



# Views from the Mountain

## From the Rector

*The Reverend Susan R. Ironside*

When I visited cherished friends recently after not seeing them for a few months, their dogs greeted me as if my arrival was the most incredible thing to have happened in the history of the world.

"Oh, thank heavens you are back!" the dogs seemed to say. "We were worried you had left forever. You have been away too long."

They carried on in a lavish fashion, making me feel like a rare, long-awaited and deeply desired companion. Much to my embarrassment, I had brought nothing for them. No treats. No bones. Nothing. I could only stoop down and pet them, and let them be near me. I could only let them welcome me with their passionate greeting. All I could do was let them into my lap and gather them.

And it seemed to be enough for them.

Every year we are issued the same invitation on Ash Wednesday, "return to me with all your heart." (Joel 2:12)

Lent is our annual migration back to our true home, when we return to the watery womb of our baptism, where God claimed us forever.

And that may sound scary, but only if you think of God as some kind of scorekeeper who can't wait to tell you how much you have screwed up. Or if you think of a God who will be impressed if you surrender chocolate, and will decide not to smite you after all.

God is more like my friend's dogs who greeted me with such delight that they could barely contain themselves.

Lent is not a 40-day self-improvement strategy. It is a trip back home, where we have been long awaited and are deeply desired. Some people make this trip by giving something up, or setting some things aside, to clear their focus on the journey back home.

Some embrace new ways of being mindful of God's presence.

As a community we gather for prayer more often, and will be singing Evening Prayer together every Wednesday in Lent. We put aside some of our beautiful things for a few weeks, so we can better focus on the journey back to the baptismal waters that will await us at the Great Vigil of Easter.

Every Lent we are invited to return to the God who loves us, not because we can fool God, but because we know we can't. Lent is not about changing God's mind about us, but about changing our minds about God. There are many ways to do that, some silly, some serious. Give something up. Take something on. The goal is the same: return to the One who has never stopped longing for you, and could never bear to give you up. You can come empty handed, even, and the greeting will still be the same, as if your arrival is the most incredible thing to have happened in the history of the world, God waiting to burst into your lap, declaring, "Thank heavens you are back! You have been away for too long!"

*Susan +*

Don't forget to *spring ahead*  
on  
Sunday, March 12th!  
Be sure to set those clocks  
one hour ahead!



## WORSHIP NEWS

### WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Thursday at 10:00 am

Please join us in the Parish House Meeting Room from 10 - 11 am each Thursday. All are welcome

### MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at 8:15 am

Please join us every Wednesday in the Parish House Meeting Room from 8:15 am - 9:15 am.

### USHERS NEEDED

Please consider joining this important ministry. Greeting people, distributing bulletins, conveying the sacred elements to the altar, and inviting parishioners to partake of Communion are central to our worship services. No experience needed. To sign-up or for more information contact the office at 908-766-2282 or [office@sjotm.org](mailto:office@sjotm.org).

### 2017 BAPTISM at St. John on the Mountain

We baptize primarily on those dates set aside for baptism, as listed in the Book of Common Prayer. Since the presence of the community of faith is essential for welcoming the newly baptized into the church, baptisms take place in the principal service on the appointed Sunday. Questions about baptism? Please contact the office 908-766-2282 or [office@sjotm.org](mailto:office@sjotm.org).

#### 2017 Dates for Holy Baptism

|                    |       |                           |
|--------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| Saturday, April 15 | 7 pm  | The Great Vigil of Easter |
| Sunday, June 4     | 10 am | The Day of Pentecost      |
| Sunday, Nov 5      | 10 am | All Saints' Sunday        |

### EVENING PRAYER on WEDNESDAYS: *Praying in Lent*

March 8th, March 15th,  
March 22nd, March 29th,  
April 5th

Please join us at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays in Lent (March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5) for Evening Prayer in the Church. We will use a simple musical setting by Marty Haugen called the Holden Evening Prayer. Originally developed for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) it has widely become an ecumenical in use. The service will last about 20 minutes.



## MISSION OUTREACH

### GRACE SOUP KITCHEN

Friday, March 31st  
600 Cleveland Ave, Plainfield, NJ

Grace Soup Kitchen serves 1,000 hot nutritious meals the last five days of each month to the hungry of Plainfield. St. John on the Mountain parishioners help on the last Friday of each month. Join us one Friday as we prepare and serve lunch. The next day scheduled for St. John on the Mountain to serve is on Friday, March 31st from 10 am – 1 pm. The dates for the remainder of 2017 (all Fridays) are: April 28th; May 26th; June 30; July 28th; September 29th; October 27th; December 29th. For more info, email Graham Argent-Belcher at gabelcher@msn.com.

### EASTER HAM COLLECTION

The Outreach Committee is gladly accepting hams every Sunday from the end of March through April 9. Any questions? Contact Sue Kennedy at 908-234-0267

### FOOD PANTRY Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to staff the food pantry Saturdays in April from 9:30 to noon (April 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29). Tasks include interviewing clients, and bagging and distributing food. The pantry is located at the rear of the United Reformed Church, 100 West Main Street in Somerville. This is a great opportunity for families; community service hours will be given. To sign up, please contact Sally Hespe (908) 875-1518 or sallyhespe@aol.com

### ADOPT-A-FAMILY For Easter

Help a struggling family this Easter, by providing an uncooked meal. It's easy! Just buy the makings for a meal, and deliver to your *Adopt-a-Family*. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. For more information, please call Sue Kennedy at 908-234-0267. If there is a particular family that you have been supporting, please let Sue know so that she can inform the Food Bank.

## ST. JOHN'S NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS



Our nursery school has been buzzing with visitors as we offer tours of our nursery school to prospective families. There are still spaces available in our two year-old classes for all ages of twos.

March highlights include an informative visit from a local dentist, a school bus ride to the RVCC Planetarium for our pre-K classes, St. Patrick's day parties, and a special Saturday morning at SJNSN with Dads!

Anyone interested in a school tour and registration information for the 2017-2018 school year, please contact the nursery school director, Jeanne Williams at (908)766-0374 or jwilliams@sjotm.org.



**CHILDREN & YOUTH NEWS****SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY  
& PANCAKE SUPPER**

*Girls prepare pancakes and sausages for the SJOTM Annual Pancake Supper. A big thank you to our parish youth for a successful event!*



*Children decorated the Alleluia Banner during the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Feb. 28th. This banner was "buried" in the church, and it will be hung in Parish Hall on Easter Sunday.*

## Best Wishes as you celebrate your birthday in March

Caroline Zanardi, Juliana DeMarco,  
Gracie Morais, Trevor McKeon, Cydney McGee,  
Caroline Grant, Brigette McGee,  
Sydney Vollmar, Oyinda Emuleomo, and  
Andrew Lippman



We held a successful soup tasting fund-raiser at coffee hour on Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>. There were six different soups to taste and purchase. On Tuesday, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> families enjoyed pancakes and sausages at the annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. All proceeds from both events will be donated to the Food Bank Network of Somerset County.



*A few of the soup cans collected during Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5. All proceeds from the Souper Bowl went to the Food Bank Network of Somerset County.*



*Scene from Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5, 2017*

## CHILDREN & YOUTH NEWS

continued....

### St. John on the Mountain Lenten Campaign for 2017



During Lent this year we will be collecting items for a children's play center to be built by local Girl Scout Troop 60111 at Grace's Kitchen in Plainfield. The following items are needed:

- coloring books
- crayons
- colored pencils
- simple crafts
- puzzles
- books
- dolls
- action figures
- foam floor puzzle mat
- storage bins

Items can be dropped off each Sunday in the chapel or during the week in the church office. The last day for collection will be Easter Sunday, April 16th.

## MUSIC NEWS



On Sunday, February 26th, we dedicated our new piano to the glory of God and in loving memory of Jean F. Byrnes. We were honored to worship with members of the Byrnes family, and Mr. Jennings made the gorgeous instrument sound sublime. We are most grateful for such a generous gift!

**COMMUNITY/FELLOWSHIP NEWS****POTLUCK SUPPERS on  
WEDNESDAYS:  
During Lent**

March 8th, March 15th,  
March 22nd, March 29th, & April 5th

On Wednesday evenings at 6 pm, the community will gather for simple potluck supper followed by Evening Prayer in the Church. Bring a dish to share for supper, and come and allow the word of God to wash over you, and pray with the assembled community, as our ancestors did before us. Members of our community will preside at this simple service of prayer.

**LADIES' LUNCHEON**  
Thursday, March 16th

All are invited to the *Ladies' Luncheon* on Thursday, March 16th at noon at the home of Gerry-Jo Cranmer, 320 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville. Please bring a sandwich; beverages and dessert will be provided. We hope to see you there. RSVP to Gerry-Jo at 908-766-0199.

**PRAYER LIST**

If you would like to have someone added to the Prayer List, please call 9098-766-2282 or email the Parish Office [office@sjotm.org](mailto:office@sjotm.org).

**MEN'S LUNCHEON**  
Thursday, March 2nd

Please join us on Thursday, March 2nd at 12:15 pm at the Morristown Club at 27 Elm Street in Morristown. The luncheons are open to members of the parish and their guests. The favor of a reply is requested in order that a place may be reserved for you at the table, but last minute drop-ins are always welcome. Hope to see you there. For more information please contact Alan Enos at 908-234-1321 or [aenos4@verizon.net](mailto:aenos4@verizon.net).

**PARISH DIRECTORY**

If you would like a Parish Directory, please stop by the Parish House. Directories can be found on a clipboard posted on the bulletin board. To have a digital copy sent to you call the office 908-766-2282 or email [office@sjotm.org](mailto:office@sjotm.org)

**March Birthday Wishes  
to**

*Mother Susan, Bob Kielley,  
Mary Mason, Diane Morash,  
Dottie Vernimb, and Marion White*



**SIMPLE SUPPERS  
KICK-OFF PARTY**

Sunday March 5th

# Simple Suppers

## SIMPLE SUPPERS SIGN-UP

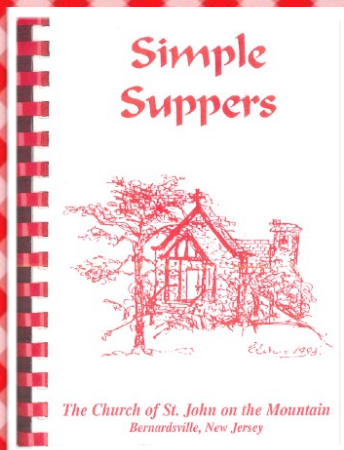
### Simple Suppers - The Tradition Continues

The Fellowship Committee is delighted to announce that we are bringing back Simple Suppers. For those who are unaware, this is a voluntary fellowship activity that is designed to welcome new parishioners into our community and give all parishioners an opportunity to get to know each other in a fun, informal setting. After everyone who desires to participate has signed up, the Fellowship Committee will divide the list into groups of 8-10 people.

Simple Suppers will start with a kick-off party held in the Parish Hall on Sunday, March 5th immediately following the 10:00 am service. At this event, everyone will break into their groups to schedule dinner or lunch get-togethers at the homes of group members. In past years, groups have arranged about three get-togethers.

Sign up on our website, [www.sjotm.org](http://www.sjotm.org). For those who do not use the Internet, we will also have a sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board next to the Parish Hall.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Zanardi at [908-256-1136](tel:908-256-1136) or [paulzanardi@gmail.com](mailto:paulzanardi@gmail.com).



## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN ON THE MOUNTAIN

379 Mount Harmony Road  
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908-766-2282

### PARISH STAFF

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Ed Burke  
*Sexton*

FOR DAILY UPDATES AND INFORMATION,  
DON'T FORGET TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.sjotm.org](http://www.sjotm.org)  
and be sure to *like us* on facebook



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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