

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lent is often a time in which Christians will find something from which to abstain. Of course, we joke about abstaining from things that we don't like: in my case, lima beans. Hate 'em. But we know that this isn't really the nature of the Lenten practice.

More seriously, the idea of abstaining from some practice or food of which we normally partake is rooted in fasting, a period of abstaining from food or drink for the purpose of religious observance.

What might get missed is that fasting is not for weight manage-

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ment — at least, not in the sense that I'm using it here. If weight loss is your goal, consult with your doctor first! In this case, abstention from a thing of which we're fond, particularly from some food or

drink, is for the purpose of *gain*, not of pounds, but of spiritual strength.

In fact, fasting as a spiritual discipline is only one-half of the godly formula for spiritual weight gain. Not only is one to put off something; one also puts on something, usually an additional amount of prayer and Bible reading. Consider the example of Anna, who “did not depart from

the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day” (Luke 2:37).



Put off—put on; that's a key part of the usage of fasting. Now couple this Lenten practice with something with which many struggle (or perhaps no longer struggle?), the reading of Scripture. Do you have a discipline of reading Scripture on your own? If you do not, or if it's spotty or infrequent, use the time saved from watching your favorite television show (or television altogether), from drinking that evening glass of wine, from eating dessert,

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from consistently checking your Facebook page, or however you end up saving some time and fill it with reading Scripture and prayer!

Every Sunday's bulletin has lectionary readings for the week in it. Use that! Or read the gospels straight through. Or spend time savoring the Psalms. Journal your thoughts. Pray with your spouse.

In short, replace some of the “noise” of your daily life with a quiet moment dedicated to building up your godly strength and character.

You *will* find yourself refreshed!

Baker Library Book Brief
By Ken Cook

Your chance to expand your knowledge and understanding of the outworking of the Gospel of Jesus Christ over the span of the last 2,000 years - while enjoying it - is coming to a church library very near you! Whether it is the Good News of Christ himself, or the Church or Church History or Christian Theology, or key figures that intrigue you, it is very likely that an opportunity is now being provided that will allow you to investigate your selected field of interest or of concern without reservation. St. John's has been given a complete set of the 12-volume *The Christians: Their First Two Thousand Years* series. Each hardbound volume is presented in the format of a coffee-table publication and runs to about 300 pages. As well, each volume is richly appointed with maps (ancient and modern), on-site photographs, prints of representative art works and illustrations. The text throughout this people-centered series is based on sound scholarship, having been overseen by Dr. William S. Barker (formerly of Westminster Theological Seminary), Dr. Dennis Martin, professor of Historical Theology at Loyola University, Chicago, Dr. Mark Noll (of Wheaton College and Notre Dame University) and Dr. J.I. Packer. *The Christians* has been the project of SEARCH, Society to Explore and Record Christian History, publication of the first volume having begun in 2002 and completion of the series having been concluded in 2013. Throughout, Ted Byfield, a veteran Canadian journalist (67 years at last count!) and one of the founders of the St. John's Anglican Schools of Cana-

da, has served as the editor; many of the researchers and authors who have contributed to this series are Canadians as well. Each volume is eminently readable, having been written for interested adult readers, and not scholars. While individual chapters concern themselves with the broad scope of major issues, each chapter contains a series of brief free-standing related articles. This sweeping consideration of Church History consistently covers developments within all of the various Christian traditions, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant.



The series includes: (1.) *The Veil Is Torn: Pentecost to the Destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 30 to A.D. 70)*, (2.) *A Pinch of Incense: From the Fall of Jerusalem to the Decian Persecution (A.D. 70 to 250)*, (3.) *By This Sign: From the Decian Persecution to the Constantine Era (A.D. 250 to 350)*, (4.) *Darkness Descends: The Fall of the Western Roman Empire (A.D. 350 to 565)*, (5.) *The Sword of Islam: The Muslim Onslaught All But Destroys Christendom (A.D. 565 to 740)*, (6.) *The Quest for the City: Pursuing the Next World, They Founded This One (A.D. 740 to 1100)*, (7.) *A Glorious Disaster: The Crusades: Blood, Valor, Iniquity, Reason, Faith (A.D. 1100 to 1300)*, (8.) *The Renaissance: God in Man: But Amid Its Splendors, Night Falls on Medieval Christianity (A.D. 1300 to 1500)*, (9.) *A Century of Giants: In an Age of Spiritual Genius, Western Christendom Shatters (A.D. 1500 to 1600)*, (10.) *We the People: Democracy: Christendom's Unintended Achievement (A.D. 1600 to 1800)*, (11.) *Unto the Ends of the Earth: Despite*

Rising Disbelief, the Faith Advances as Never Before (A.D. 1800 to 1914) and (12.) The High Tide and the Turn: A New Christendom Explodes into Life in the Third World (A.D. 1914 to 2001).

Perhaps it should be noted that any and all attempts at establishing distinct periods within history are susceptible to criticism, even if such practice is unavoidable. Likewise, such periodization might result in inaccurate characterization of the people, movements and events within a given era. However, what we have here are the best efforts of a large and balanced team of historians, researchers and writers. Excellent and expansive bibliographies are available at the end of each volume for the reader who desires a further pursuit of study on most of the topics considered within any given tome in this collection. If anyone wonders if I have read the whole series, my reply is, "Are you kidding?!" But given my recent participation in St. John's involvement with the John Jay Institute, I plan to start reading volume 10 as soon as possible. With which volume do you want to start? Is there any among us who does want to begin with the first volume and read straight through to the last? If so, let me know. One way or the other, I am glad for the opportunities this large new resource makes available to one and all of us within the Body of Christ at St. John's.

Ken

The Forge: Where Character Is Formed

By Nathan Rudolph

Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.

~ Matthew 18:4-5



The FORGE

Where character is formed.

Our Lord Jesus ascribes great worth to children, and by Christ's death and resurrection we are invited to take part in an inheritance as sons and daughters of God.

We at St. John's desire to devote ourselves to the work of ministering to and training the young men and women in our local neighborhoods. As all churches are called to do, we seek to humble ourselves that we may receive children graciously and mercifully, just as Christ receives us. However, as many churches have experienced, parishioners below the age of twenty are strikingly few. Sometimes, it can be hard to apportion resources—whether time, money, or space—for a youth group or young adult activities when only

one or two might attend such functions.

Even when there are resources aplenty, there is still one resource that can still be sorely lacking: fellowship. The body of Christ needs hands and feet, eyes and ears, mouths and noses. Every age can be edified by its youngers and its elders: one will benefit greatly from the vivacity of his or her youngers; one will benefit greatly from the wisdom of his or her elders. Just as we need to learn from those who are younger and older than we are, we also need peers with whom we can learn how to serve God's universal church.

To this end, St. John's has created The Forge, a place where the disparate youth of different churches can come together to hone and use their many gifts. This effort has only just begun, but a number of churches have responded with great support. Nevertheless, it is hard to align different schedules—especially between different churches. Therefore, we would covet your prayers as we press forward to bringing God's children together.

We have been meeting on the third Sunday evening of every month. St. John's itself resides in Southampton, but we have been trading off the meeting location amongst the involved churches. Please keep us in

your prayers as we try to reach as many hearts and minds in the locales God has entrusted to us.

We welcome your support in spreading the news. We invite your children, your grandchildren, your nieces, and your nephews. The Forge is tailored to serve students from 6th to 12th grade.

Ultimately, we just want to know Christ and make him known; please join us in embracing and spreading His good news. We hope to see you at The Forge: *Where character is formed.*



Family Resource Center By Helen Miller

Only two weeks until the official beginning of spring! March 21 also marks the day in 2005 that we moved into our current home twelve years ago. What a hectic, crazy day that was! We were so excited and thrilled to finally have our own yard, instead of sharing one with everyone else in our townhouse community.



We've loved every minute of our time here. We've filled existing flower beds with plants, and created new gardens where none existed. We've taken down trees, dug up stumps, and quietly marveled at how much we loved the huge efforts it took to move from imagination to reality. It's been such a joy to watch the fruits of our labors emerge every spring!

We didn't always get it right—some plants died out due to disease

or placement in the wrong area of the yard. The deer destroyed our effort to grow a pink dogwood tree, and they regularly annihilated any annuals we left unprotected. Still, we always learned from the failures, we adjusted our plans, and moved in a different direction.

The main thing I've learned about gardening is that it is impossible to predict what will happen from year to year. The weather controls so much—too much rain, too little rain, too hot or too cold—and it's all out of my control. I've had to learn patience, and accept that some things simply won't survive. Weeds, alas, always do!

This spring is especially exciting to me, as we prepare the way to our new church home. We are finally being planted in fertile, rich soil, with so many opportunities open to us. We're already "digging in" to the Southampton community, and it will take time to grow and thrive there. If we have patience, and believe that God will lead us, all will be well.



THIS TIME TOMORROW
BY THE REV'D CHRIS DODDS
FEBRUARY 27TH, 2017

REPORT FROM THE FIELD, from Bishop Steve: One of the joys I experience during parish visits is seeing wonderfully creative ministries in each of the churches in our Diocese. Almost every church has efforts to reach out, or to care, or to disciple, that are unique and inspiring. As you read about these ways God's people are doing the work of the Church, perhaps you will begin to imagine new and fresh

ways your church can fulfill its mission.

At Church of the Cross in Boston, I have been encouraged by a regular feature in their weekly services called This Time Tomorrow. It is a way for lay people to give testimony to their vocations in the marketplace and home. Newly ordained Rev Chris Dodds explains . . .

This Time Tomorrow

What will you be doing this time tomorrow? This is a question we ask someone in our community most Sundays during our CotC worship services. This Time Tomorrow (TTT) is a short interview and part of a commitment to keep before us a vision of God's deep concern for all of his creation and all aspects of our lives, not just our time together on Sundays.

For most of us, the way that we get to steward the gifts we have been given and to seek the good of our community, is on our frontline - the place where we spend the majority of our waking hours each week. This may be at school, in the home, or a place of paid employment. God is with us in these places and is Lord over them, so we wrestle together

If you enjoyed this article, you can check out our Diocesan website at www.adhope.org and look for the newsletter section *Anchor Lines* on their home page.

with what it means to work faithfully as a follower of Jesus. Our interview with parishioners consists of three simple questions:

What will you be doing this time tomorrow?

What are the opportunities and the challenges you face as a follower of Jesus?

How can we pray for you?

As well as reminding us all each week of the importance of the work the Lord calls us to, TTT provides a great way to learn more about a member of our church family and to lift them and their workplace up in prayer.

Norma McCorvey, Jane Roe of Roe v. Wade, Passes Away: She Never Had an Abortion and Became Pro-Life

NATIONAL STEVEN ERTELT FEB 18, 2017 | 2:10PM WASHINGTON, DC

Norma McCorvey, who was the Jane Roe of the infamous Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court case legalizing virtually unlimited abortions, passed away today. McCorvey never had an abortion and eventually became pro-life and dedicated her life to overturning the horrible Supreme Court decision that bared her pseudonym.

McCorvey died today at an assisted-living facility in Katy, Texas. She was 69.

McCorvey never wanted an abortion — she was seeking a divorce from her husband — but young, pro-abortion feminist attorney Sarah Weddington used McCorvey's case as a means of attempting to overturn Texas' law making most abortions illegal. Weddington took the case all the way to the Supreme Court, which invalidated every pro-life state law in the nation protecting unborn children and the rest is history.

But most Americans don't know that McCorvey, who was "pro-choice" on abortion at the time, became a pro-life advocate. She dedi-

cated to reversing the Supreme Court case that bears her fictitious name, Jane Roe.

In a video, McCorvey explained her effort to obtain a legal abortion in the 1970s when facing an unplanned pregnancy. However, she never had an abortion and realized that her court case was the biggest mistake of her life and currently fights to stop abortion.

"Back in 1973, I was a very confused twenty-one year old with one child and facing an unplanned pregnancy," she says in the ad. "At the time I fought to obtain a legal abortion, but truth be told, I have three daughters and never had an abortion."

"I think it's safe to say that the entire abortion industry is based on a lie.... I am dedicated to spending the rest of my life undoing the law that bears my name," McCorvey says.



She concludes the 60 second ad with the words: "You read about me in history books, but now I am dedicated to spreading the truth about preserving the dignity of all human life from natural conception to natural death."

As pro-life attorney Casey Mattox wrote at LifeNews.com previously:

There is a 46-year-old woman, born in Texas, who should be dead right now. In fact, she should have never been born. Forty years ago, the Supreme Court decided that the Texas law that prevented Jane Roe from ending the life of her unborn daughter was unconstitutional. But by the time the Supreme Court issued its decision in 1973, she had already

been born and adopted by a family—likely not knowing that all that ink spilled in *Roe v. Wade* was about her.

Norma McCorvey is “Jane Roe.” She claimed then that her pregnancy was the result of a rape, although for over a decade now she has been outspokenly pro-life and publicly admitted that this, and virtually every fact on which her case was built, was a lie. Both McCorvey and Sandra Cano, the Doe of *Doe v. Bolton*—Roe’s companion case from Georgia decided the same day—are now outspoken pro-life advocates who have sworn that their cases are built on lies.

But before the Supreme Court could decide whether McCorvey did have a constitutional right to end her unborn daughter’s life, it had to overcome a procedural obstacle that slowed down the process—a delay that factored into whether her daughter would ever have a family.

Because of that delay, McCorvey had already had the child by the time the Supreme Court issued its decision in January 1973. She had been adopted into a Texas home,

perhaps somewhere in the Dallas area where McCorvey lived. The court nevertheless said that McCorvey’s case was not moot since her circumstances were “capable of repetition” because courts would never be able to decide the question during the time of a woman’s pregnancy.

Procedural history is never the exciting part of a lawsuit. But for McCorvey’s unborn daughter, the dry complexity of legal procedure is the reason she exists today. Fortunately for a three-year old girl, “the wheels of justice grind slowly,” and by the time the court issued its decision, a Texas family had adopted her. If the courts could have moved more quickly, she (and her family) would have never had that chance. Lemonade comes from lemons.

It is unknown to me whether the adoptive family ever even knew that their daughter was the supposedly unwanted child who was the subject of *Roe*. As far as we know, they raised her not knowing who she was and certainly never telling her.

EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM

Name: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

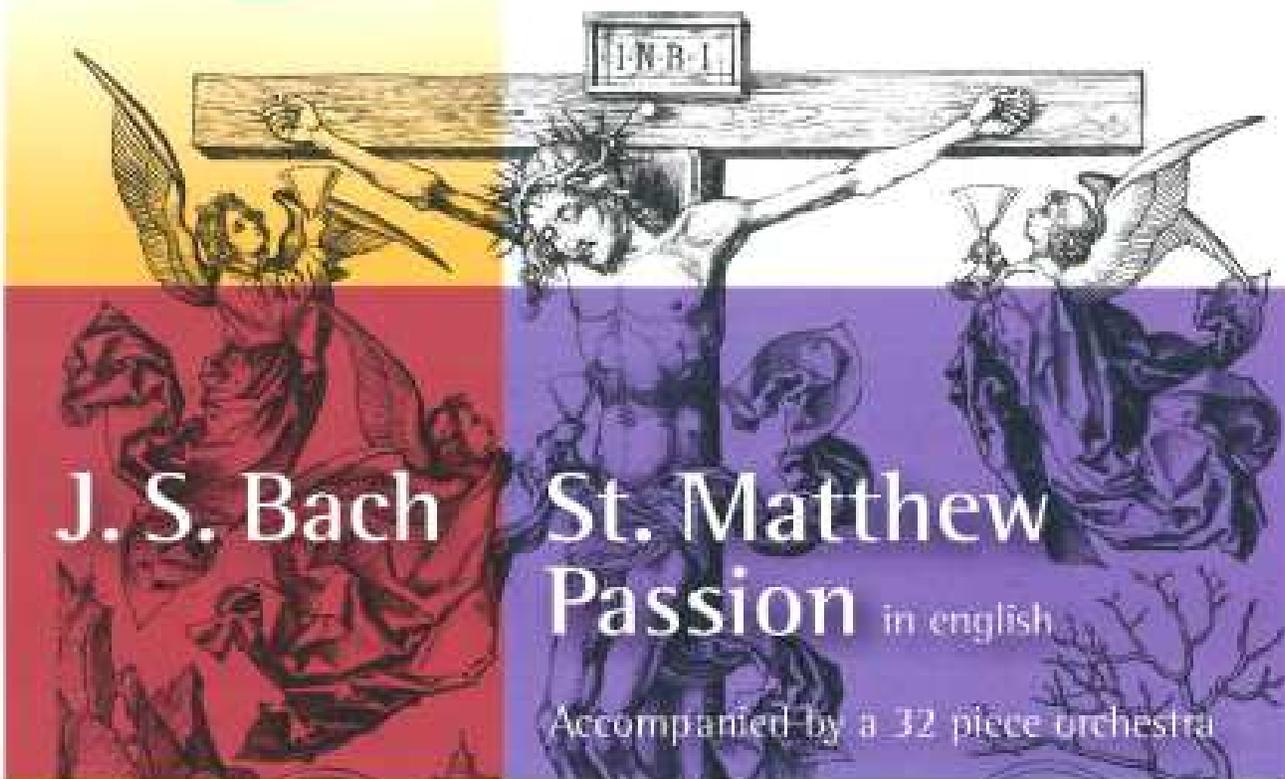


Tulip, (6"5 blooms), red# _____ purple# _____



THE CHORISTERS

David Spitko, *Artistic Director*



J. S. Bach

St. Matthew
Passion *in english*

Accompanied by a 32 piece orchestra

George Somerville
Evangelist

Frank Mitchell
Jesus

Pennsylvania Youth Chorale

Soloists:

Carole Latimer, *Sop.*
Suzanne Duplantis, *Mezzo*
Lawrence Jones, *Tenor*
Mark Hightower, *Bass*

Saturday evening
April 8, 2017
at 7:30 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church
1000 W. Main Street
Lansdale, PA 19446

TICKETS AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE ON OUR WEBSITE.
For more information or to purchase tickets, go to www.TheChoristers.org
or call (215) 542-7871. \$5/ticket discount with advance ticket sales.

 Find us on
Facebook

The Bulletin Board

**Altar Flowers given to the honor and glory of God
during the month of February 2017**



19th	In Loving Memory of Anne Williamson
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Event	Location	Date & Time
Palm Sunday	Abington Baptist Church	Sun. April 9th 7:45am & 9am Holy Communion
Maundy Thursday	Abington Baptist Church	Thu. April 13th 7:30pm Holy Communion
Good Friday	Abington Baptist Church	Fri. April 15th 12:00 noon (time is tentative) Worship Service
Easter Egg Hunt	St. John's Anglican Church Southampton, PA	Sat. April 15th 10am
Easter Sunday	Abington Baptist Church	Sun. April 16th 9am Holy Communion

OUR VAUES: SCRIPTURE
THE REV'D MARK BOOKER
FEBRUARY 27TH, 2017

The second stated value of our diocese is Scripture. Cranmer's beloved collect calls upon God to help us "hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the holy Scriptures for the sake of true Christian living, that we might "embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life." That is, Scripture is the God-ordained means by which we are nourished and sustained in the life of faith. Neglect this and our grip on the blessed hope will loosen. Prioritize this and our grip will grow ever stronger.

It seems fair to suggest that Cranmer was inspired by the words of Moses that "man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord" (Dt 8:3). Jesus quotes Moses when he is tempted. After forty days of fasting, no doubt meditating upon Scripture for much of this time, he embodies the words of Psalm 119:11, "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." The word of God keeps him on the path of life, holding on to the blessed hope with an iron grip, even in Gethsemane, even on the cross. It's that simple, really.

Think of Matt Damon in *The Martian* and how he depended upon oxygen in such an inhospitable climate. The spiritual life, the blessed hope, is no more natural in the sinful world than human life is on Mars. Scripture is our oxygen, breathed out by God.

Is it any wonder, then, that such a necessity, such a lifeline,

such a gift, is celebrated throughout Scripture itself? When Ezekiel eats the word of God it's as sweet as honey in his mouth (Ezk 3:3). Jeremiah, too, ate the words of God and they became to him "a joy" and "the delight of my heart" (Jer 15:16). The psalmist echoes both when he declares, "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps 119:103).

So, as the people of God, we hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest this great gift of God's word. We do this together. We do this alone. And we know that as we do this, with humility, with faith, with our minds and hearts fully engaged, we are being sustained, nourished, and shaped by God himself as the people of the blessed hope.

One of the ways we engage Scripture at Church of the Cross is by providing an accessible daily lectionary. To deepen our engagement with the readings, someone in our community writes a brief reflection (daily or weekly, depending on the season) for all of us to read.

There are obviously many ways to engage Scripture. The important thing is that we do, regularly and intentionally, so that our hold upon the blessed hope remains firm to the end.



Rev'd Mark Booker is the Rector of Church of the Cross in Boston. This article also appeared in *Anchor Lines*.