

## From Father Nik

*Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” They answered, “John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen” He said to them, “ But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Messiah of God.”*

*He sternly ordered and commanded them not tell anyone, saying, “The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”*

*Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their lives will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. But truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”*

~Luke 9:12-17

Luke begins this passage with that literary clue that tells us that what follows will be very important for the story—*Jesus was praying*. The passage that follows is the turning point in the gospel narrative. Jesus asks his disciples who others say he is and who they say he is. His closest apostle answers, *The Messiah of God*—the Christ, the king of God’s kingdom. Then Jesus reinterprets the meaning of this answer in an unexpected way, as the suffering servant who will be crucified. Moreover, the way to follow such a suffering servant is to daily take up one’s own cross. If his disciples do this, then they *will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God*.

This scene is worded slightly different in Luke’s Gospel than in Mark and Matthew so that we don’t misunderstand Jesus’ promise. Jesus is *not* promising that some of his disciples will somehow escape death to be present when Jesus returns in the fullness of the kingdom of God at the end of the age. Rather, Jesus is promising his disciples—then and now—that if we follow him on the way of the cross, then we’ll *see* the kingdom of God in our midst, among us, even before we die. Then Jesus goes up a hill where he’s transfigured as a sign of this promised glimpse of the kingdom.

Of course, if we’re to follow Jesus on this way and *see* the kingdom, then we can’t be *ashamed* of Jesus. This might seem like an odd statement for Christ to make in this context. But we must remember that his was a culture that placed great emphasis on *honor* and *shame*. Being crucified wasn’t just a torturous way to die, it was also extremely *shameful* because the victim was naked and usually there wasn’t much left to be buried. Taking up our cross means being joined with Christ in his shameful death through baptism and daily returning to the gift of faith in his grace, so that the Gospel might transfigure us, giving us eyes to see God’s kingdom among us.

Nik+

## **Godly Play for the Summer**

We will be telling stories from the Old and New Testament which have to do with water.

- June 26 – God created water
- July 3 – No class
- July 10 – Noah and the Ark.
- July 17 – Our own baptism.
- July 24 – Moses and the parting of the Red Sea,
- July 31– Jonah and the Whale
- August 7 – Jesus' baptism,
- Aug. 14 – Jesus calling the disciples at the Sea of Galilee,
- Aug. 21 – Jesus' resurrection appearance at the Sea of Galilee.
- Aug 28 – No class
- Sept 3 – No class

We'll be making pretzels and communion bread, painting T-shirts, making books, and having a wonderful time.

## **Youth Group Event**

The Youth Group will go kayaking on Saturday, July 9 (weather permitting).  
See Boo for more details.

## **Learn about St. Augustine**

A small group of parishioners from Fork & SJtL are meeting at  
10am every other Thursday at St. James the Less  
to listen to and discuss the Teaching Company Course,  
**“Augustine: Philosopher & Saint” by Phillip Cary.**

If you are interested in joining the discussion,  
they will meet again at  
10am on Thursday, July 14.

## **CARITAS**

We will be assisting with CARITAS  
at St James the Less, Ashland on Monday, July 11.  
There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex of the church.  
See Howard Anderson for more info.

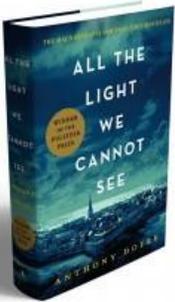
*The loose offering collected on the first Sunday of each month  
goes to the Rector's Discretionary Fund*

# SUMMER READING

## The Women's Small Group

The Women's Group is reading *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr.

This novel won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction & Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction. A #1 *New York Times* Bestseller, the *New York Times Book Review* had this to say about it:

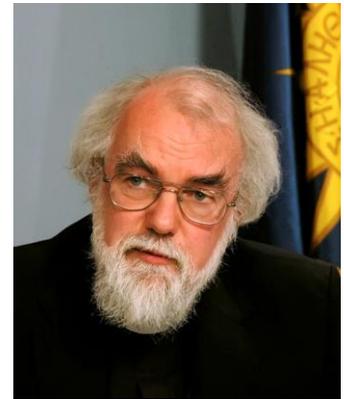


“Tackling questions of survival, endurance and moral obligations during wartime, this book is as precise and artful and ingenious as the puzzle boxes the heroine’s locksmith father builds for her. Impressively, it is also a vastly entertaining feat of storytelling.”

## The Men's Small Group

Beginning in July, the Men's Small Group will be reading *Being Christian* by Rowan Williams, The 104<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury.

“What are the essential elements of the Christian life? I am not thinking in terms of individuals leading wonderful lives, but just in terms of those simple and recognizable things that make you realize that you are part of a Christian community. This little book is designed to help you think about four of the most obvious of these things: baptism, Bible, Eucharist and prayer. . . . In this book we shall be looking at what those activities tell us about the essence of Christian life, and what kind of people we might hope to become in a community where these things are done.”



*-from the Introduction*

July 7 – Finish Discussing Bonhoeffer’s *Discipleship*

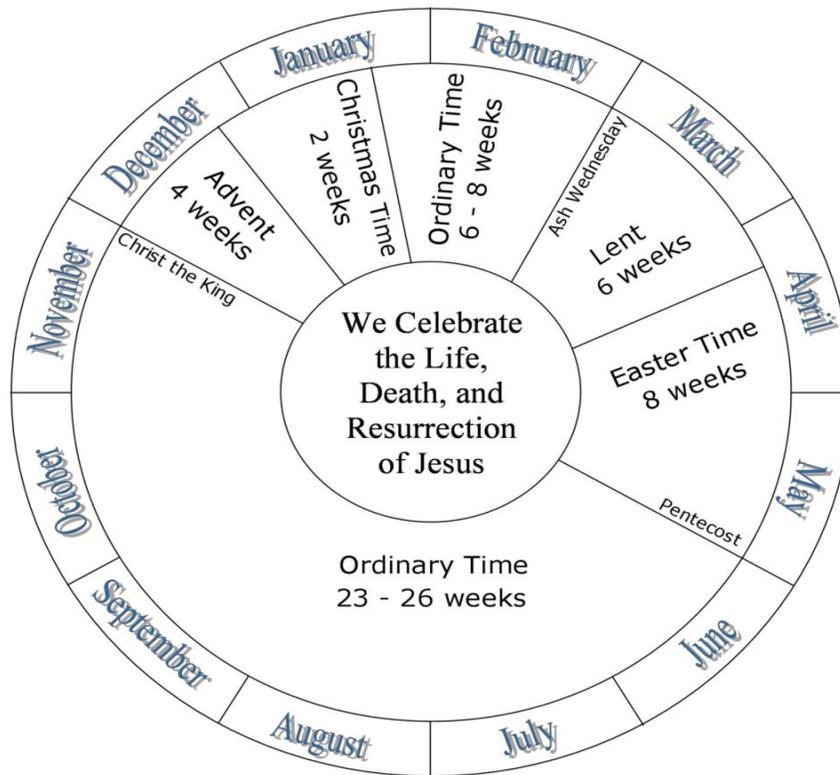
July 21 – *Being Christian*, Chapter 1, “Baptism,” pp 1-19

August 4 – *Being Christian*, Chapter 2, “Bible,” pp 21-40

August 18 – *Being Christian*, Chapter 3 “Eucharist,” pp 41-60

September 1 – *Being Christian*, Chapter 4, “Prayer,” pp 61-82

# The Liturgical Year



## Nik's Calendar

- Monday, June 27 – Coffee with the Rev'd Dr Ed Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm  
Friday, July 1 – Young Rector's Group, 10am, Culpepper  
Thursday, July 7 – Meeting with Fr Phil & Fr Ben, 9:30-10:30am  
– Lunch with the Rev'd Tom Smith  
Monday, July 11 – Coffee with the Rev'd Dr Ed Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm

## Looking Ahead

- Thursday, June 30 – St Augustine Study at SJtL, 10am  
Tuesday, July 5 – Vestry Meeting, 7pm  
Thursday, July 7 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am  
Monday, July 11 – CARITAS, St. James the Less

**Office hours:** Jacquie Alleva, our office administrator, works Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.