

### For Those Who Failed at Lent

by Benjamin Capps

For those of you that have already failed on your Lent commitments, I want you to know, I'm with you.

By now it is evident, even to the most occasional of church attenders, that we have thoroughly entered the long, somber, and glorious tunnel of Lent.

For some, this season came upon us like a long-awaited and welcomed intervention. Lent offers a reboot and a chance to evaluate the ways in which the many trappings and vices of life have taken up residency within the fragile folds of our hearts. This opportunity is often longed for.

For others, the season may have become evident by a co-worker wearing an ash cross on their forehead, the particularly somber tone of our opening liturgy on Sunday mornings, by the absence of a friend on social media, or the presence of a Filet-O-Fish sandwich wrapper in a neighbor's trash can.

The season is nearly as cultural as it is religious.

Business Insider recently wrote about how the phenomena of lent provides an incredible catalyst for McDonalds' Filet-O-Fish Sandwich sales. The Filet-O-Fish Sandwich is available year-round but 25% of the sandwiches sales come in Lent. The company credits this swell to the many Christians that abstain from eating meat (with the exception of fish) on Fridays during Lent.<sup>1</sup>

The popular financial information website "Marketwatch" also wrote about the influence of Lent on social media websites, saying that "This year it seems that time-sucking internet platforms are high on observant Catholics' Lent hit list." The article was shrouded in cynicism, coyly titled "Americans are giving up social media for Lent — or at least they say they are."<sup>2</sup>

These articles, and many more, point towards our obsessive desire to commercialize even the most somber of opportunities. But they point to something else - they also point towards a certain kind of devotion that grips the hearts of those that want to be made new by this season. We give up meat on Fridays or Social Media on Sundays, not because we hate ourselves, but because we desperately want to be rescued.

And yet Lent, for me, has on many occasions digressed into either a series of compromises surrounding my devotional act of asceticism, or a self-righteous and rigid attitude around my ability to "win" Lent. My fasting is after all, better than your fasting. The first of these approaches has led to complete and utter apathy and the second has led to a hard fall off my proverbial high horse in the wake of crushing failure. Both postures have landed me in a similar place - alone and ashamed at my inability to fight off my own demons. Embarrassed by my inability to conjure up a rescue.

How, then, ought we approach this season? Should we scrap the endeavor altogether? Should we give up on the idea of spiritual practices and devotions? Not at all.

The reason that Lent captures our imaginations and compulsions in the ways it does is not because it leads us spiraling into ourselves. "Winning" Lent has never been about a personal victory at all. Rather the gravity of Lent spirals us through our own brokenness and inability to save ourselves and into the image of a resurrected Christ that shines at the end of the tunnel of Lent as a glorious reminder that we do indeed have a rescuer. That despite our disordered loves there is a true love that has defeated death. There is a location for our hope that will not fail.

The problem is that the tunnel of Lent can often become like hiking through a rocky terrain. We become so focused on our feet that we forget about the mountain vista that we are marching towards. We become obsessed with our own ability or inability to walk the path. We forget what's at the end of the tunnel.

Theologian Alexander Schmemann describes Lent like this: "A journey, a pilgrimage! Yet, as we begin it, as we make the first step into the 'bright sadness' of Lent, we see far, far away-the destination. It is the joy of Easter, it is the entrance into the glory of the Kingdom."<sup>3</sup>

Schmemann describes well what we miss at the end of the tunnel by only looking at our feet.

I have often said that an important part of the season of Lent is failing at our Lenten commitments. In our failures we are reminded of our own human fragility and having stumbled and fallen along the tunnel of Lent, our eyes are turned up. And there, staring at us at the end of the tunnel, is not a finger of condemnation, but a cross. The embodiment of love and grace, beckoning us back to our feet to continue the journey.

For those of you that have already failed on your Lenten commitments, I'm with you. Now... let's brush ourselves off, keep our eyes on the cross, and keep moving forward towards a devoted life that is not marked by our own piety, but by our reception of love and grace that rescues us and continually makes us new.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/mcdonalds-filet-o-fish-season-scales-skyrocket-march-lent-catholic-christian-2017-3>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/americans-are-giving-up-facebook-and-twitter-for-lent-or-thats-what-they-say-2018-02-14>

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Schmemann, Great Lent



FAIL

# The Samaritan

The Music Ministry of the Church of the Good Samaritan presents  
a concert of choral music, featuring the:

## CHICHESTER PSALMS

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

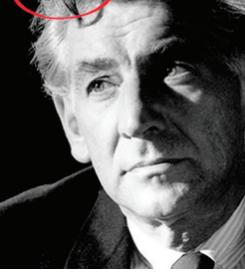
SUNDAY APRIL 14, 2019 | 4:00PM  
THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

LINDEN HALL CHOIR  
CHURCH FARM SCHOOL CHOIR  
GOOD SAMARITAN ADULT CHOIR

RICHARD ZUCH, CONDUCTOR  
COLIN HOWLAND, ORGAN  
OWEN OSBORNE, PERCUSSION  
JOANNA SHAW-RUSS, HARP

*"Three movements, six Psalms:  
words of peace and reconciliation  
with the libretto in Hebrew."*

A free will offering • All are welcome, please join us  
[WWW.GOOD-SAMARITAN.ORG](http://WWW.GOOD-SAMARITAN.ORG)



### Dinner & A Question

May 11 6:30pm Ashton Hall  
with Dr. Lia Howard

#### How Do I Talk with Those That I Disagree With?



Dr. Lia Howard is the Executive Director of the Agora Institute and a Professor of Political Science and Liberal Studies in the Templeton Honors College at Eastern University. Prior to Agora she taught American Politics in the Political Science Department at Saint Joseph's University. Dr. Howard was a Critical Writing Fellow and taught in the Political Science Department at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Philadelphia Commons Institute seeks to cultivate civic dialogue, engaged citizens, and the common good through interdisciplinary research and programs.

Register for Dinner & A Question online at [good-samaritan.org/dandq](http://good-samaritan.org/dandq)



### Mental Health Family Support Group

April 27, 11-12:15 Room 263

Do you have a family member struggling with mental or emotional health? Do you feel alone, stressed and unequipped? You are not alone. Many families in our parish are facing the challenges of caring for a loved one who is suffering in this way. There is a support group meeting the 4th Saturday of every month @ 11am in Room 263 to provide a confidential, safe space for people to share their stories and experience the support of their church community. This group is facilitated by Ian MacDonald, a licensed professional counselor, and Tracy Defina, Director of Family Ministries and PhD candidate for Marriage and Family Therapy. Please contact Susan Starke, CRNP, with any questions and if you would like to participate. ([susan.starke@good-samaritan.org](mailto:susan.starke@good-samaritan.org); 610-644-4040 x207)

### Belonging to the Church

4 Sundays, 6-8pm April 28 - May 19  
Ashton Hall South

This is a four week course for new members, current members or anyone who would like to learn more about what it means to be an Episcopalian and a member at Good Samaritan. This course is required for those who are interested in being confirmed on June 9, 2019, but all are welcome. Classes will meet in Ashton Hall from 6-8pm. The evening includes dinner, worship, talk and discussion.

Topics covered will include Anglican History, Holy Communion and Liturgical Worship, The Holy Spirit, Baptism and Confirmation & Membership at Good Samaritan.

Register online at [good-samaritan.org/events](http://good-samaritan.org/events)



## Man Up Breakfast Series

3 Wednesdays 6:30-8:00am April 24 - May 15

Ashton North

Speaker: Dr. Fred Putnam, Associate Professor of Bible & Liberal Studies, Eastern University

Topic: The Story of Joseph Genesis chapters 37, 38 & 39

### \*What is Tenebrae?

"This form of the monastic office (matins and lauds) is commonly adapted for congregational use during Holy Week. The office is structured around psalms, readings, and responsories. A distinguishing characteristic of this service is the series of readings from Lamentations which appear early in the office. The distinctive ceremonial of Tenebrae includes use of fifteen lighted candles, often set on a special, triangular stand. One candle is extinguished as each of the fourteen appointed psalms is completed. The fifteenth candle, symbolic of Christ, is left lighted at the end of the final psalm. But it is carried away to be hidden, which signifies the apparent victory of the forces of evil. A sudden loud noise is made at the end of the service, symbolizing the earthquake at Christ's death. The lighted candle is then restored to its place, suggesting Christ's eventual triumph."

- taken from [An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church](#)

**Red Cross Blood Drive**  
**April 29 1-6pm**  
**Sign up to donate**  
[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)



## HOLY WEEK 2019

PALM SUNDAY APRIL 14

7:30am, 9am, 11am (chapel), 11am (church)

MAUNDY THURSDAY APRIL 18

7:30pm (church) with footwashing

GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 19

Family service 10am (church)

"Seven Last Words" 12-3pm at St Peter's in the Great Valley

\*Tenebrae service 7:30pm (church)

THE EASTER VIGIL APRIL 20

7:30pm (church)

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 21

7:30am, 9am, 11am (chapel), 11am (church)



## Holy Week for Families

Please join us in the church on Friday, April 19 at 10am for our Good Friday Family Service. We will gather in the church for a child-friendly service followed by crafting and hot cross buns/donuts and beverages in Ashton Hall. Middle School Students - come help out in the service and with crafts!

On Easter Sunday, April 21, Pre-K - Middle School children will join their families at our regular services. Children's bulletins are available. Nursery and Toddler childcare is available. Be sure to pick up an Easter treat after services!

## Vestry Corner

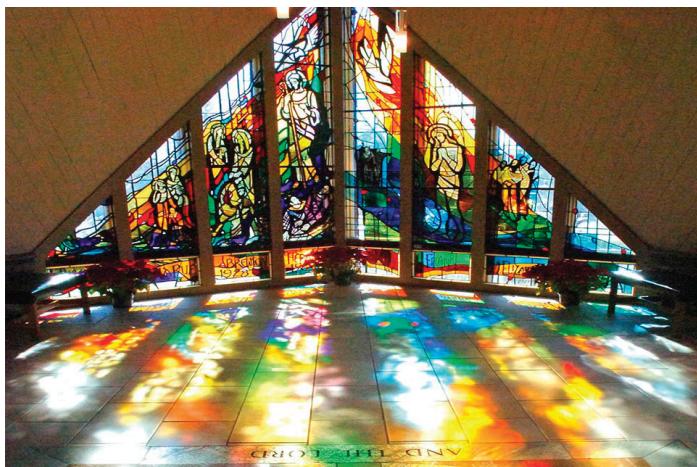
by Sharon Locke Dugan

On Sunday, March 3, Church of the Good Samaritan held its annual meeting. Please find the 2018 Annual Report at <http://good-samaritan.org/news/2018-annual-report>.

Friday, March 8, the Vestry met for a potluck style dinner at the Rectory and welcomed Ian MacDonald and Tom Connell aboard. Not all of the Vestry was able to attend the dinner, but on Saturday most of the members were able to attend the annual Vestry Retreat at St. Peter's in the Great Valley. Saturday morning was bright, clear and energizing and the group's enthusiasm for serving the Lord as leadership team for The Church of the Good Samaritan echoed the day.

We started with bagels, fruit, coffee and comradery before Father Richard Morgan read and shared a reflection on Ephesians 4. He then invited us to take 20 minutes in silence and individually meditate on the passage, being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. As we gathered back in the main room, we were able to share our inspirations on the verse. As a new vestry together for the first time we shared our testimonies of how and why we have made Good Samaritan our spiritual home and what God has been doing in our lives. We enjoyed lunch and more socializing before ending the afternoon with our first official Vestry Meeting.

At our brief official meeting, Richard Morgan, Justin Crawford, Bill Hughes, Cheryl Sparks, John Remaley, Ian MacDonald, Andy Balsan, Sharon Dugan, Glen Shorley, Barri Alexander, Ted Klenske and Chris Micklewright attended. Helen Hartman needed to leave early prior to the meeting and Reuben Garrett and Bonnie O'Neil were not able to attend the retreat. Justin Crawford was re-appointed Rector's Warden, Bill Hughes was elected Financial Warden. Re-elected were Barri Alexander—People's Warden, and Cheryl Sparks—Clerk. After the business of the elections, the meeting was adjourned, and we all left to enjoy the rest of the beautiful day.



## Family Services at Good Sam

### Why take the time?

Parents,

Do you, like me, feel we have so few opportunities to speak into our growing children's hearts? Between the shuffling off to school, homework, activities and just daily living, where is God?

Sure, we can pray with them, maybe do devotionals from time to time and bring them to Church and Sunday school and these are good formative spaces!

Our Family Services are a unique opportunity to gather together and worship, pray, create, invite and connect!

I hope you will receive this invitation to slow down. Take a moment and consider joining us in the church for our Good Friday service on Friday, April 19 at 10am.

Every chance we get to experience the Lord as Lord of our lives together is a gift – join us!

With gratitude for our community,

Tracy Defina, Director of Family Ministries



2018 Christmas Eve Family Service

## March Madness... for those who follow Christ

by Marcia Wilkiinson

March Madness can be just that. Since 1939 the intense attention of sports enthusiasts and hype surrounded the rivalry of college basketball teams. Not just any ole team, mind you, but the great teams of the year.

Today the term MM is being used on other occasions to get our attention for something spectacular to happen, or just to play off the energy of the term.

Just the other day we received an invite to a March Madness party for a friend who will be celebrating her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in March.

For the followers of Jesus Christ, March (this year) is not about rivalry, hype, but does foster the element of enthusiasm. This is our time to prepare for, reflect on, and exam ourselves to be ready for the real celebration...Resurrection. Like all Christian holy days, the observation of Lent may have changed over the years. However, the purpose of observing these 40 days has not.

Preparation, self- examination, and reflection on who we are and who Christ is for us, calls forth a response. Do we take on stricter disciplines as in taking away something we enjoy eating or doing (or maybe getting rid of a vice)? Or, do we add something of value to help others like giving to the poor, working at a soup kitchen, or visiting a homebound friend?

My church denomination growing up (American Baptist) didn't observe Lent. Roman Catholic friends received ashes and talked about leaving candy or sweets out of their diet, but that was about it. Today, I can't even imagine celebrating Easter, the Paschal Holy Day of Resurrection without these 40 days.

Neither could early church father, Irenaus of Lyons (130-200), who wrote of a season in the earliest days of the church that observed a few days of penitence.

Later in 325 at the Council of Nicea, 40 days of fasting was deemed an important discipline to emulate Jesus' time in the wilderness with wild animals and angels, and/or, as a time for new believers to prepare for baptism.

Soon the whole church became involved. Lenten practices eventually became more relaxed. So much so, that in the past few years, one can find ashes 'to go' in drive by places- train stations, and street corners. Evangelicals have come to ask the question: could Lenten practices for the whole church bring about a revival?

Nothing is lost. All is gain when we observe holy practices for the purpose of drawing closer to our Lord. Even disciplines repeated out of obligation can foster a deeper awareness that our faith, what we think is important and how we really want to live our days- hold us steady.

There are questions as to why we change our liturgy during Lent, why we simplify the altar and use the color purple and take away the response "Alleluia?"

Answers to these questions point to an opportunity for stripping away the un-essentials in order to be in touch with the sacred, with the spiritual matters of Christ with us. Being penitent, and praying for forgiveness requires putting away those things that entice us and distract us. Stripped away, the distractions aren't so enticing. No flowers, but plain greens. Color purple for Christ's royalty and passion. Alleluias omitted have to wait for celebration when Jesus is raised from death.

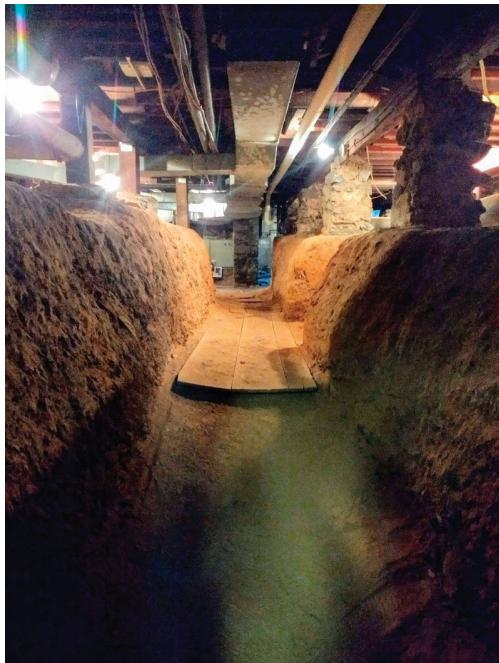
So, in Lent we reflect on the forgiving love of our Father who sacrificed his own beloved. Forty days stretched out to tell the unbelievable story that must be told-and lived-over and over again.

There is a time for everything under heaven. This is our time to enthusiastically take to heart the life of love and passion of Christ. Then when Resurrection Sunday arrives, when the colorful spring flowers cover the cross with life, and the Alleluias are sung in praise and thanksgiving, we'll have the joy that exceeds any worldly expectation.

March Madness... not for followers of Jesus.

*See what love the father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are...1 John 3:1a*

## Chapel Restoration Project



*Before...*



*Soil removed, pillars shored and cement floor poured*

## The Thrift Shop Gets a New Floor



*Glue down, ready for new tiles*



*Finished area with new floor tiles*

## Kenya Presentations

### April 3, Walton Hall at 7pm & April 7 Ashton Hall after the 9:00 service

In January, Steve Prible, Reuben Garrett and I went to Kitale, Kenya to continue building Good Samaritan's relationships with folks and organizations in that part of East Africa.

Good Sam has provided support to communities, schools and churches in the area for more than twenty years. The Missions Committee provides ten scholarships to the Mwamba Foundation and another ten scholarships are provided by individual church members. Secondary school level education in Kenya is prohibitively expensive for half of the population. Thus, young adults are forced into an overcrowded, unskilled labor market and girls are vulnerable to early, often forced, marriages.



*Steve makes new friends*



*Reuben at school*

*by Rusty Smith*



*Honorary Pokot Elders*

Mwamba scholarships provide a life-saving opportunity for some of the brightest minds to develop and learn. In addition, Good Sam's Missions Committee also provides scholarships for seminary students at the African Theological Seminary. Since initiation of our own campus renewal, Good Sam has contributed nearly \$250,000 to qualifying organizations to build churches and schools.

Kitale is the location of the Water Mission headquarters in Kenya. Through funds raised by our Walk for Water events, we have funded nine safe water projects, providing safe water and living water to thousands of families and students.

The presentations will give Good Samaritan members a good view and report on the impact these benefits have had transforming the lives of many through provision of education, good health and hygiene and deepening relationships with Jesus Christ. We will try to impart to you the gratitude and blessings from these folks and their communities.

Coffee and desert will be served.



THE CHURCH OF THE  
**GOOD SAMARITAN**

212 West Lancaster Avenue  
Paoli, Pennsylvania 19301

# April 2019 Events Calendar

April 3

Retired & Refired

April 3

Kenya Presentation

April 5-7

Youth Spring Retreat

April 7

Kenya Presentation

April 10

Healing Meeting with Dr. Frank Sizer

April 13

Brandywine Singers Concert

April 14

Palm Sunday

April 14

Bernstein's Chichester Psalms (New Date!)

April 17

Retired & Refired

April 18

Maundy Thursday

April 19

Good Friday

April 20

The Easter Vigil

**April 21**

**EASTER SUNDAY**

April 24

Praxis

April 27

Mental Health Family Support Group

April 29

Red Cross Blood Drive