



Growing a Rule of Life



Are you out of alignment with your inner self and with nature?
Should you be

Growing a rule of life?

Our church has decided to invite all our adults to participate in a Lenten program called "Growing a Rule of Life". We all can experience being out of alignment with our inner selves and with nature. In our current world it is almost too simple to be 'plugged in' and working around the clock. The Sabbath is no longer officially kept, as families find themselves inundated with social obligations. Living a balanced life requires growing and internalizing a whole set of new boundaries and rules, which may seem impossible in the face of your already overcrowded schedule. But just as stakes and lattices nurture the growth of young plants, so too can spiritual disciplines support the flourishing of our whole being.

This video series and accompanying workbook from the Brothers of SSJE and Center for the Ministry of Teaching of the Virginia Theological Seminary is designed to help people bring useful elements of monastic spirituality into the everyday lives of the course participants.

We will meet once a week on Sunday's in Lent at 9:00 am or Thursdays at 7:30 pm and we will work together through the major steps of the growing process as we establish our own Rules of Life. Ultimately each of us will create a unique and balanced Rule of Life or 'Garden Plot' to sustain and expand beyond the class.

The Brothers of SSJE have created a free video series which

The Brothers of SSJE have created a free video series which offers a mix of Brothers sharing their own experiences and teaching about the rewards and challenges of living a Rule of Life. These videos are available at www.SSJE.org/growrule and should be seen as complementary to the work we will do together.

The series asks people to think about how they relate to Time in their life over five weeks. The series begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10th 2016 and runs through to Palm Sunday. Each day there is a video, a provocative question and a call to reflect either in the workbook or via social media.

You can download a workbook to accompany the videos or pick up a copy at Church.



February Calendar Highlights

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES

WWW.STPETERSMEDFORD.ORG

Feb. 9 Pancake Supper, 5:30

Feb. 10 Ash Wednesday, 10 am, 6 pm, 7:30 pm

Feb. 13 Holy Eucharist and Renewal of Marriage Vows with spaghetti dinner, 5:00 p.m.

Feb. 14 St. Paul's Breakfast Program 7:45 a.m.

Feb. 15 Office closed in observance of President's Day

Feb. 17 Vestry Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 22 Caps & Laps, 12:30 p.m.

FROM PULPIT TO PEW

by The Reverend Canon Donald J. Muller

On February 10, we will begin the holy season of Lent, it is Ash Wednesday. During Lent the Church invites us to journey with Jesus to Jerusalem, the cross, and his resurrection. We begin this journey by receiving ashes on our foreheads as a sign of our mortality and penitence. The journey continues in the Ash Wednesday Liturgy with a “Litany of Penitence”, a stripping away of all that inhibits our relationship with our loving, graceful God. It also makes room for us to add into our daily/weekly lives time and activities that will draw us closer to God in Jesus Christ and help us to grow in faith.

One of the ways we can help is in the course “Growing a Rule of Life” available for individuals or joining one of our two groups (Thursday evenings 7:30 pm or Sunday mornings 9:00 am). Please read over the article on page one about this in this newsletter. You can sign up in the Narthex or contact the office. Additionally, Morning Prayer will be offered Monday through Friday mornings at 9:00 am in Moore Chapel. At 7:00 pm Monday through Thursday Evening Prayer will be said, also in Moore Chapel. Fridays throughout Lent, Stations of the Cross will be in the Church at 7:00 pm.

When I was growing up the custom was to “give up” something during Lent. As a kid, candy or dessert, were high on the list. In later years I knew of people who gave up smoking, or drinking alcohol. Some folks cut back on their TV watching. Today, I find most people like the idea of “Taking on” something – extra worship (Morning or Evening Prayer, Stations of the Cross, Mid-week Eucharist, etc.); designated prayer time; spiritual reading; joining in a study program; and more.

The church has always invited her members to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent. These were physical ways to make space and intentionality with God. Almsgiving, that is giving money away to God’s purposes – feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, educating the poor, etc. One way of doing that is to use the Mite Boxes or Coin folders.

Here is part of the Invitation to a Holy Lent from the Ash Wednesday Service in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer:

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord’s passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith. I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s holy Word.....

May you have a Holy Lent.

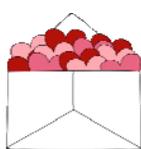
In Christ,

Fr. Don

KIDS' CORNER

By Sue Legnani, Christian Formation Director

It used to be that Lent was spent in quiet, contemplative solitude. I think most of us find that it's not that way anymore. Perhaps it never was, but we would like to think otherwise. In our busy, overscheduled lives it's kind of hard to find that quiet time to read or contemplate much of anything. Most of us rush from one thing to another and rely on the technology in our pockets to keep us informed and/or in the loop. So it goes with Lent. There are several things that will be offered to everyone during Lent this year. Some of them are at our finger tips and I want to share them with you.



On Sunday, February 7th Sunday School children, parents and parishioners are invited to make **Valentines** in Williams Hall for the patients at Weisman Children's Rehab Hospital. This annual event provides not only a little cheer for the pediatric patients but some fun supplies for the therapists to use with them. Thanks to Kelly Wu for spearheading this project and delivering the donated items to the hospital.

On the same day there will be an area in Williams Hall to make a Lenten Vigil Candle holder. This craft will make it possible for you to have a lovely candle holder to use at home with the supplies from **Lent In A Bag** (a tea light, some sand, a figure of Jesus, a stone and instructions on what to do with these things at home).



Older children and adults are invited to participate in **Lent Madness** beginning on Ash Wednesday. This fun and informative saintly smack down is based on basketball's March Madness. It uses a bracket of saints from all over the world and through the ages to crown a winner with the Golden Halo at Easter. Each day there are two biographies of saints and you vote on the website of Forward Movement (the people who bring us Day by Day) for your favorite saint and then watch to see if your final pick makes it to the Golden Halo. You can receive these daily biographies in your email by signing up at www.lentmadness.org.

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 10th, the Brothers of the Society of St. John the Evangelist will provide a daily email with a short video and meditation to lead you through **Growing A Rule of Life**. If you participate in their Brother Give Us A Word, a daily meditation received by email, you will automatically receive this. To register go to www.ssje.org. A workbook is available for download as well.

Join us on Friday, March 18th at 7 pm for a **Stations of the Cross for young people**.

This simplified, hands-on Stations of the Cross will be followed by making a **Resurrection Garden** for use in your home during Holy Week and the Easter season. This isn't just for kids. Everyone is invited!



On Palm Sunday we'll have a **Palm Cross Workshop** in Williams Hall to make...Palm Crosses... to take home and to share with our shut-in parishioners. Simple instructions will be available for EVERYONE to make their own cross.

You may not be able to do everything this Lent, but I encourage you to do at least one thing to enrich your spiritual life during these forty days to get ready for the great feast of Easter.

Body and Soul

By Edith Green, RN

I hope you all got through the storm without any injuries or damage to your property! God sure does a job when he wants us to pay attention!!! And how many of you were depressed about the inconvenience the snow brought? Shoveling, snow blowing the walks, cleaning off the car, unable to do what you'd planned. What was God thinking?

If you watched the TV stations, you would have seen that we were really lucky in a lot of ways. We didn't lose power (I don't think) and we didn't have the flooding those further south in New Jersey experienced. And today is as bright and sunny as you'd want.

I think I wrote about this before: that is the idea that we should look at the positive things in our lives and stop focusing on the negative. And it's not easy to do ever! Those of you who are going through a life crisis like an illness or loss of a job or family member will find it incredibly difficult to not think about. And, of course you should take your time to think about those issues and make appropriate decisions. But if that's ALL you think about, you will turn into gloom and doom person and I don't think that's what God intended when he made us.

Dan Gottlieb is a radio personality, psychologist and quadriplegic. He talked once about getting his wheelchair stuck in the Spring mud outside his home. He knew he would get help when an aide came later on. But, he said, "Instead of enjoying the weather, smelling the flowers coming up and just relaxing, I sat there and cried." How often do we do that when we are caught by surprise by incidents in our lives?

So, once again, I remind myself, and you, to look at the positive side of things when life hands us lemons instead of lemonade!

And finally: All of us could take a lesson from the weather, it pays no attention to criticism.

Dates to Remember

Save the Date!

Designer Bag Bingo
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Friday, March 11th
7:00 PM



Van Duzer and ECW Scholarships
Applications Due March 1

Van Duzer Scholarships offer assistance for recent high school graduates preparing to enter their first year of accredited post-secondary education. ECW scholarships are also available for seniors and college students. Application forms are now available in the narthex and must be postmarked no later than March 1.



Scholarship

DEACON'S BENCH

By Deacon Helen Orlando

Lord, who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray, teach us with thee to mourn our sins, and close by thee to stay. (Hymnal 1982, #142, 1st verse)

Most Episcopalians have sung this hymn every year on the first or second Sunday in Lent. In 32 years of being an Episcopalian, I know that I have! However, in reading over the above verse verses today, I was struck by the fact that whenever I sing this hymn, I always remember and reflect upon the first few words, “Lord, who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray” and totally miss what comes afterwards.

I take the hymn as a reminder that Lent is a time of penitence. What I miss is the following: “Teach us *with thee* to mourn our sins.” (Italics mine)

I find the idea that our Lord mourns our sins with and for us to be astounding. The gods of the cultures surrounding the Hebrews and early Christians simply punished humans for their evil deeds and thoughts – sometimes in quite capricious ways or just for the sport of it. God, as known by the Hebrews, also punished sinners; but the well-known story of Noah’s Ark (Genesis 6-9:17) tells us that our same God, who wreaked nearly total destruction with a 40-day flood, felt not just anger, but also grief at the evil actions and thoughts of the people whom he had created. The God of the Noah’s Ark story is the same God who mourns our sins with us in Christ Jesus and who ultimately takes them upon himself on the Cross.

Certainly, Lent is a time to “fast and pray” and to make a special effort to help those in need (give alms.) It is also a time to deliberately engage in fruitful self-reflection about how we ourselves may be grieving God and how, with God’s help, we can make the changes in our lives that will enable us to grow into the person God created us to be and who will bring joy to God.

Praying that each one of us may grow into persons who will bring joy and not grief to our Lord, I wish you a blessed Lent,

Deacon Helen

When Do I Bring in my Blessed Palms?

Blessed Palms will be burned to ash at the end of the 10:15am service on February 7, the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, for use on Ash Wednesday. A box is already available in the narthex to receive your palms. Alternatively, you may give them to Deacon Helen or Lisa Miner, our parish administrator. Thank you.



PARISH NEWS

Renewal of Vows and Spaghetti Dinner Saturday, February 13th 5:00 pm

Married couples: have you been looking for an opportunity to renew your wedding vows, but have been waiting for the perfect place and time? St. Peter's Church at the 5 pm on February 13th, Valentine's Day Saturday service is that place and time. At that service, St. Peter's will welcome all married couples wishing to re-affirm their commitment and love to each other in front of their families, friends, and neighbors. After the service, come join us for a traditional spaghetti dinner – bring a bottle of wine to celebrate! Babysitting will be available. Please contact Laurel to let her know if you will need this service. A sign-up list for those wishing to attend the dinner will be in the narthex.



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Tuesday, February 9th

5:30-7 p.m.

Once again, St. Peter's will host a traditional pancake supper of pancakes, sausage, applesauce and beverages. We look forward to seeing you!

\$7 per adult

\$5 for seniors 62 and over

\$3 per child

Children under 2 are free

Shrove
Tuesday



PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISMS

None

WEDDINGS

None

MEMORIAL SERVICES

None

Thank you's...

A big thank you to all who helped with the Greening and Ungreening of the Church for Christmas! Don and Janice Powell, Andrew LaRue, Andrea, Stephen, Drew, Steve, Leslie Haines, Anita Beard, Mike Krug, Ben and Betty Jones, Marty Banecker, Johnson's Farm, Robert Becker, and members of the Alter Guild.

A Heartfelt Thank You to the Parish - St. Peter's staff members offer a heartfelt thank you for the Christmas bonuses made possible by your support and generosity. With or without your gifts, each one of us considers it an honor to serve you and sends you our blessings. Sincerely, Father Don, Deacon Helen, Lisa Miner, Sue Legnani, Howard Black, 3rd, Matt Smith and Mark Cantarella.

Thank you to Tina Sunlitis and Mary Allan for coordinating the Bingo game at the Evergreens on 1/21.

PARISH PHOTO ALBUM



Photos: Even though Christmas seems like a long time ago, our children (and the adults who directed them) deserve some recognition for the wonderful pageant they performed for us. Thank you for a wonderful, original and humorous pageant!
(Photos courtesy of Tiffany Myers)

Below right: Our youth group recently traveled to prison...the prison museum in Mount Holly, that is!



Below left: Kristine Adler snapped this photo at a local Quaker Meeting house. A good thought to keep in mind!



St. Peter's Episcopal Church

One Hartford Road, Medford, NJ 08055
The Rev. Donald J. Muller, D. Min., Rector
The Rev. Canon Ronald Albury, Associate Priest
The Rev. Helen M. Orlando, Deacon

Lisa Miner, Parish Administrator Eleanor Meyer, Director of Music Sue Legnani, Director of Christian Formation
Tel: 609-654-2963 Fax: 609-654-0401 <http://www.stpetersmedford.org>
Email: office@stpetersmedford.org Newsletter email: stpetersnewsletter@stpetersmedford.org

Saint Peter's Church is a blessed community of faith, grounded in the power of God's transforming love, where Jesus Christ welcomes all to abundant life. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we follow Him in prayer and praise, study and service.

February 2016

<i>Growing a Rule of Life</i>	1
<i>From Pulpit to Pew</i>	2
<i>Kids' Corner</i>	3
<i>Body & Soul</i>	4
<i>Deacon's Bench</i>	5
<i>Parish News</i>	6
<i>Photo Album</i>	7

Service Schedule

Saturday Eucharist..... 5 p.m.
Sunday Traditional Eucharist..... 7:45 a.m.
Family Eucharist..... 10:15 a.m.

Weekdays

Wednesday, Healing Eucharist..... 10 a.m.
Morning Prayer (Monday-Friday)..... 9 a.m.

Ash Wednesday 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church
1 Hartford Road
Medford, NJ 08055

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #81
Vincentown, NJ

Contains Dated Material