

From Father Nik

The Covenant that God establishes with us in Jesus Christ is a friendship. His covenant with Adam and Eve was one of Creator to creatures. That covenant, reestablished with Noah and his descendants, became a relationship of protector and preserver to the vulnerable. The LORD's covenant with Abraham and his descendants was a relationship of a god to his people. And the covenant He established with Israel at Mt Sinai was a relationship between the only One who the hearts of man long to worship and His kingdom of priests, his holy nation. In each covenant, God sought a deeper relationship with us. And in Christ, the covenants reached their perfection in friendship.

In the Gospel according to John, Jesus says to his disciples, and us, "I do not call you servants any longer . . . but I have called you friends" (15:15). Now, this is a remarkable thing for Christ—who is *God from God, of one being with the Father*—to say. Philosophers of his day had pointed out that true friendship is only possible when there is equality between the friends. There is no equality between God and us; we depend on him *for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life*. But by becoming one of us, fully human, God has made possible a covenant—a relationship—that is a friendship.

If you've ever had a really good friend, you may have noticed that after a while, y'all began to share some idiosyncrasies. Friends often use the same words or share a particular turn of phrase. Sometimes they begin to dress in a similar fashion, or start reading the same books, or find that their senses of humor have become aligned. And so it is when God becomes our friend in Christ. Hence, Jesus says, "You are my friends if you do what I command you" (Jn 15:14). We might initially object that friends don't normally command one another, but then we remember what Christ's command is, "that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12). And how has he loved us? "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Not only has God revealed His love for us in becoming our friend in Christ, He has further revealed the incomparable measure of that love by laying down his life for us, to win for us victory over sin and death. In that way, he has made it possible for us to have and share in that supreme love. He makes it possible for us to become true friends with one another and with those who the world has rendered friendless. "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you," says Christ our true friend, "abide in my love" (Jn 15:9).

Nik+

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 29 – 10am Eucharist
Maundy Thursday, April 2 – 7pm Eucharist
Good Friday, April 3 – 7pm Liturgy
Holy Saturday, April 4 – 10am Liturgy
Saturday, April 4 – 7:45pm Great Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday, April 5 – 10am Eucharist

Easter Church Flowers

Time to order, in \$15. increments and indicate your memorials/honors. Order forms in narthex of the church. Send checks, payable to Fork Church Altar Guild, to Trish Renn. The deadline is 3/26 to be on memorials list.

Also, we will need garden flowers for the Cross brought early to church Easter morning.

St. James the Less Brunswick Stew is back Saturday, March 28th

Pickup: You can pick up stew on Saturday, March 28th, between 3:00 and 6:00 pm

Parish Dinner & 2014 Opera Viewing

Saturday, April 25 we will celebrate our new kitchen with a parish dinner and viewing of the 2014 opera in the parish hall.

Birthdays: Dickson Barry 3/28

African Team Ministries

Fork again is participating in the African Team Ministries sale of jewelry and artifacts. Items are scheduled to be displayed on Sunday, April 12. The African Team Ministries is a Christian Ministry that provides funding for orphan and refugee missions and evangelism in East Africa. They have experienced the worst drought in 60 years which has caused a severe food crisis in East Africa. The profits from this year will be used to purchase irrigation pumps and dig wells for the villages. The people are working especially hard on the items they will be sending.

For more information on African Team Ministries, their website is

Africanteamministries.org

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 today, Sunday, March 22 @ 5pm in the parish house.**

Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings at 9am. **During the season of Lent we're doing a six (6) week study of St Paul's Letter to the Galatians.** Come join us for coffee and good conversation.

Small Groups

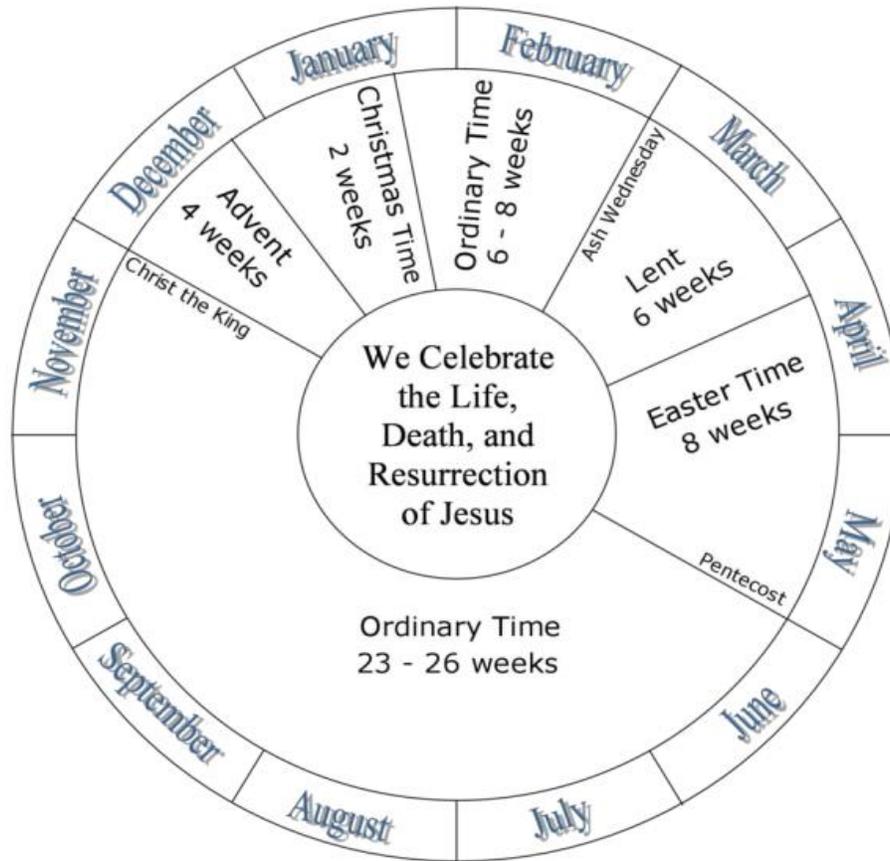
The Women's Book Group meets every other Thursday at Kathy Thomas' house from 10am-noon. The next meeting is Thursday April 2, the book is *Unglued* by Lysa TerKeurst. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, April 2 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea. They are reading *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas & Will Willimon – (pages 112-127). 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

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Monday, Mar 16 – Meeting with the Rev. Dr. Ed Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm
Friday, Mar 20 – Young Rector's Group, Culpepper, 10:30am-12:30pm
Thursday, Mar 26 – RMC Campus Ministry Council, noon-1pm
Tuesday, Mar 31 – Clergy Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30am

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, Mar 25 – Catechism & Confirmation class, 6:30pm
Wednesday, Mar 25 – Choir rehearsal, 7pm
Sunday, March 29 – Palm Sunday, 10am
Thursday, Apr 2 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am
Thursday, Apr 2 – Woman's Book Group, 10am-noon