

The Bell of Zion

April, 2009

The Rev. Mark Stielger
Rector
585-226-3722

The Rt. Rev. Prince Singh
8th Bishop of Rochester
585-473-2977

Rector's Corner

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We are often called Easter People. I like being called Easter People; it makes me an Easter Person. Being an Easter person makes me a person of resurrection, a person of renewal, a person of rebirth, a person of new hope, in short a person of Christ.

Easter is the oldest and greatest feast day celebration in Christianity. As such, I thought you would be interested in some of the history of our most important day.

As we all know Easter is all about the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whereby he defeated sin, Satan, and death. Through this act, our Baptism, and confession of faith we receive these same benefits. We owe nothing for this act (debt) other than our love and thanksgiving to God. But where did the name and date(s) come from?

It is thought, and proposed by the ancient historian 'The Venerable' St. Bede (673-735), that the name Easter is derived from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring Eostre (or Ostara). Scholars however are unsure of this derivative. We do know however, that a celebration of the Resurrection of Christ took place in the early second century on the day immediately following the Jewish Passover, or 14 Nisan on the Jewish calendar. It did not matter on what day of the week this occurred. By the mid-second century the Gentile faction of the emerging Christian Church changed Easter to the Sunday immediately following 14 Nisan. In the year 197 the Bishop of Rome declared that this was the only proper dated and excommunicated those who practiced differently. Most of the rest of Christendom continued to use the old date. A controversy raged (aren't churches great) until Constantine declared in the fourth century that the proper date Empire wide for Easter would be the Sunday following the last day of Passover, with the

preceding Friday being Good Friday. It would be nice if this was the end of it, but it is not.

In 1582 the Western Church accepted the Gregorian calendar and moved the date of Easter again. Meanwhile, the Eastern Orthodox Church remained on the earlier calendar. With the Gregorian calendar Easter has been moved to the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal (spring) equinox. This is where Easter remains for us today while the Orthodox Church remains with the First Sunday after Passover. So there are two different Easters celebrated – Western and Orthodox – in the Christian Church. (By the way, if you cannot go to sleep at night, turn to pages 880 through 887 in the Book of Common Prayer and you will find the *Tables and Rules for Finding the Date of Easter Day*. Reading these is guaranteed to put you to sleep right away or keep you up all night.)

Discovering all these, as my Church History Professor called them, "factoids" about Easter does not change anything about the deep meaning of Easter and how it affects our lives. It is no accident that Easter and Passover are conjoined. The Passover celebrates the beginning of the Exodus from bondage and Easter celebrates the end of this passage into freedom – a passage into new life. For Christians, our new life rests with Jesus Christ in his Resurrection which is our resurrection into the light. For this we are joyful and thankful.

Yes, we are Easter People. And, it really does not matter on what day Easter falls because we carry our Easternness year around.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Mark†

Tuesday Ecumenical Lenten Luncheons:

Please see the bulletin boards for information

Zion Lenten & Easter Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 5th:

Holy Eucharist & Palms 10:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 9th:

Holy Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar
7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10th:

Stations of the Cross 7:00 p.m.
(There will be a basket at the back of the church for a freewill offering that will go to the Diocese of Jerusalem.)

Easter Day, April 12th:

Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.

Faithful in little things

The vestry wants your creative ideas on ways we can increase our income at Zion, as well as ways to cut costs. Please submit your ideas to any vestry member.

A couple things we can all do is remember to **TURN OFF LIGHTS** when leaving a room (rest rooms are frequently forgotten) as well as **SETTING BACK THE THERMOSTAT** to 60 degrees if you turned it up. If we all cooperate, this can result in a tremendous savings.

Thank you.

Kathy Maltby

Spring Yard Work

*Dreary winter has all but disappeared,
Spring flowers have risen from the ground.
Ugly reminders of snow removal have reared.
But willing workers from Zion abound!*

*Now that April has raised its pretty head,
And the ground is no longer bound by frost,
Preparing the lawns and flower bed(s),
Offers no time that can be lost.*

*Disturbed soil and grass must be replaced.
Stones and debris raked and removed.
New flowers chosen, planted, and embraced,
By your tools, time, and lots of love.*

Women of Zion

The receipts from the Angel Tree have been dispersed as follows:

\$50 to both Avon and East Avon Fire Companies

\$50 to the Avon Ambulance

\$50 to Joseph's Hammer

We realized about \$800.00 from the Rummage Sale. Thank you to all who provided "stuff" to sell and those who participated.

We moved \$1000 to the Church's General Fund.

Several members visited Temple B'rith Kodesh On March 25th for a review of the book, *The Faith Club* – Conversations between a Jewish, a Muslim, and a Christian Woman. Lunch and a tour of the Temple followed the discussion. About 150 women participated, and we were encouraged to begin a "Faith Club" of our own.

UTO

Gratitude is an attitude of thankfulness. Since we pray, "All things come of Thee, O Lord," isn't it natural to thank God for all he has done for us!

The **United Thank Offering** is one way we can say, "Thank You, Lord."

Did you remember to thank God throughout the freezing, slippery, and bleak winter? Now that spring has arrived, we have many reasons to be thankful – the longer and warmer days, the flights and singing of the beautiful song birds, the budding of trees, and the blooming of flowers. As we look forward to spring, let us also anticipate the May **UTO Spring Ingathering**.

The **UTO** "coins" benefit so many people in so many ways. They "travel" all over this country, throughout the world, and even in our own Diocese. A recent **UTO** grant was awarded to St. Peter's, Geneva, to support their Art Academy.

Continue to place your coins in your "Blue Box" and say a prayer of thanks to God. Pray also for those who have requested **UTO** grants, and ask GOD to bless them and their efforts to further His love.

Sunday **June 1st** will be
Acolyte Recognition Sunday!

Our Acolytes are a treasure for Zion. Their service each Sunday throughout the year adds so much to our worship. A very warm thank you is extended to all acolytes, especially our graduating high school seniors who have been so faithful to us for so many years.

Jean Batzing	Mike Davis
Susan Feller	Mike Davis
Leslie Mack (Sr.)	Michael Meath
Doris Milton	Jeff Phillips
Matt Phillips (Sr.)	Kathryn Riedener
Samantha Riedener	Pat Sapienza

Circle Nursery School

The preschoolers have been noticing the signs of Spring. With the start of the weather changing they begin to learn about Spring. They were excited for St. Patty's Day and went on a Leprechaun Hunt. They all found gold!! In gearing for the Easter Holiday the classes learn and review their letters and numbers (Kk, Ee.) The kids have done some incredibly cute project like kites and bunnies that line the hall. Julie Shutt has been back from maternity leave and the teachers are in full swing with the children. Geneseo has completed all the speech Evaluations and handed back the results. The 3 day class had teachers conferences and the 4 year olds are getting prepared for Kindergarten. Circle is holding the Usborne Book Fair from 3/30-4/3. Both classes will be having Easter parties.

Shannon DiFranco

Bounty in Bottles

Little strokes fell mighty oaks!

Hard to believe, but in the years the Fellers have been returning bottles for the church, over eight hundred dollars has been raised, first for the west window, and now for the organ fund. So, with warm weather coming, after enjoying your bottled (or canned) beverage, remember the church and clean & save your containers, then drop them in the box in the vestibule on Sunday morning.

Thank you,

The Fellers

From the Diocesan Archives

The plant of Zion Church, Avon, was badly damaged by fire on the afternoon of Feb. 19th (1929.) The cause of the conflagration was apparently an overheated furnace. The tile roof with its foundation of tin and smoke filled attic prevented firemen from

getting at the blaze until it was beyond control. The work was further hindered by the extremely cold weather. The Parish House, constructed but a few years ago was practically destroyed and much damage done to the Church itself. Fortunately most of the movable valuables and the records were saved. The loss has been roughly estimated as close to \$30,000 while insurance on the property was very small by comparison.

Food Pantry

The *Food Pantry* is alive and well and very busy. The call for aid decreased a little in February. Fortunately, food supplies at the *Pantry* remain stable at this time.

We would appreciate each church ask **at least** two (2) persons to volunteer for the Easter basket packing. Easter baskets will be prepared at Central Presbyterian Church. Except for the drivers, one need not make a reservation to help; just show up and work will be found for you. The schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, March 31st

Rearrange tables following the Lenten Luncheon; many hands make light work!

Wednesday, April 1st 9:00 A.m.

Groceries will arrive from TOPS Market and placed on tables. Boxes will be labeled and numbered. Boxes for diabetics will be packed.

Thursday, April 2nd, 9:00 A.M.

All remaining boxes will be packed.

Saturday, April 4th

7:00 A.M. Meat will arrive from TOPS.

8:30 A.M. Drivers arrive and deliveries begin.

Persons who wish to deliver baskets should contact Barb Cole at 226-3444.

Happy April Birthdays

1 st	Brenda Mack
2 nd	Doug Phillips
5 th	Tom Sapienza
13 th	Dennis Mack
22 nd	Kathryn Denham

Happy April Anniversary

Kurt & Linda Zobel