

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church



News from the Mountain Top

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February 2023

Swimming with FISH, by Charlene Fu

After many years of supporting FISH of Clarke County's food pantry with monthly donations of food, paper goods, and clothing, Good Shepherd Church has deepened this cooperation by joining FISH's latest initiative: FISH Community Table, a mobile food pantry that distributes food on Saturday mornings from a neighborhood location.

On Feb. 4, a dedicated group of about a dozen volunteers from Good Shepherd and FISH braved frigid temperatures to serve hot soup in the church kitchen and distribute boxes of food from the parking lot to residents of the Village of Pine Grove and Shenandoah Retreat.

Everyone who walked into the church building that morning was struck by the enticing aroma of the home-cooked beef and vegetable soup and Brunswick stew (made by Senior Warden Lois Tapscott and vestry member Judy Hall, respectively) that were available for eating in or take away. FISH's bounteous food boxes contained fresh eggs and milk; canned soup, vegetables and fruit; canned tuna and pouched chicken; and ground beef, potato flakes, flour, pasta, pasta sauce, peanut butter, walnuts, oats, yogurt and toilet paper.



It was FISH's sixth Community Table event, and the first time at Good Shepherd. The uncharacteristically cold temperatures in the low teens that morning kept many at home, but FISH vice president and pantry director Anne Cushman said, "We served 11 families, four we have never seen before, which says we are in the right place."

The Community Table started last fall and is Anne's brainchild. She wanted to reach those in need of FISH services who can't get to FISH's Main Street location in Berryville. When Blue Ridge Area Food Bank gifted FISH a box truck last year, the Community Table was born. With a representative from Clarke County Social Services on site at each Community Table event, county residents can also get administrative tasks taken care of if they are unable to get to the county offices during regular business hours.

On Sunday, Jan. 22, after Junior Warden Tim Hall preached his Epiphany homily, he invited Anne to share ways we can be lights to the world. Fittingly, the Gospel reading from which Tim had just preached was on Jesus calling the disciples to follow him and "fish for people." Anne spoke impassionedly about FISH's history and its mission and vision, and the unmet needs that she saw in the community that grew into the Community Table initiative.



At that point, FISH and Good Shepherd had agreed to the Feb. 4 Community Table date, but her inspirational talk was met with such an enthusiastic response that, within days, she asked if Good Shepherd would consider a monthly commitment. Our church members responded with a resounding and unhesitating "Yes."

As Anne and the Good Shepherd volunteers finished two hours of food distribution on Feb. 4, they agreed that the monthly event would commence in April, when the weather is more congenial and after FISH's box truck is converted into a refrigerated truck.

Meeting our neighbors in Pine Grove and helping to meet their needs has been a focus of Good Shepherd's outreach efforts, and it's been exciting to see how quickly this partnership with FISH came together. Pastor Henry Blackaby wrote in his life-changing and best-selling book "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God" that the key to finding God's will is to "Watch to see where God is working and join Him in His work."

FISH is a volunteer-led non-profit Christian ministry that, in cooperation with local churches, organizations, and private citizens, has, since its founding in 1968, been supporting neighbors with basic necessities of life such as food and clothing, financial assistance, and a fuller integration into our local community life.

— Tim Hall contributed to this story

A Challenge During Lent, *by Cindy Ingram*

Lent begins this year on Feb. 22 (Ash Wednesday) and extends to Saturday April 8, the day before Easter. But why do we have Lent and why is it important?

For new converts wanting to be baptized, it is a time of learning the catechism in preparation for their Easter baptism. For the already baptized, it is a time of self-examination and a time to study and meditate on God's holy Word and to seek God's presence in your life.

For me, Lent has always been a time of special closeness to God, a time when I ask Him to show me His will for my life. As such, I have made several life-changing decisions during Lent. These decisions include becoming more involved with the Church, deciding to go back to school, and applying to seminary. Likewise, this Lenten season, I will be seeking to discern whether I am being called to the diaconate.

What if we did this together? I mean, all of us as a community of Christians seeking God's will for us and for our community? What a difference that could make! In that vein, I would like to offer you a challenge: This Lent, set aside some time each day, even if it is just for a few minutes, to seek God's presence and God's guidance for your life and for the community. Let us make this Lent one of transformation for us all!

May God bless you during this most holy season of Lent.



FREE – COMMUNITY PANCAKE SUPPER

It's Shrove Tuesday, the last day of Epiphany, the day before Ash Wednesday. Many people "give something up" during the 40 days of Lent as a way to prepare for Easter.

But this night, also known as Mardi Gras, we'll be enjoying pancakes, syrup, fried apples, and sausage. We'll have music and play a few games. And then we'll burn the palms from last year's Palm Sunday to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

Join us at: 27 Good Shepherd Rd., Pine Grove, VA

Tuesday, 21 February 2023 | from 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Come anytime! Hope to see you then!

Cultivating Clergy, *By Tim Hall*

Besides working on our flourishing Prayer and Meditation Garden, our church is abundantly blessed with a growing clergy corps.

On Sunday, Jan. 29, the Rev. Rob Banse joined Rev. Martha Clark to help lead our service of Holy Eucharist and Public Healing. In addition to celebrating and healing, he also delivered a powerful sermon on The Beatitudes. We were overjoyed to welcome him and Janie, his wife, for the service and for refreshments afterwards.

After much lively conversation, happily, Rev. Rob agreed to offer a semi-regular service at Good Shepherd. He will be celebrating with us again on the First Sunday in Lent (Feb. 26) and the Second Sunday of Easter (April 16).

Rev. Rob retired from Trinity, Upperville in 2018, after 11 years as their rector. Before that, he had served as priest for more than 20 years, as interim priest at St. Stephen's in Wilkinsburg, rector for St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon, PA, and filled various roles in parishes in Wilmington, N.C.; Boise, Idaho; and Honolulu, Hawaii.

He is a graduate of Georgetown University and the Virginia Theological Seminary. His most recent "post-retirement" service was interim rector at Christ Church, Millwood, prior to Rev. Melanie Lewis' call there. He and Janie live in Delaplane, just a short 20 miles south of Good Shepherd. Welcome!



Creation Care Corner: Looking Ahead to Spring, *By Cindy Ingram*



Spring is coming and it will soon be time to get back to the work of installing our Prayer and Meditation Garden! Beginning in March, we will need volunteers to clean out the fall leaves that have covered the garden, finish the installation of the walkways, and plant the rest of the trees and bushes.

The third and fourth Saturdays of March are likely days on which we will be scheduling these garden work days, so look for an announcement in next month's newsletter. Contact Cindy at cndyingram@cs.com if you would like to be on the volunteer email list.

The herbaceous plants will be planted in either late April or early May depending on the weather forecast. It is possible that we'll have two herbaceous planting sessions, planting the

earlier more cold hardy plants in April and the rest in May. The date(s) for the herbaceous plants will be announced in the April newsletter.

It is our hope that this garden will be a place to practice fellowship and worship in God's awesome creation and that it will bring glory to God for many years to come!

Upcoming Events

- **Saturday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m. to noon** – “Praying Through Winter” in the parish hall
- **Monday, Feb. 20, 5 p.m.** – “Centered” men’s group in the parish hall
- **Saturday, Mar. 4, 1 p.m.** – “Berryville Celebrates 225” Lecture Series/Exhibit Opening at the Barns of Rose Hill, 95 Chalmers Court, Berryville, with the topic of “how our town developed.” Free. Info at www.clarkehistory.org.

Church Calendar - All are welcome at our services!

SAT Feb. 12, 11 a.m. – The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Deb Rutter

SUN Feb. 19, 11 a.m. – The Last Sunday after Epiphany: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Martha Clark

SUN Feb. 19, noon – Annual Meeting to follow our regular church service

TUES Feb. 21, 5 to 6:30 p.m. – FREE Shrove Tuesday Community Pancake Supper downstairs in the parish hall and burning of palms to make ashes for Ash Wednesday

WED Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m. – Ash Wednesday: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Martha Clark

SUN Feb. 26, 11 a.m. – The First Sunday of Lent: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Rob Bance

SUN Mar. 5, 11 a.m. – The Second Sunday of Lent: Morning Prayer with Josette Keelor

SUN Mar. 12, 11 a.m. – The Third Sunday of Lent: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Martha Clark

SUN Mar. 19, 11 a.m. – The Fourth Sunday of Lent: Holy Eucharist with Rev. Deb Rutter

To join via Zoom, go to our website at www.goodshepherdbluemont.org and click the link on the home page.

Outreach



AA meets at Good Shepherd every Saturday night at 8:30 pm, in person or by Zoom.

Drop in or contact:

<https://aavirginia.org/meetings> and search for Bluemont.



FISH of Clarke County (36 E. Main St., Berryville) The FISH clothing store and food pantry are open 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Visitors should wear face masks. Anyone not able to stop by when FISH is open may contact FISH at 540-955-1823 or via email at fishfoodpantry@comcast.net to schedule no-contact delivery.

Good Shepherd gathers donations for FISH every month. Please bring your donations to the church narthex by the last Sunday of the month. Lois, our senior warden, will be delivering the donations on the following Wednesday. Our January donations of canned food, soup, cereal, oatmeal and juice weighed 97 pounds.

Checks made out to FISH to support this effort are also appreciated. The FISH mobile food pantry will be setting up again at Good Shepherd monthly on Saturday mornings starting in April.

Giving

Checks may be dropped in the offering plate or mailed to:

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 324, Bluemont, VA 20135

Thank you for your generous support.

Any questions or concerns? We would love to hear from you by email, phone, or in-person:

office@goodshepherdbluemont.org * 540-252-5825 * 27 Good Shepherd Road, Bluemont, VA 20135