank you to the Tuck family and for Michael's assistance in the preparation of the beautiful Requiem Mass conducted by Fr. John Alexander, Fr. Milton Cheney, and Fr. Michael Greene.

The Vestry is going to be very busy in 2008. We are putting committees together for the year and will be looking for a new rector starting sometime during 2008. At the present time we shall use supply priests to assist in our services. At this time, Bishop Wolf suggests that there should be no changes to the existing Vestry and Wardens until such time as a new Rector is found. One member will be added to allow for voting purposes.

All of us have special skills which can support our parish in many ways: Acolytes, Altar Guild, Lay Readers, Ushers, Greeters, Coffee Hours, etc. Please consider an offering of your time. It is also important that we have a strong attendance on Holy Days of Obligation as well as Sunday services. Your presence contributes to the overall health of this parish as we journey forward. Remember our strength, love, and growth comes from working, praying, and worshipping together as one family. This is an historic time for St. John's – the operation and direction of the church is solely the responsibility of the elected officers of the church. As a parishioner, we must keep our church moving in the right direction within the Anglo-Catholic faith. Please keep St. John's and your vestry in our prayers.

As your Senior Warden, if you need to talk with me for anything, please do not hesitate to contact me here in Newport at 401-847-0012 or in Florida at 506-792-9668. I'll be leaving for Florida February 14th, returning 16 or 17 March.

Sincerely, Your Senior Warden, and Friend

Charles White

God Bless

My brothers and sisters in Christ;

Once again, the Lord's plans for S. John's Church seem, to our mortal eyes, enigmatic. The death of Fr. Michael Tuck after less than a year as our Priest-in-Charge was an emotional devastation that we are only now beginning to fully understand. We are a community in grief; it will take time to heal.

But Fr. Tuck's death, like his ministry in life, has also served to remind us that, through Christ's ultimate sacrifice, death is not the end, but rather the beginning – it is the fruition of life in Christ that was begun with baptism and nurtured through the sacraments during a life on earth. Through our communal life in Christ, we will heal, and Fr. Tuck will rejoice in that healing at the heavenly banquet prepared for all believers.

In the meantime, there is much work to do. There are Masses in which to participate, liturgies to plan, shut-ins to visit, committees to staff, prayers to raise, hospitality to extend, mailings to send. How often have we heard parishioners talk about how "he" or "they" (the Rector or un-named authorities) need to do these things better or faster or more clearly? An interesting consequence of Fr. Tuck's death is that, at least for the moment, there is no "he" or "they", there is only "we" and "us". We are corporately responsible for participating in Mass; for planning liturgies; for visiting shut-ins, staffing committees, raising prayers, extending hospitality and sending mailings.

On Ash Wednesday, we are called to the observance of a Holy Lent. As part of that observance, we are encouraged to enter into some form of Lenten discipline. It is my hope that, as part of our corporate Lenten discipline, we can all find it within ourselves to shoulder a larger portion of the load that is the doing of God's work in this place and this time.

Remember, His yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

In Christ's Peace,

Jonathan Babbitt

Organist/Choirmaster & Junior Warden

IN MEMORIAM – FR. R. MICHAEL TUCK

Newport Daily News, Thursday, Jan 17, 2008: Fr. R. Michael Tuck, 63, Priest in Charge of the Zabriskie Memorial Church of St. John the Evangelist, died on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at home in his sleep. Fr. Tuck served as Priest in Charge at St. John's from March of 2007 until his death. Prior to coming to Newport, Fr. Tuck was the Rector of the Church of the Holy Cross in Dallas, Texas from 1998 to 2007 and Rector of the Parish of Saint Stephen's in Norwood, Pennsylvania from 1979 to 1998.

Fr. Tuck received his bachelor's degree in Philosophy from North Texas State University and Masters in Philosophy from Purdue University before answering his call to the priesthood and receiving a Masters of Divinity from Seabury Western Theological Seminary.

He will be well remembered for his conversational style of preaching that took theologically complex doctrine and made it understandable and relevant to those who heard him. Whether from the pulpit, as a spiritual director on a cursillo weekend, or at the dinner table, Fr. Tuck was a joyful and profound servant of his faith. Michael Tuck is survived by Patty, his loving wife of 41 years, his sister, his four children, five grandchildren and all who knew and loved him as their Father.

Vespers for the Dead were offered on Friday, January 18th and a Requiem Mass was sung on Saturday, January 19th.

NOTICES

ASH WEDNESDAY & STATIONS OF THE CROSS

There will be two opportunities to receive Ashes on **Ash Wednesday, February 6**; the first will be at a Low Mass celebrated at 12:10 PM, and the second will be Choral Evensong with the Penitential Office and Imposition of Ashes at 6 PM. All the faithful should make every effort to attend one of these liturgies.

On subsequent Wednesday evenings at 6 PM we will once again walk the Via Dolorosa as we observe the **Stations of the Cross**. These liturgies will be followed by a light Lenten meal.

MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP

The monthly will continue to meet on the third Monday of each month with the intention to identify and pray for God's intervening presence in those concerns that affect our Parish Life – specifically: support for our Vestry leadership as well as for the eventual calling of a priest to serve amongst us. With the sudden and sad loss of Fr. Tuck, our need to persevere in prayerful petition for the present protection, spiritual development and future growth of our church family remains paramount. Anyone who feels so inclined is warmly encouraged to join us on **Monday, 18 February** after the Daily Office of Evening Prayer at 5:30 PM in the Lady Chapel. Intercessory prayer around the corner at 41 Walnut Street will begin promptly at 6 PM and will be followed by a light supper at 6:30. If you've any questions or concerns, please call Mary Jane Rodman at 846-9199.

BUCKLEY OIL PARISH OFFER

After successfully negotiating a reduction in oil rates from Buckley Heating & Cooling, we now have the opportunity to enroll members and friends of the Parish in a reduced-price program. The exact savings will depend upon how many accounts we are able to include; the more participants we have the lower the price for everyone, including the church. If you are interested in participating, please call the church office and leave your name, or see Jono Babbitt.

SWANHURST'S 14TH ANNUAL BROADWAY DINNER THEATER

Mark your calendars for a great evening (or afternoon) of music, humor, dancing, and food: Friday – Sunday, **Feb 29 – Mar 2nd**, and **Mar 7 – 9th**. This year's show is George & Ira Gershwin's "Crazy for You". Take a dancing fool from New York, a neglected theater in Deadrock, NV, some show girls on holiday, a few down and out cowboys, an Hungarian Broadway legend, and a hometown girl with big dreams, add some classic Gershwin tunes, and you have the makings of a truly rollicking good time! Held at Fenner Hall, 15 Fenner Avenue, Newport, Swanhurst will offer 6 dinner theater-style shows. Doors will open evenings at 6:30 PM, and Sundays at 1:30 PM. Tickets for the evening performances are \$32 and include a full dinner and dessert buffet. Sunday matinees are \$22 with full lunch and dessert included. Reservations are strongly advised. See Lisa Babbitt, call 401-682-1630, or visit Swanhurst.org to make a reservation. Seating at tables of 6 and 8 - - a great group event!

THE CHANT CORNER, FROM THE CHOIRMASTER

During the seasons of Pre-Lent and Lent, the *All...ia* and verse that precede the Gospel are replaced by the Tract. The Tract consists of from two to ten psalm verses sung antiphonally between Cantors and Congregation. The practice of singing psalmody with this antiphonal structure has evolved since the eighth century into one where significant pauses are made, not *between* verses, but rather at the break *within* each verse. Anyone who has participated in the Daily Office will recognize this system as the same used in the antiphonal recitations of the daily psalms. The duration of this pause differs by custom; my own personal "measuring stick" is to exhale and inhale lightly before starting the second half of the verse. Others silently say the words "Hail Mary" or "Our Father" (just the 2 words, not the entire prayer!) as a measurement of the pause. As we move through Lent, let us consciously experience the silence that is created by the pauses in the Tracts. This experience will come to a climax during the recitations of the psalms during Tenebrae on Wednesday of Holy Week. When offered deliberately and prayerfully, the verses become transcendent, and help to set the "emotional stage" for the Sacred Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

FEBRUARY SAINTS

A Christian girl named **Agatha** lived in Sicily in the 3rd century. The governor, hearing of Agatha's beauty, brought her to his palace wishing to make her commit sins against purity, but she would not give in. "My Lord Jesus Christ," she prayed, "you see my heart and you know my desire. You alone must have me, because I am all yours. Make me worthy of winning out over the devil." The governor tried sending Agatha to the house of a wicked woman. But Agatha had great trust in God and kept herself pure. After a month, she was brought back to the governor who tried again to win her. "You are a noblewoman," he said kindly. "Why have you lowered yourself to be a humble Christian?" Agatha answered, "I am a slave of Jesus Christ." "Then what does it mean to be noble?" the governor asked. Agatha answered, "It means to serve God." When he realized that she would not sin, the governor became angry. He had Agatha tortured. As she was being carried back to prison she whispered, "Lord, my Creator, you have protected me from the cradle. You have taken me from the love of the world and given me patience to suffer. Now receive my soul." Agatha died a martyr at Catania. Her feast day is **February 5th**.

This lovable saint, born in Assisi, Italy, in 1188, received the name Francis at Baptism, in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. His mother died when he was only four. Francis' father sent for a governess to raise him and the other children. Francis grew to be very handsome, likable, and popular. He loved to have fun, but even while having good times, he was bored. He seemed to feel in his heart a strong desire for God and the deeper things of life. Twice he became so sick he nearly died. Each time he promised Our Lady that if she would obtain his cure, he would become a religious. He did get better both times, but he did not keep his promise. One day, he saw a picture of the Sorrowful Mother that was being carried in a procession. It seemed that the Blessed Mother was looking at him. At the same time, he heard a voice in his heart telling him, "Francis, the world is not for you anymore." That did it. Francis entered the Passionist monastery at eighteen. The name he took was **Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother**. Gabriel's great loves became the Holy Eucharist and Mary. He loved to spend time thinking about the passion of Jesus and how much the Lord had suffered for him. Gabriel also learned to practice two virtues: humility and obedience. His special trademark was joy and he spread his happiness to those around him. After only four years in the order, Gabriel died on **February 27**, 1262. He was proclaimed a saint by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.

Vestry Notes: Regular Meeting of the S. John's Vestry - 8 January 2008

- ❖ The meeting was called to order by Fr. Tuck with a prayer. Present were Charles White, Jono Babbitt, Ed Carnes, Jay Jacot, Shirley Channon, Cheryl Abney, John Garagliano, Frank Jenks, Mary Lou Chase, and Pel Boyer; and guests Ruth Kiker and Lorraine A. Horton, CPA, CFE, of L. Horton & Associates, Kingston, RI. George Meleleu was absent.
 - ❖ **Treasurer's Report** A written report was distributed and accepted subject to audit. Cash available for general operations is now \$4,546.02, thanks to a \$14,000 infusion from the Foundation for the Preservation of the Faith. On 31 December 2007 it was (-)16,326.58. Because pledging to date totals \$58,537, as against \$85,240 for last year, the present positive balance can be expected to deteriorate rapidly. The newly established organ fund is now funded at \$60,610.04, a surplus of \$3,543.19.
 - ❖ **Forensic Audit.** At the request of the Diocese of Rhode Island, a forensic audit of the Rector's Discretionary Funds for the years 2002 through 2006 has been initiated. The pertinent bank and other statements were turned over to the accountant.
 - ❖ **Report of the Priest-in-Charge.** Fr. Tuck stated the need for examination of parish practices, expenses, and resources, with a view to identifying possibility for economies or new income, in the areas of property, internal procedures and routine outlays, and owned artwork. Jay Jacot will address artwork; Mary Lou Chase will examine procedures.
 - ❖ **Report of the Senior Warden.** Two nominations for the Vestry are now in hand, to replace the two members leaving. Any further nominations are needed by 22 January. The need for a comprehensive and accurate schedule, and for agreement between all published versions was emphasized. Jay Jacot is combining the various schedules and databases now existing.
 - ❖ **Report of the Acting Junior Warden.** Jono Babbitt has received from Buckley a verbal estimate for heating oil greatly superior in terms of cost per gallon and services than Petro's. Handicap-access signs have been shipped will be installed on receipt.
- The next regular Vestry meeting will be on 12 February 2008.**