

Good News from Good Shepherd Church



Ponderings from Our Pastor

"I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word."

(BCP265; Ash Wednesday)

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

Because our next newsletter won't be out before Ash Wednesday, I want to ponder Lent with you this time.

I want to reverse the usual Lenten trend and ask you to add something for the season, not take something away. Would you consider the practice of a Wednesday noon Eucharist and healing service? Beginning Wednesday, Feb 14th, Good Shepherd will have a traditional Episcopal noon Eucharist with a healing litany and anointing.

There are three things that every Episcopalian should do as an Anglican pattern of life. The first is to read scripture each day; the second is to come to the communion table each week; and the third is to get through the church year every year by following the calendar and its celebrations and traditions.

If you are like the rich young ruler who responded to Jesus, "All these things I have done from my youth," then good for you! Now comes the addition. Would you consider inviting someone who has never attended an Episcopal church service to attend a Wednesday Eucharist with you?

What is so special about this new service, you may ask? It is a short and low-stakes introduction to the Eucharistic liturgy in a traditional setting, and it is the chance for you to bring a hurting friend to a healing service that is very per-

sonal and tactile. I cannot tell you how many people, co-workers, and friends with whom I have met and attended weekday services. Afterward, over coffee or lunch, their stories would come pouring out. It was healing for them and a chance to offer Christian presence to them as I accompanied them. Many would later return to the Church to explore a Sunday service. Wednesday Eucharists are the gift that keeps on giving!

Here is my prayer for you this Lenten season 2024:

"Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen."

For Lent, let us resolve to share this experience with others. That includes the people you know who have wandered off during COVID-19, even (dare I say) if they are currently attending somewhere else. Let's woo them back!

Blessings, ashes, and prayers, Father Bill+



Envisioning with the Vestry

Happy New Year, Good Shepherd Family!

January is typically the time of year when we *attempt* to commit to new beginnings. Whether we are cleaning out cabinets, planning on better eating habits, starting a new project, or making a concerted effort to just be better to ourselves and others.

Well, I have a sure-fire way to *accomplish* all the above:

- ✓ Go to church as much as possible. Clean out, reset your heart and mind.
- ✓ Receive the Holy Eucharist, the sacrament that nourishes the soul.
- ✓ Join one of the many ministries at Good Shepherd and share in doing God's work.
- ✓ Pray often.

May God continue to protect, guide, and bless you as we journey around the sun together in 2024!

Barbara
Sr. Warden

Also Note:

Be on the lookout for your 2024 pledge envelopes at the back of the church! This year, we have added a yellow envelope to the mix. The yellow envelope may be used to contribute to a designated fund of your choice if you so desire. It is important to know that any money that is designated may only be used for that purpose. None of those funds may be used for routine expenditures. If you wish to contribute to any of these designated funds, simply write the name of the fund on the yellow envelope.

The fund options are as follows:

Music Fund
Daughters of the King
Altar Guild
Building Fund
Garden Fund
Stained Glass Window
Capital Campaign Account

If you any questions about a specific fund, feel free to reach out to a vestry member or the treasurer.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

Our parish community joins to celebrate and thank our own Ronni Gioia!!!

Taken from the Pike County Courier:

Port Jervis PD celebrates Ronnie Gioia's retirement

Port Jervis. Gioia served many years as a crossing guard and a police matron for the department.

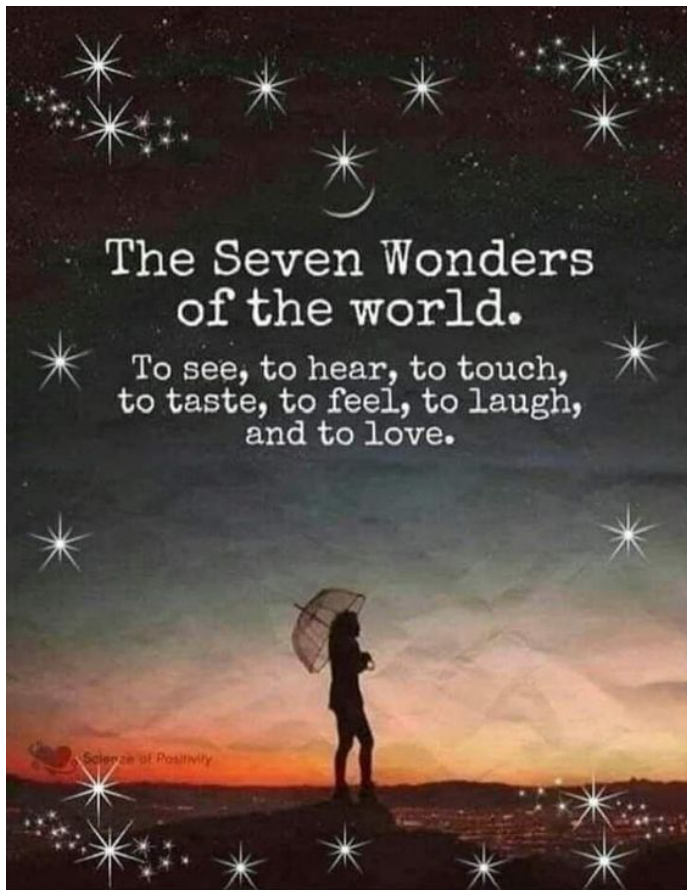
PORT JERVIS /
| 05 JAN 2024 |

On January 3, the Port Jervis Police Department bid a fond farewell to longtime employee Ronnie Gioia upon her retirement. According to the announcement, Gioia started working with the Port Jervis Police Department on October 23, 2012, in the capacity of a school crossing guard, which she held until July 19, 2021. She also served as a police matron from September 22, 2014, to December 31, 2023, which involved conducting searches of female prisoners, supervising their safety, serving meals, and accompanying female prisoners to and from courts.

"She honorably and professionally served the residents of our community with devotion and distinction, whether safeguarding the lives of our young children walking to school or serving as a police matron being subject to call-out throughout the day and overnight hours to provide for the care, custody and control of female prisoners incarcerated at the Port Jervis City Police Department," the department said in its farewell message to Gioia.

"Ronnie's dedication to public safety in our community is commendable and we greatly appreciate her service. On behalf of the City of Port Jervis, we wish you the best of happiness and good health in your well-deserved retirement."





Prayer: For Beauty in the Mundane

God of every beautiful thing,

Make us people of wonder. Show us how to hold on to nuance and vision when our souls become addicted to pain, to the unlovely. It is far easier to see the gloom and decay; so often it sings a louder song. Attune our hearts to the good still stirring in our midst, not that we would give ourselves to toxic positivity or neglect the pain of the world, but that we would be people capable of existing in the tension. Grant us habits of sacred pause. Let us marvel not just at the grand or majestic, but beauty's name etched into every ordinary moment. Let the mundane swell with a mystery that makes us breathe deeper still. And by this, may we be sustained and kept from despair. *Amen.*

Cole Arthur Riley

Robin William's Top 10 Reasons To Be An Episcopalian

The comedian Robin William's once listed these top 10 reasons to be an Episcopalian:

10. No snake handling.
9. You can believe in dinosaurs.
8. Male and female God created them; male and female we ordain them.
7. You don't have to check your brains at the door.
6. Pew aerobics.
5. Church year is color-coded.
4. Free wine on Sunday.
3. All of the pageantry – none of the guilt.
2. You don't have to know how to swim to get baptized.

And the Number One reason to be an Episcopalian:

1. No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other Episcopalian who agrees with you.

Faith in Action

