

THE SHIELD

Holy Week & Easter 2021



THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Family and Friends of St George's,

It is probably impossible to write something that is meaningful for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday – all in one short message. Therefore, I will not try!

Instead, allow me to tell you how the events that we will mark in the coming days are all part of the eternal, all-encompassing message of God's love for all that God has created.

Sometimes, it seems that there is a sort of competition between Christmas and Easter for the title of "most important event for Christians." I want to put an end to that line of thinking right now. Christmas and Easter are not two events – connected or separate. They are both parts of the same reality – the reality called "love incarnate" or God's love in flesh and blood.



Some Christian denominations place great emphasis on what is called "substitutionary atonement." Those fancy theological words simply mean that Jesus' death was required in order to relieve you and me of the punishment that we deserve for all our sins – and in fact, for every sin of every human being since the first, and on into the future, until the day that Jesus comes again in glory. In my view, that kind of theology is far too limiting – it makes us think that the only thing that matters is that God was so angry with us that we would have been condemned to eternal death (or hell, depending on which passages of scripture you choose), and that the only way God could possibly find to forgive or redeem us was to send Jesus to die on the cross in our place.

In case you haven't looked, you will not find those words in our Catechism. It's not that we don't recognize Jesus' sacrifice or admit that we come from a long line of sinners – no, it's that we see a greater purpose, a more important reality in all the events of God's long relationship with humankind – a reality we call God's Grace.

What you will find is a reminder that, above all, God is love – love that embraces every sinner and offers each of them a chance to become a child of God.

From the beginning of time – or the Big Bang, if you wish to call it that – God has loved you and me. Yes, I mean long before we existed – in fact, long before the universe, stars, galaxies, planets, plants, animals, and human beings existed. Creation was God's primeval act of unconditional love. And the Incarnation of God in Jesus was the most visible act of that love in human existence.

Let's be clear: there was never a time – NEVER A TIME – when God did not love. Oh, I know the Old Testament seems to say a lot about God being angry, and punishing, and destroying, and causing all sorts of misery. But those passages simply represent the human understanding

of what was happening. And God always reveals God's self to us humans in terms we can relate to, of how we would behave, or what we would think.

Jesus appeared among us at a particular point in eternity. At that moment, God's love became *incarnate* (became flesh and blood). But Jesus' birth (incarnation), life, miracles, sermons, healings, teaching, suffering, death, and resurrection are all equal signs of God's love for us. No single moment or event in Jesus' life—or before or after—is any greater proof of God's love than any of the others.



Jesus taught us a new way of thinking about God—a Way of Love. God is love, and all things are loved by God. There is nothing that God does not love—not even the meanest, most evil, destructive, hateful, or terrible thing we can imagine. It is simply not in God's nature to hate. God laments our sins. God regrets the evil that we do or allow to be done in our names. God wants us to repent and return, to ask forgiveness of those we have trespassed against, and to tell God how sorry we are for our sinful choices. Our sins are an obstacle standing between us and a more perfect relationship with God, even in this incarnational universe of love. We sin and fall short of the love of God, and we must deal with that in our lives by doing all we can to live in love with God and our neighbor.

But God's love is not dependent on any of that. God does not love us when we're good and hate us when we sin. Put simply, God loves sinners, and we are all sinners. There is nothing we can do to make God stop loving us. But we can stop loving God. We can reject and deny all that God's love means in our lives. And even then, the grace of the Holy Spirit calls us back again.

Let us never forget that specific days—particular events in the life of Our Lord—are merely signposts along the eternal path of love that God has taken—in creating, in forgiving, in restoring, in redeeming, in blessing... and in loving us.

May God bless and keep us all!

Father Tom +

A Meditation by Father Richard Rohr, OFM

Jesus spoke these things, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, "Father... I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in me through their word; that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me."
John 17:1, 20–23

THIS BEAUTIFUL PRAYER for union is from Jesus' Last Supper address to his disciples. It might be the highest level of mystical teaching in the entire New Testament. Here Jesus connects everything: he in his Father, the Father in you, you in God, God in him, God in the world, and you in the world. It's all one.

I think this is the core realization of every saint. Saints see things in their connectedness and wholeness. They don't see things as separate. It's all one, and yet like the Trinity, it is also different.

What you do to another, you do to yourself; how you love yourself is how you love your neighbor; how you love God is how you love yourself; how you love yourself is how you love God. How you do anything is how you do everything.



Faith is not simply seeing things at their visible, surface level, but recognizing their deepest meaning. To be a person of faith means we see things – people, animals, plants, the earth – as inherently connected to God, connected to ourselves, and therefore, absolutely worthy of love and dignity. That’s what Jesus is praying for: that we could see things in their unity, in their connectedness.

I will go so far as to say that the more we can connect, the more of a saint we are. The less we can connect, the less transformed we are. If we can’t connect with people of other religions, classes, or races, with our “enemies” or with those who are suffering, we’re not very converted. Truly transformed individuals are capable of a universal recognition. They see that everything is one.

We don’t “go to” heaven; we learn **how to live in heaven now**. And no one lives in heaven alone. Either we learn how to live in communion with other people and with all that God has created, or, quite simply, we’re not ready for heaven. If we want to live an isolated life, trying to prove that we’re better than everybody else or believing we’re worse than everybody else, we are already in hell. We have been invited – even now, even today, even this moment – to live consciously in the communion of saints, in the Presence, in the Body, in the Life of the eternal and eternally Risen Christ. This must be an almost perfect way to describe salvation itself.

A PRAYER FOR GOOD FRIDAY

By Karen Barber | April 16, 2014

DEAR JESUS, we come to you in prayer on this day we call “Good” Friday, remembering the terrible day when you were tried, convicted, mocked, beaten, and crucified. We remember how you died and were laid into your tomb amid the cries of incredible grief, fear, shock, and sorrow of those who knew and loved you.

Instead of jumping ahead in our thoughts to the happy ending, where you arose from the dead on Easter morning, help us to pause and meditate today on the great sacrifice, suffering, and pain that you endured for our sake and for the sake of the whole world. Even in our

greatest times of suffering, we realize we have never suffered as you did. You deserved life, honor, and praise. Yet you willingly chose death, dishonor, and ridicule in order to fulfill God's will.

You could have opened your mouth, and with just a few words you could have answered your accusers and proven them to be frauds, hypocrites, and liars, yet you remained silent. You could have called upon legions of angels, and yet you submitted your back to cruel scourges. You could have called down fire from heaven, yet you allowed the blood to flow from your hands and side and feet onto the wood of the cross. You could have called for a fiery chariot like Elijah's and been taken up into heaven, yet you chose that your lifeless body be taken down and placed in a cold, dark tomb.

My Jesus, I am overwhelmed by the depth of your love for me. May I sit in silence and allow myself to look with an open heart toward the cross. Help my knowledge of your suffering and crucifixion move from my mind into my heart. Help me to feel the tension between great sacrifice and great love, between suffering and redemption, between death and life, between the fleeting and the eternal. Help me to experience the unseen force of Grace and obedience and weep with both joy and sorrow at the great cost of your love for me.

Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. Amen.

FATHER TOM'S BIBLE STUDY



Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father." [John 20:16-17 NRSV]

"Do not hold on to me." The King James Version says, "do not cling to me." Another translation says "do not hold me back." And yet another has, "do not touch me."

These are strange warnings for Easter Sunday—a day on which we recognize and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Of all the days in the year, this is the one when we most want to hang on to him, to cling to him and to the promise of eternal life, to touch him—and convince ourselves that he is real, and really alive again. And yet, Jesus' words to Mary and to us say just the opposite: "let go of me." How are we to understand this?

One clue may be in the words that Jesus chose. They were not original. In the forests around Rome, white stags wore a collar saying, in Latin, "Do not touch me, I belong to Caesar." To hunt them meant arrest and death.

Jesus may have meant, "Do not touch me, I belong to God now." Perhaps, after the resurrection, Jesus fully realized that his role had changed. He had been a teacher, a healer, a charismatic leader who attracted many disciples. The events of Good Friday ended all that. Jesus the man was no more. The teacher, the healer, the leader was no more.

Now, Jesus was the Risen Lord. By the awesome power of God he had risen from the dead—not as a sideshow trick, but simply in order to make it possible for us to do so, too. Mary could have, and may have, touched Jesus the man—serving him, feeding him, even embracing him. But she could not touch Jesus the Savior—it was not the way that God meant it to be.

A lot of people come to church on Christmas and Easter because they feel that those two days bring us close to the most important mysteries of the Christian faith: God actually became a human being, and then gave his life as a sacrifice to redeem all of humanity.

At such times, we might be content to just sit and gaze upon the beauty of the day: the Christmas tree, the Nativity crèche, the lights, the Easter flowers. If we are brave (or no one is looking), we might even come close and touch some of the decorations on the tree or arrange the figures in the crèche. We might bend near and smell the fragrance of the lilies.

In other words, you and I naturally feel the need to have physical contact with these things, because they represent mysteries we cannot grasp. If we stop and think deeply, we probably have a lot of unanswered questions. How could the omnipotent God of all the universe be born to a human woman? How could someone who died of torture and cruelty, whose dead body was put in a tomb, now be alive again? Perhaps the only way to be sure that these things really happened is to make physical contact with them, to touch them.

But Jesus is clear—to Mary and to us—“Do not touch me. Do not cling to me. Do not hold on to me—let me go.” And that is perhaps the hardest thing to do.

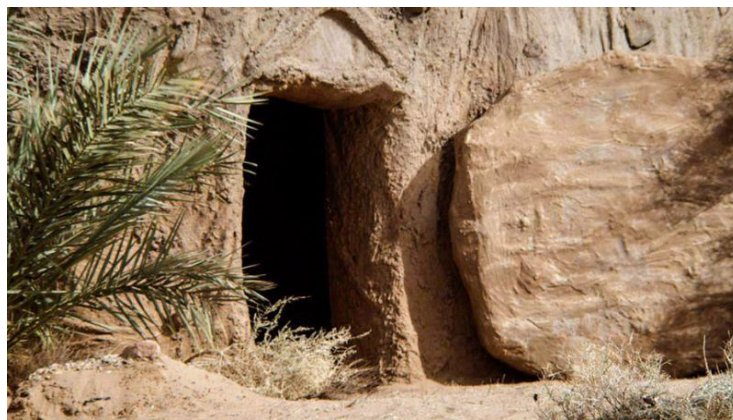
One of the greatest temptations that Christians have faced throughout the centuries is to want to get away from it all and just “be” in the presence of God. Thousands of monks and nuns have dedicated their entire lives to doing just that. And while we admire and even venerate some of them, most of us know instinctively that it’s not the way for us to be a Christian.

Most of the people we call saints did not shy away from the world. Mother Teresa went to India and devoted her life to people dying of leprosy, hunger, and disease. Saint Dominic left the comfort of a wealthy family and a cushy job as a bishop’s assistant, to preach in the streets to people who were hungry to hear the word of God. He even risked his life by preaching to people who were opposed to his brand of Christianity.

I think that’s what Jesus is saying to you and me today. “Let me go. I have other work to do, and I can’t do it with you clinging to me. But also, let yourselves go. Get out of this church and into the world. There are people who need us, people who are hurting, hungry, cold, sick, suffering.”

Jesus didn’t come among us—he did not rise from the dead—so that we would have a pretty picture to look at forever. He didn’t live and die so that we would have something to sit and contemplate. Jesus was a real man. He lived a real life. He died a real death. And he went on to live forever so that we could do so, too.

Don’t touch me. Don’t hold me back. Instead, come with me. Join me in the work that needs to be done.



Christ
is
Risen!

Easter Blessings to one and all!

May our Risen Lord bless you with faith, hope, and love.
May you and your loved ones feel the warmth of this community,
and take it with you wherever you go and to whomever you meet.

MOUNT SAVAGE FOOD PANTRY

The food pantry will be distributing gift cards for the upcoming Easter Holiday.

If you know of anyone in need of food or a gift card, please let Karen Bonner or Sharon Logsdon know by calling the office or [emailing](#), and they will send this information to the Pantry.

THE WOMEN OF ST GEORGE'S – KAREN BONNER

Happy Spring everyone! The Women of St. George's will be having their first meeting of the year on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 7:00 PM in the parish hall dining room. All women of the parish are invited to attend.

We will have our election of officers and decide on our yearly project. We look forward to seeing everyone.

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN – DEE STALLINGS

This has been a very strange year for St. George's because of the Covid 19 Pandemic. Father Tom Hudson became our priest in charge one year ago in May. We were able to have our usual Sunday services for a very short time, before we had to start having services with only enough people in attendance to cover the various jobs needed to conduct a service. These services were live streamed and also recorded for later viewing by our members, friends, and family. Just learning how to get these services out to the public was interesting. Thanks to our Junior Warden, Jim Rice, this was accomplished with only a few glitches. The services now run smoothly and are enjoyed by many. We are now allowed to have public services again and are hoping our congregation will feel comfortable enough to return to our beautiful building. The live streamed services will continue for anyone to view who wishes to.

In my capacity as organist at St. George's, I am happy to report that we can now have music coverage for those Sundays I am unable to be in church—Kate Tummino, a former piano student of mine, has offered to fill in for me. She has already covered two services and has done a magnificent job. Thank you Kate!

I give my thanks to Fr. Tom, Jim Rice, Ken Preston (cameraman), and our lectors, who rotate Sundays, for your loyal service to St. George's by your attendance and help in keeping us available to our members during this pandemic emergency. Here's hoping and praying that we will be able to stay open for public worship in the future.

FROM THE JUNIOR WARDEN – JIM RICE

Well, it looks like we made it through the winter with only three major clean-up snow days. No facility issues that I know of. We did take on a new person to remove snow at the end of the season: Marcus Delozier. Hopefully this will work out better for us.

With Spring sprung, we will be starting our monthly work days beginning in March. The work days fall on the third Saturday of each month with a 9:00 AM start time, only lasting until noon. We have flower beds to keep clean/weeded and trash to remove from the grounds, rain drains and ditches to keep open. It looks like we have some leaning tombstones that need attention with some fill added under them. We will see and deal with as many of them as we can. If you think or see something needing attention, please let us know about it. If there is something you would like to tackle or do and need materials, please let me know. I realize our group is small but we have been able to get lots done on these work days. Any help is appreciated.

EASTER FLOWER MEMORIALS

If you would like to dedicate a donation toward the flowers on the altar for Easter, please send your information to the parish office by email (admin@stgeorgesmtsavage.org) or leave a voicemail at the office (301-264-3524), no later than Wednesday, May 31st.

PLEASE NOTE: If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, rather than postal mail, please call or email the office.

PARISH & LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- March 20 *Parish Work Day 9:00 AM til Noon*
- March 28 The Sunday of the Passion [Palm Sunday] – 9:30 AM (*begin in Parish Hall*)
- April 1 Maundy Thursday – 7:00 PM
- April 2 Good Friday – Stations of the Cross – 7:00 PM
- April 4 The Day of Resurrection [Easter Sunday] – 9:30 AM
- April 11 Second Sunday of Easter [Thomas Sunday] – 9:30 AM
- April 17 *Parish Work Day 9:00 AM til Noon*
- April 18 Feast-day of Saint George [transferred from April 23] – 9:30 AM
- April 19 *The Women of St George's – 7:00 PM in the parish hall dining room*
- April 25 Fourth Sunday of Easter [Good Shepherd Sunday] – 9:30 AM
Vestry Meeting – after the service



NOTE: All services are broadcast live on [our Facebook page](#) and also recorded for viewing at any time.



Information from Our Parish Nurse – Sharon Logsdon

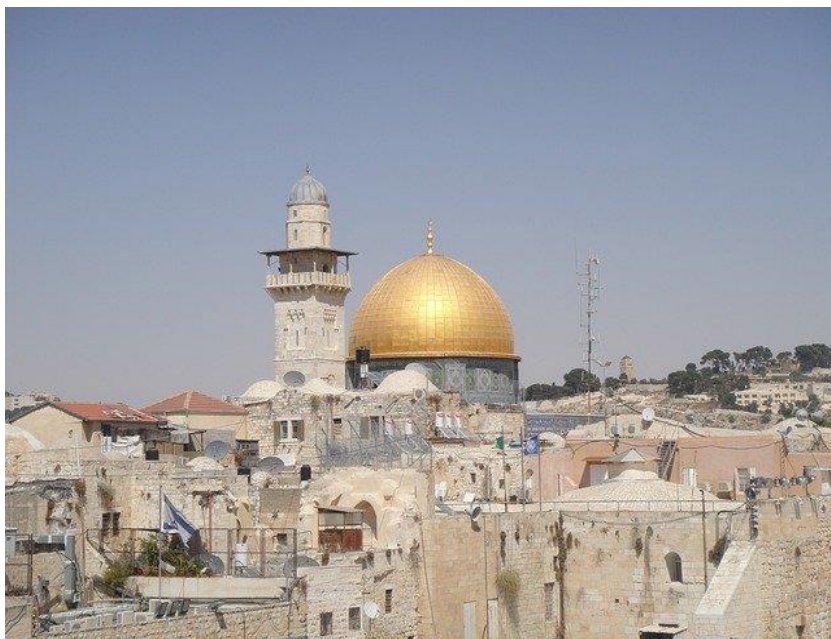
COVID 19 updated Allegany County has currently vaccinated 19.2% (over 13,000) of the population and (over 8,000) 12.2% of those have received their second vaccination. Please continue to wear your mask, social distancing, and handwashing. The congregation of St. George's has been very fortunate that we have had no positive cases of COVID.

Please remember all who have been confined to their homes during this long year with the pandemic. I am sure they would appreciate a phone call or visit when possible.

As we go forward into the coming spring and summer please continue to maintain good health practices. If I can be of any help regarding medications or doctors appointments please let me know.



THE ANNUAL GOOD FRIDAY OFFERING



The history of the Good Friday Offering reaches back to 1922 when, in the aftermath of World War I, The Episcopal Church sought to create new relationships with and among the Christians of the Middle East. From these initial efforts, which focused on a combination of relief work and the improvement of ecumenical and Anglican relations, the Good Friday Offering was created.

Through the years many Episcopalians have found the Good Friday Offering to be an effective way to express their

support for the ministries of the four dioceses of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Pastoral care, education and health care continue to be primary ministries through which the reconciling spirit of the Christian faith serves all in need. Participation in this ministry is welcome. The generous donations of Episcopalians help the Christian presence in the Land of the Holy One to be a vital and effective force for peace and understanding among all of God's children.

This year, the goal of the offering is to raise \$100,000, which will go entirely to benefit the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Jordan. Your offerings on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be dedicated to this purpose this year.

Saint George's Prayer List

Joshua Abbot
Ruth Beal
Porter Beard
Rev. Harold Bishop Jr
John Bridges
Rusty Bridges
Shirley Bridges
Bud Bridges
Dennis Carder
Emily Carnell
Jerome Cassidy
Ellen Jenkins Davis
Dawn Downey
Cindy Emmerick
Robert Flynn
Clarence Finzel
Rita Frankenberry
George Frankenberry Jr.
Charles Glass
Darrell & Mary Sue Glass
Jeff Hall
Evelyn Hausrath
Angela Hill
Harvey Hogamier
Tammy Kern
Tyler Kisamore
Grace Lepley
Carol McCleaf
Diana Michael
Carolyn Monahan
Frank Morgan
Janet Reynard
Henry Snyder
Sandra Swanger
Janie Taccino
Grayson Turano
John J. Watts, Sr



Prayer for the Sick

O God of heavenly powers, by the might of your command you drive away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity: Be present in your goodness with your servants for whom we pray, that their weakness may be banished and their strength restored; and that, their health being renewed, they may bless your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Those Who Care for the Sick

Sanctify, O Lord, those whom you have called to the study and practice of the arts of healing, and to the prevention of disease and pain. Strengthen them by your life-giving Spirit, that by their ministries the health of the community may be promoted and your creation glorified; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Birthdays & Anniversaries



April

Birthdays

Brian Kuhn
 Carole Logue
 Rick Glass
 Gail Kreiger
 Dee Stallings
 Paul Werner
 Jessica Cripps
 Jeff Hall
 Jackson Arthur Imes
 Henry Snyder, Sr.
 Gwen Watts
 Maria Hall
 Father Tom Hudson
 Gracie R. Imes
 Erik Stevenson
 Karen Preston

Anniversaries

Ken & Karen Preston
 Heather & Jeff Lewis
 Becky & Bob Weatherholt

May

Birthdays

Elliott Stallings
 Myrna Lancaster
 Walker Geary
 Vicky Glass
 Kara Tummy
 Sue Hausrath
 Jeff Lewis
 Logan Smith
 Ronald Ellis
 Patti Femi
 Melanie Preston
 Robbie Weatherholt
 Susan Cripps
 Barbara Festerman
 Sam Kreiger
 Krista Barry
 Carla Geary
 J. Daniel Arnold
 Delany Downey
 Olivia Warne
 Beth McConn
 Eva Davis
 Michael Warne

Anniversaries

Robert & Jane Otto
 Carla & Brian Geary
 Patti & Johns Femi
 John & Gwen Watts
 Theresa & Denis Brion

You may purchase the 2021 Parish Calendar of Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Memorials for \$1.50 from the Women of St George's. Please call the office if you would like a calendar mailed to you.

God's Blessings!

Saint George's Episcopal Church
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Mount Savage, Maryland 21545



Contact Information

Links are active in PDF version only

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The Rev Thomas J Hudson, OPA
minister@stgeorgesmtsavage.org
Cell: 301-616-3967

Church Email

admin@stgeorgesmtsavage.org

Web Page

www.stgeorgesmtsavage.org

Mailing Address

PO Box 655
Mt Savage, MD 21545

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

www.episcopalmaryland.org
1-800-443-1399

The Anglican Communion

The Most Rev. and Right Honourable
Justin T. Welby, *105th Archbishop of Canterbury*

The Episcopal Church

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, *27th Presiding Bishop*

The Diocese of Maryland

The Right Rev. Eugene T. Sutton, *14th Bishop of Maryland*

The Right Rev. Robert W. Ihloff,
Assisting Bishop, 13th Bishop of Maryland

Parish Officers, Staff & Volunteers

Dee Stallings	Senior Warden, Organist, Vestryperson (2022) Treasurer of the Women of St George's
Jim Rice	Junior Warden, Worship Leader, Acolyte Leader, Vestryperson (2021)
Ken Preston	Treasurer, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Lynda Folk	Assistant Treasurer, Vestryperson (2021)
Peggy Hess	Registrar, Altar Guild, Eucharistic Visitor, Secretary of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Karen Bonner	Altar Guild Chairperson, President of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson (2022)
Sharon Logsdon	Parish Nurse, Eucharistic Visitor, Parish Secretary
Jeff Hall	Vestryperson (2023)
Karen Preston	Vestryperson (2023), Parish Secretary, Altar Guild