

*As Jesus spoke, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that nursed you!” But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, “This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah became a sign to the men of Nineveh, so will the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.*

–Luke 11:27:32

These are some strange words from Jesus. What’s he talking about? *Who* is he talking about—Jonah, Nineveh, the queen of the South? Jonah, you’ll remember is the reluctant prophet swallowed by a giant sea creature, which we now call a whale. He was sent by God to exhort the people of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, to repent—which they did, to Jonah’s consternation. *The queen of the South* is a reference to the Queen of Sheba. First Kings 10 & 2 Chronicles 9 tell the story of this pagan queen who came to hear first-hand the words of King Solomon, whose divinely granted wisdom had made him renowned far and wide. These events and character are signs standing in judgment of *this generation*.

Why are these the only signs given to this generation? To understand what Jesus is saying, we have to look at the interchange between Jesus and the woman in the crowd who pronounced Jesus’ mother, Mary, blessed. Certainly, that woman was right! Who else is more deserving of being called blessed than the holy mother of God? But Jesus doesn’t respond like a good Jewish boy should and say, “Darn right my mother is blessed!” Rather, Jesus replied that *those who hear the word of God and keep it* are blessed.

Jonah was sent to preach repentance to Nineveh. He didn’t want to go because Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. That’s the very same Assyrian Empire that conquered and occupied the Northern kingdom of Israel. Jonah was afraid. He didn’t want to bring them the message of God’s wrath if they failed to repent, because he was sure they wouldn’t take it seriously but they’d probably kill the messenger. After the whale spit him up and he decided to go, Jonah was amazed to find that the pagan people of Nineveh actually did heed his words and repent. Similarly, the pagan queen of Sheba sought out the wise teaching of God’s anointed king, Solomon. Jesus’ point is this: your identity is no longer to be grounded in your nation or your tribe or family, but in the Word of God, who is Christ himself and the community of witness gathered around him.

*Nik+*

## **Godly Play for the Summer**

We'll be telling stories from the Old & 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
- Aug 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 & communion bread, painting t-shirts, making books, and having a wonderful time.

## **Lemonade on the Lawn**

Thanks to the Hawks family for this morning's refreshments!

West Hanover Band

## **MUSIC JAM**

In the Parish Hall at 2pm-6pm on Saturday, August 6.

Bring your instrument, your voice, or your dancing shoes  
and come enjoy some good ol' Country, Bluegrass, & Gospel Music!

\$2.00 Cover Charge



## **Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont**

Together with Church of Our Savior, Montpelier – Sept 16 to 18.

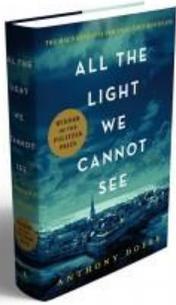
*Please contact Fr Nik if you're interested in going.*

## 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:

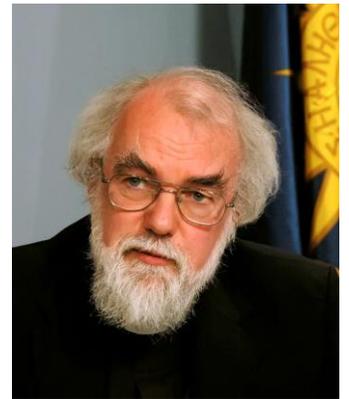


“Tackling questions of survival, endurance and moral obligations during wartime, this book is as precise and artful and ingenious as the puzzle boxes the heroine’s locksmith father builds for her. Impressively, it is also a vastly entertaining feat of storytelling.”

### 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*

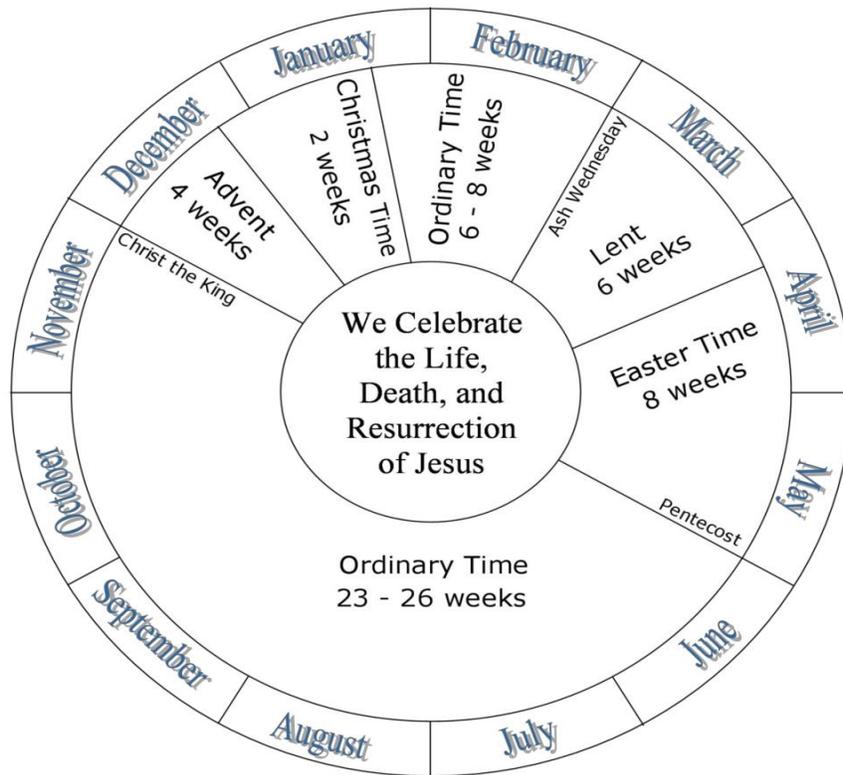
July 21 – *Being Christian*, Chapter 1, “Baptism,” pp 1-19

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

Tuesday, Aug 2 - Pastoral visits

Thursday, Aug 4 – On line meeting with Fr Phil and Fr Ben, 9:30-11am

Monday, Aug 8 – Coffee with the Rev'd Dr Ed Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm

Monday, Aug 8 – Sunday, August 14 – Away on vacation

## Looking Ahead

Thursday, Aug 4 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

Saturday, Aug 6 – West Hanover Band Music Jam, Parish Hall, 2pm-6pm

**Office hours:** Jacquie Alleva, our office administrator, is in the office on Tuesdays (11am-3pm), Wednesdays (11am-3pm), and Thursdays (1pm-5pm).

If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by 1pm on Thursday.