

From Father Nik

Since Christ came that we might be made friends with our God in him (Jn 15), it makes sense that the community gathered in witness to the person and work of Christ is a community of friendship. As we discussed in last Sunday's sermon, Christ's friendship with us makes possible our friendship with one another despite differences that would otherwise keep us apart. St Paul gives voice to this when he writes to the Galatian Christians that "there is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

These words haunt our feeble attempts to build bridges of friendship across the lines drawn for us by the world. But as long as we are a community of witness, we can't escape the words enlivened by the Gospel. They follow us, continuing to speak to us of the witness that has drawn us together; as in William Dunkerley's (1852-1941) missionary hymn from the beginning of the twentieth century: "In Christ now meet both East and West, In Him meet North and South; All Christly souls are one in Him Throughout the whole wide earth." These words remind us that the friendships that constitute our community of friendship are not grounded in kinship, in networking, or in pleasure (though those elements are not necessarily excluded from our community of friendship). Our friendships in the community of witness are grounded in that very witness to a God who loves us wayward creatures so much as to become one of us so he might call us friends, even as we treated him as an enemy. Or, in the words of the Samuel Stone (1839-1900) hymn, "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord."

Our friendships are in Christ, our true friend, who is the Truth (Jn 14:6). This means that we must be truthful to one another in the Church as a mark of our friendships and a witness to His friendship. Truthfulness can be difficult. It can even be painful. It can test a friendship. But we trust that we are bound together by something more than sentimentality or utility. We are bound together by our witness to the Truth. Being bound together by our witness to the Truth as a community of friendship means that we must always be engaged in proclaiming the Gospel to one another. By proclaiming the Gospel to one another, we become that community of friendships that bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in a world that is desperately seeking an alternative to its own deception. By proclaiming the Gospel to one another, we bear witness to the Gospel in the world. We bear witness by our friendships to the Truth of the Gospel.

Spring Meeting
Episcopal Church Woman of Virginia
"Saying Yes to God"

When: Saturday, May 30, 1-5pm; **Where:** Christ Church, Spotsylvania
Register on line by May 26.

<http://www.thediocese.net/Forms/Form.asp?Action=Edit&FormID=64>

Trinity Sunday @ Trinity Church

The Rev'd Bob Heatherington will preside at a 4pm Eucharist
on Sunday, May 31 at Trinity Church
(18185 Teman Rd. Beaverdam)

Men's Book Group

will begin discussing a new book on Thursday, June 4.

Strawberry Faire

Volunteers needed

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 Berry 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 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 tonight @ 5pm.

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.

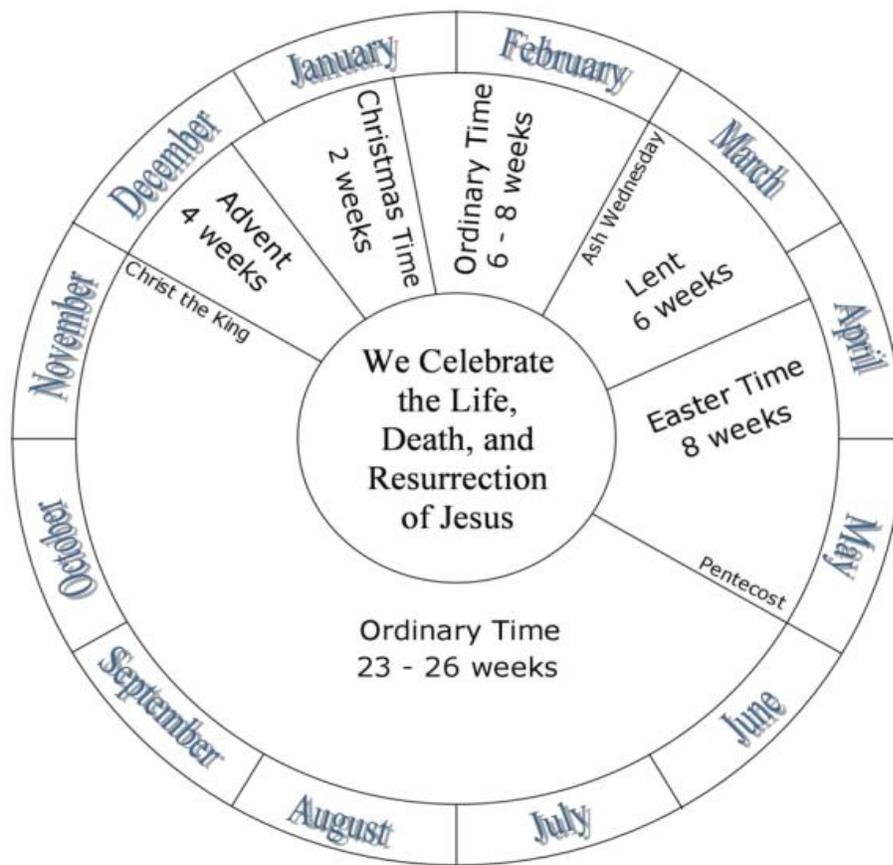
Small Groups

The Women's Book Group meets every other Thursday at Kathy Thomas' house from 10am-noon. The next meeting is Thursday May 28. 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 21 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea. They are discussing *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas & Will Willimon. 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, May 18 – Meeting with Fr. Bushong, 10:30
– Pastoral visit, 2pm
- Wednesday, May 20 – Pastoral meeting, noon
- Friday, May 22 – Young Rector's group, 10am
- Thursday, May 28 – Lunch with Fr. Brian Turner, noon

Looking Ahead

- Sunday, May 17 – Youth Group, 5pm
- Tuesday, May 19 – Vestry meeting, 7pm
- 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
- Sunday, May 31 – Youth group, 5pm
- Saturday, June 6 – Strawberry Faire, Ashland, 9am
- Sunday, June 7 – Annual Parish Picnic, 10am