

From Fr. Nik

“I am the bread of life,” Jesus proclaims just after slaking the hunger of five thousand famished people with only five barley loaves and two fish (John 6). We may be tempted to take this statement as *mere* metaphor—no doubt, like many who heard Christ speak these words. I say, “*mere* metaphor” not to diminish or call into question the power of metaphor, but to highlight the other possibility for understanding these words. Of course, this other possible interpretation—the more-than-metaphorical interpretation—is potentially offensive. This is the lure of the metaphorical interpretation.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven,” Jesus continues. “If anyone eats of this bread; he will live forever.” Our suspicions are confirmed; Jesus must be speaking metaphorically. There is no way we can imagine how Jesus speaking of us eating him can be anything other than metaphor. Jesus says he’s a shepherd, but we all know his résumé just has two entries: carpenter and Messiah. Jesus says he’s the true vine, but no one expects to find him planted in Napa Valley. Jesus was called the Lamb of God, but nobody thinks that means Mary Had a Little Lamb. All this talk about *being bread* and *being eaten for everlasting life* should be filed in the cabinet marked, “Jesus’ Weird Self-Referential Metaphors,” right? He can’t mean it any other way, can he?

“The bread I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh,” he concludes. Those who hear this strange statement are understandably puzzled. Jesus has just taken a bizarre metaphor and made it disgusting—offensive, even. But he’s not done. “I’m telling you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have everlasting life, and I will raise them up on the last day. For my flesh is food indeed and my blood is drink indeed. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.” After the initial shock of these words begins to wear off, the real, offensive weight sinks in. Jesus is not speaking *merely* metaphorically. However our feeble reason wrestles these words into some semblance of an understandable account of their meaning, the one avenue that is not left to us is to reduce them to a metaphor.

Many of the disciples, *the Gospel tells us*, when they heard it, said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him (John 6:60 & 66). *Nik+*

Coffee Hour

Thanks to Jeannette Harrison for today's refreshments!
The Thomas family will be hosting next Sunday's refreshments.
Volunteers are needed for all the Sundays in December

To sign up, please go to

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/9040449A5AA2FA57-coffee/25614452

Youth Group

Will meet at 6pm this evening at the Church of Our Savior, Montpelier.

Heavenly Creations Arts & Crafts Show

St. James the Less, Ashland

Friday, November 20 – 6-8:30pm

Saturday, November 21 – 9am-4pm

Thanksgiving Day

Eucharist at 10am on Thursday, November 26.

The Liturgy will be from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer,
in keeping with the historic origin of Fork Church.

Advent Wreaths

Will be made in the parish hall after worship on
Sunday, November 29th.

Interested in Serving on Vestry?

Contact Fr Nik – KnicholasForti@gmail.com; 804-291-6124

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 morning worship; after which, they join their parents in church for Communion.

J2A Youth Group will meet today, Sunday November 15, at 6:00pm, at the Church of Our Savior in Montepelier.

The Adult Sunday School meets Sunday mornings at 9am, in the parish hall, to explore the Sacraments.

Small Groups

The Women's Book Group will discuss the third section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Communion" on Thursday, November 19, at 10am. Please contact Kathy for directions:

boysthree@embarqmail.com

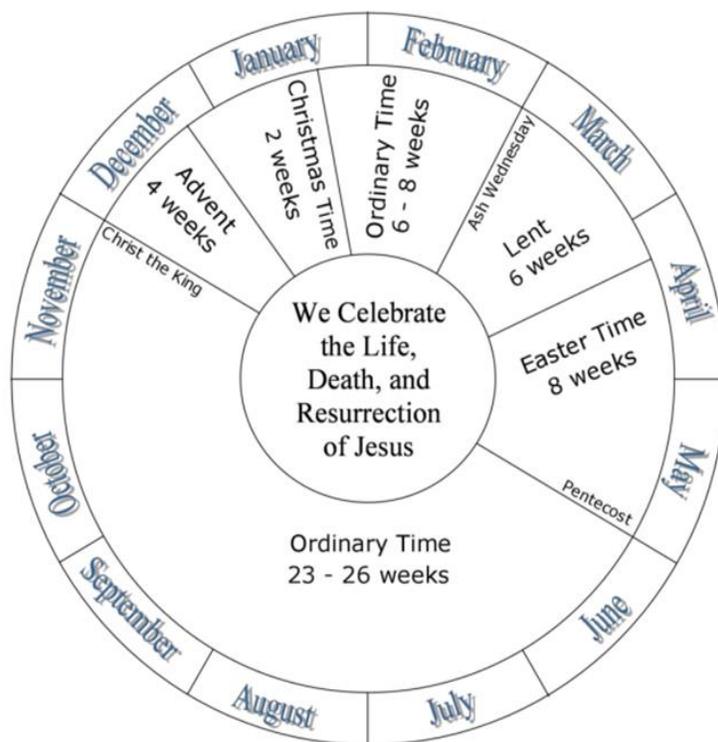
The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, November 19, at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the third section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Communion," (pp 121-157).

Christian Formation

The *Way of Discipleship* class for Confirmation & Reception meets on Wednesdays at 6:30pm.

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

Thursday, Nov 12 – Fresh Start, 9:30am-3pm

Monday, Nov 16 – Coffee w/ Fr Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm
– Meet with Fr.Ben & Fr.Phil, 3:30-5:30pm

Looking Ahead

Sunday, Nov 15 – **Parish Hall Use:** Old Dominion Morgan Horse Asso, 2-4:30pm

Monday, Nov 16 – **Parish Hall Use:** Girl Scout Troop 429, 6:30-8:30pm

Tuesday, Nov 17 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm

Wednesday, Nov 18 – Confirmation/Reception class, 6:30pm
– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Thursday, Nov 19 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am
– Women's Book Group, 10am-noon

Thursday, Nov 26 – Thanksgiving Day Eucharist, 10am

Sunday, Nov 29 – Advent Wreath making, Parish Hall, after worship

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.