

From Father Nik

What it means for the Church to be a community of witness is that we're a people drawn together by the incredible love God has shown us—continues to show us—in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It means that we have encountered God making all things new in the resurrection of his Son, & we've been given the gift of participation in this sanctification of all creation. Therefore, we gather in worship, proclamation, & service to live this Good News in word & deed. We gather together because in each other, in our life together as a parish community, we see God's new creation, His great revolution, His peaceable kingdom breaking into this world. In each other, and in the community we have around the Eucharistic table, we catch glimpses of the grace of God, won for us by Christ, raising the dead to life.

We need only listen to our lessons from the Book of Acts during this Eastertide to hear how God's grace transformed the lives of the disciples. Even when Jesus was among them as one still walking toward death, they failed to see how God was uniquely in their midst, calling them into new life. But after his death & resurrection, the disciples became a community of witness. It is our inclination to focus on individual saints, like Peter, the hot-tempered, peasant fisherman who became one of the pillars of the early Church until he was crucified like his Lord; James the Just, Jesus' own brother who doubted Christ during his life but then became the Bishop of the Church in Jerusalem until he suffered a martyr's death; & Paul, the brilliant Pharisee who persecuted the Church until the Risen Christ revealed to him the Gospel and appointed him as the Apostle to the Gentiles. But they were not lone heroes; they were members of a greater cloud of witnesses.

Peter, James, & Paul couldn't have done what they did, lived the lives that they lived, and died the deaths that they died, had they not been supported & surrounded by that community of witness of which they were but members. Their witness was no more meaningful or esteemed by God than the witness of those about whom we know very little, like Mary Magdalene, Thecla, & Priscilla. And the witness of these saints we've named was only a part of and made possible by that whole community of witness whose names have long ago been forgotten. They haven't been forgotten by God. Christ promised that in bearing witness to him, he also bears witness to us (Lk 12:8/Matt 10:32). When his kingdom comes in its fullness, he will call each and every one of us by name, out of death & into everlasting life. So, *if you cannot preach like Peter, if you cannot pray like Paul*, you're still a part of this community of witness that *tells the love of Jesus who died and rose for all.*

Bob Partlow

has entered into home Hospice. Please keep him & Ruth in your prayers.

African Team Ministries

The African Team Ministries' artifacts and jewelry will be available today after church in the Parish House.

Outreach Dinner

Sunday, April 26 at St. James the Less

The menu is chicken, baked potato, tossed salad, green beans & pie

Godly Play

On Sunday, May 3 the Godly Play children will perform a program in church. This will be a program highlighting the life of Jesus. We will assign roles and practice during the regular Godly Play time for the next 3 Sundays. Please bring your children to church so they can help us tell the story of Jesus' life.

Strawberry Faire

We will have a booth at the annual Strawberry Faire in Ashland on Sat, June 6.

If you are interested in helping with covering the booth, please let Jacquie (secretary) know what times you are available by email forkchurch@embarqmail.com or phone (804-227-3413).

Annual Parish Picnic

Mark your calendars - The annual picnic will be Sunday June 7, at Mt. Olympus Farm (23298 Jefferson Davis Hwy).

Eucharist will be at 10am with picnic to follow.

The Unique Boutique Arts & Crafts Festival

will be held on the grounds of Fork Church September 19th, 2015 and is seeking artist & craft persons to participate in the inaugural show & sale. For more information go to the website (uniqueboutiquefestival.com) or email at uniqueboutiquefestival@gmail.com or speak to Amy Newell, Alice Noland, Linda MacDonald, or Emily Dickson

Office News

Fr. Nik is away Mon, April 27-Sat, May 2 & Mon, May 4-Wed, May 6.

Office hours: Jacquie Alleva, our parish secretary, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.

Christian Education

Godly Play children are invited to hear the Word in a fun, learning environment in the Parish House during the first half of our Sunday worship, then join their parents for Communion.

J2A Youth Group meets twice a month for fun, fellowship, food, & formation. The next meeting is Sunday, May 3@ 5pm in the parish house.

The Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings at 9am. During the seasons of Lent and Easter we're studying *St Paul's Letter to the Galatians*. Come join us for coffee and good conversation.

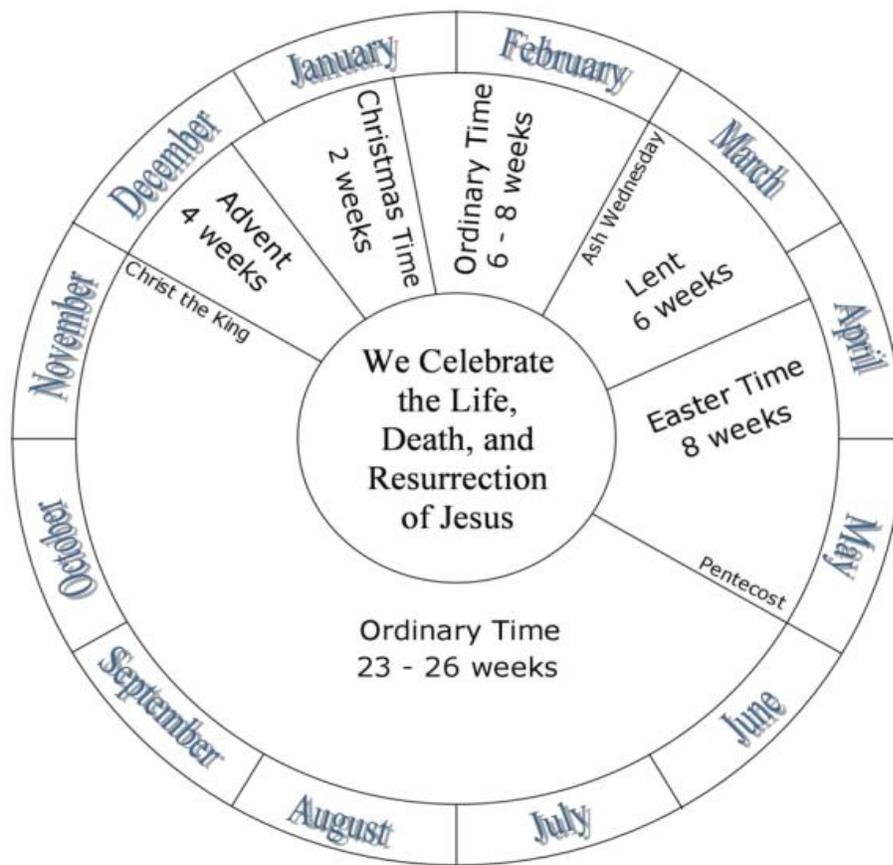
Small Groups

The Women's Book Group meets every other Thursday at Kathy Thomas' house from 10am-noon. The next meeting is Thursday April 30, the book is *Daring Greatly* by Brene Brown. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, May 7 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea. They are reading *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas & Will Willimon – (pages 156 - 172). Please join us!

Christian Formation

If you're interested in being Baptized or would like to become a member of this Church, please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com



Nik's Calendar

Monday, Apr 27-Saturday, May 2 – Fr Nik is Away

Monday, May 4-Wednesday, May 6 – Spring Clergy Retreat at Shrine Mont

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, April 29 – Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Thursday, Apr 30 – Woman's Book Group, 10am-noon

Sunday, May 3 – Youth Group, 5pm

Wednesday, May 6 – Catechism & Confirmation class, 6:30-7:30pm

– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

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

Wednesday, May 13 – Catechism & Confirmation class, 6:30-7:30pm

– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Thursday, May 14 – Woman's Book Group, 10am-noon

Wednesday, May 20 – Catechism & Confirmation class, 6:30-7:30pm

– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Thursday, May 21 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

Sunday, May 24 – Pentecost Sunday 10am