

From Father Nik

Last Sunday we heard in Scripture and sermon the story of the Magi—the wise men from the East—in anticipation of the Feast of the Epiphany later in the week. Perhaps to their great surprise, the Magi's star-led journey brought them to a peasant child lying in a manger. And it should be equally surprising for us since we also take up this journey every time we follow the star of hope inside us to Scripture. As the great sixteenth-century Father of the Reformation, Martin Luther said, Scripture is the swaddling clothes in which the Christ child is wrapped, the manger in which He lies. That is to say, in Scripture we hear God's promise that we are loved and justified in Christ, who embodies this grace for us.

According to Luther, when this promise is proclaimed in connection with the waters of Baptism, God's love is planted in our hearts; His grace is grafted in our souls. Christ's baptism by John the Baptist at the Jordan River was *to fulfill all righteousness* (Matt 3:15). Our baptisms into the Body of Christ were to give us each a share in the fullness of his righteousness. In baptism, we received the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit with whom Christ shares his divinity, eternity, and essence. And we are, thereby, invited to continue the ministry—his work—that he inaugurated at his baptism, when *the Spirit descended like a dove* (Mark 1:10).

However, we only enter into and continue that ministry—we only progress in the journey of faith—through return. Like the prodigal son wandering in the far country, we must turn back home as the way that we advance. In our journey of faith, we progress by returning to our baptism into the Body of Christ. Again and again, through the prayers and practices of the Church, we return to our baptisms as the way we grow in Grace. We return to the promise that we are loved and justified in Christ as the way we advance in the journey of faith. In this adventure of discipleship on which we've embarked, we continually return to our baptisms, trusting in the word of God's promise, because *in returning and rest, we shall be saved, in quietness and trust shall be our strength* (Isaiah 30:15).

Nik+

Thank You, Amy Newell

For your service as volunteer choir director!

Your hard work and love of this Church are very much appreciated.

Fork Cookbook

Buy yours today from any cookbook committee member.

Look What's Cookin' – 2015 Stewardship

The 2015 Stewardship Letter & Pledge Card have been mailed.

If you have any questions or need a Pledge Card, please contact Scott Smythe (scott@virginiaberryfarm.com).

Youth Dinner

The Youth are invited to gather for dinner in the Parish House

On Sunday, Jan 11 at 5pm

Our recently confirmed youth are especially encouraged to attend.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Fork Church Annual Meeting will be Sunday, Jan 25, 2015

Help a Friend Get To Church

Please consider occasionally driving a fellow parishioner to church.

If you are interested in volunteering for this ministry, contact John Rickman – annerickman@embarqmail.com

The Rev'd Bob Partlow

Ruth has created a Caring Bridge Profile for Bob to keep friends and family informed of how his treatment is coming. If you are interested in keeping up with the Partlows and letting them know that they are in your thoughts and prayers, you can go to www.caringbridge.org and search for "Bob Partlow."

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 today, Sunday, January 11 @ 5pm in the parish house.**

Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings at 9am. **During this Ordinary Time after Epiphany we are doing a seven week study of The Reformation.** 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 Jan. 22, and the book is *Unglued* by Lysa TerKeurst. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: boysthree@embarqmail.com

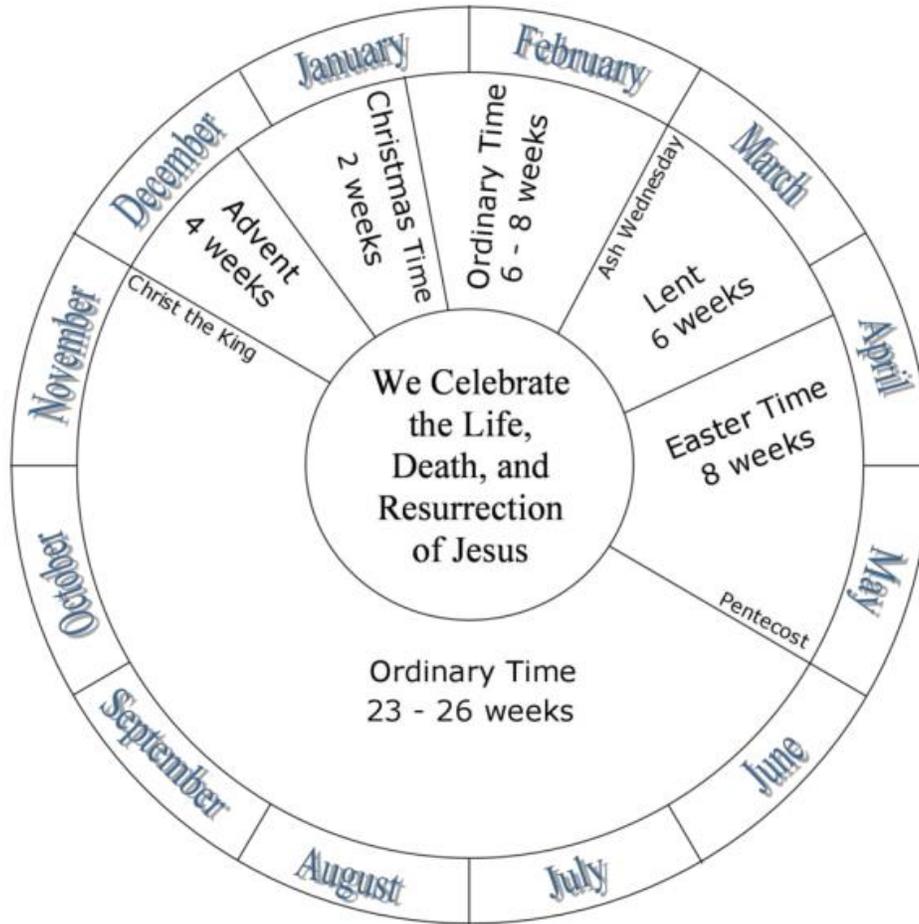
The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, January 22, 2015 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea. They are reading *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas & Will Willimon – (pages 69-80). Please join us!

Christian Formation

An Adult Christian Formation class will begin meeting during the season of Lent – (beginning in mid-February).

If you are interested in being Baptized, Confirmed,
or Received as a member of this church,
or if you would like to reaffirm your baptismal covenant,
please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Tuesday, Jan 6 – Clergy Colleague Group, 9-11:30am
Wednesday, Jan 7 – Pastoral visits, 1:30-5pm
Thursday, Jan 8 – Fresh Start, Fredericksburg, 9:30am-4pm
Monday, Jan 12 – Meeting with the Rev Dr Ed Bushong, 10am-noon
Tuesday, Jan 13 – Pastoral visits 2-5pm
Wednesday, Jan 14 – Pastoral visits, 2-5pm
Saturday, Jan 17 – Pre-marital prep meetings, 10am-2pm
Thursday Jan 22 - Jan 24 – Diocesan Annual Council, Richmond

Looking Ahead

Sunday, Jan 11 – Youth Group Dinner, 5-7pm
Tuesday, Jan 20 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm
Thursday, Jan 22 – Woman's Book Group, 10am-noon
Thursday, Jan 22 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am
Sunday, Jan 25 – Annual Meeting
Wednesday, Feb 18 – Ash Wednesday