

# the Joyful Noise

of St. James' Episcopal Church

## An Armchair Poet - After Reading Eliot's "Ash Wednesday"

by Jason Dean Runnion

Perhaps "April is the cruellest month;" I, however, have more often dreaded the month of February. What with the amusements of winter having

largely passed; now it is simply cold... Thoughts of dread, then 'dreadful majesty,' bring about thoughts of judgment. To think of dreadful things is no evil, for truly dreadful things do exist... but, neither is it a comfort, except to the perfectly just.

And so it was with a profound sense of gratefulness one year that I discovered beginning the solemn observance of Lent to be just the balm for what unfailingly threatens to ail me during lackluster February, namely a despairing notion that though the year is new, my spirit is too weary ever to attain to the righteousness that is every

Christian's calling. Despair always covers a falsehood. In this case, it is the foolish notion that, given enough time in this body, I might somehow arrive at the point whereupon a 'heart contrite as ashes' would no longer be an appropriate offering to God. Happily, the antidote to such foolishness is available annually at no charge. Ash Wednesday, I am reminded that no matter what I may or may not have thought the preceding 364 days, I will, in the material realm, become again that which I was before I was born - it is an intensely personal acknowledgement of the most universal aspect of being human - it is humiliating - and, it is good for me.

"In 1927 [T.S. Eliot] became a British subject and a member of the Anglican Church, and in 'Ash Wednesday' (1930) and the series of Ariel Poems he developed a

less taut, more lyrical style in which to treat the experience of the discovery of faith." That Mr. Eliot's meditations on the first day of "the holy season of Lent [...]

with its call to prayer, almsgiving, and fasting," should have inspired him to work in what was I surmise for him a freer style of poetics struck me firstly as ironic; after all, we are encouraged to develop discipline during Lent. This conclusion begs a question: Does Lenten discipline indicate only an ascetic constriction of experience?

First things first: we are called to fasting. Fasting first reveals that we already make choices about what we take in response to desire. Our continued



T. S. Eliot

awareness of scarcity is a key to reckoning, after having just celebrated the Nativity and the Epiphany, our persistent need of Christ as Savior, because our dependence on providence parallels our need of grace. The poem begins, "Because I do not hope to turn again." But, why is it I should 'not hope to turn again,' if indeed I "know that time is always time / And place is always and only place / And

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## Editorial Information

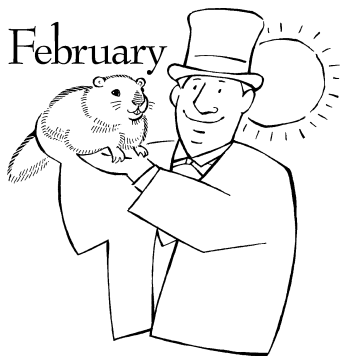
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- African-American History Month
- Boy Scout Sunday, February 8, 2004
- Valentine's Day, February 14, 2004
- Brotherhood/Sisterhood Week, February 15-21, 2004
- Presidents' Day, February 16, 2004
- Transfiguration Sunday, February 22, 2004
- Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2004
- First Sunday in Lent, February 29, 2004

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### *2004 Vestry*

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*The Collect for St. James': "almighty and everlasting God, who didst move Thy servants in times past to establish and sustain this parish of St. James: Grant us grace so to follow their good example that we in our time may fulfill Thy will for us by knowing, loving, and serving Thee and Thy people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen."*

The Mission of St. James Episcopal Church is to be an inclusive community of God's people, appreciative and accepting of each other's gifts, who welcome all who desire to be strengthened, and loved by our Lord through offerings of worship, spiritual growth, service, and pastoral care.



**Astolat**  
Publications

## Evelyn's Epistle

Dear Friends,

On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, I will have been a non-smoker for five years. I remember when I interviewed with the Search Committee, and I told them that I had four personal quirks that were non-negotiable, one of them being that I was a smoker and might never quit. Little did I know that less than a year after I arrived at St. James, I would not only try to quit but would succeed after smoking for 25 years. And like most people who quit smoking, I now have to face the challenge of getting rid of the weight that I gained after I quit.

There's always something that needs to be addressed, be it an unhealthy habit like smoking or a need to develop new habits, like healthy eating. There are the issues of personal disciplines, like prayer or study, of making a conscious decision how to use money or how to use our time.

At the end of this month, on February 25<sup>th</sup>, the season of Lent will begin. Lent for me has always been a good time to begin putting things into a more balanced order in my life. It is the time I am most deliberate in trying to live what I say I believe.

I encourage you to think ahead of time how you might use the time in Lent to bring into balance what you profess and what you do. I know that the support of the church community gives me both the strength to look at those places in my life that are not as they should be and also helps me to be accountable for my own decisions.

The grace of God's love, and the forgiveness which we share in our common life in Christ, and the presence of communal prayer enable all of us to acknowledge sin, to risk change, to celebrate the freedom to live as God's own.

I pray you will prepare to step into Lent and use the gift of this sacred time to recommit yourself to how you live in relationship with God, with others, and with yourself.

In peace and love,  
Evelyn

## Vestry Memories: Celia Smart



The three-year term that I have served on Vestry is not my first and I hope it will not be my last! When we agree to serve (on Vestry or in anything), we expect that time and energy will be required to complete the task. The skills of working with other people and governing according to bylaws

will be learned and finely tuned. While there is no perfect experience, this Vestry term has been close! Our rector, Evelyn, works hard and sets a tone of love and respect for every person in all of our endeavors. It helps me to appreciate the fact that things at the church don't "just happen," but that because of the love and work of others, we can enjoy a glimpse of the kingdom here on earth, in our activities at the church and in the community. Then we are living out the words that we hear every Sunday... "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord."

In 2003, *Master Singers Inc.*, a community chorus based in Stow, Ohio, commissioned organist Jason Metheny to compose a new work for chorus, organ, and string orchestra. The finished work is entitled *Quinque Psalmi* (Five Psalms) and comprises five movements based on texts from the Latin Psalter. Embracing a philosophy of community outreach and education, the chorus has arranged for the composer to visit area high schools to lecture on the compositional process and encourage students to explore their own musical talents.



*Quinque Psalmi* will premiere on Sunday, March 28, 2:00 p.m. at St. Sebastian Church, 476 Mull Avenue, Akron. For concert and ticket information, look for upcoming advertisements in the Akron Beacon Journal or visit the chorale's website at [www.mastersingersinc.org](http://www.mastersingersinc.org).



When you or a member of your family is in the hospital, please let the office know. Due to new privacy regulations, the hospital is no longer allowed to give us that information.

## Reading “Ash Wednesday” (from p.1)

what is actual is actual only for one time / And only for one place...?” Often the desire remains for what should not be. For example, as a poet, I cannot help but to give a nod of assent at the lines “Desiring this man’s gift and that man’s scope;” and, “These matters that with myself I too much discuss,” which are respectively what may become an inordinately consuming desire of what should not be; and, the vanity which is thereby perfected. I do not hope to turn again because I do hope not to turn again. I do hope not to turn again because it is only and always hope that defeats despair. I do not hope to turn again because I have an abiding faith in divine mercy, so that I am now able to a greater extent than ever before not to succumb to “The infirm glory of the positive hour.” Fasting symbolically affirms the possibility of subverting the effects of vain desire to the end of building greater spiritual strength.

Still, I should think we must not behave as though there were a Lenten dispensation of the Pauline directive: “Rejoice in the Lord always.” If self-denial becomes the singular focus of Lenten discipline, then the practice becomes self-centered that originally was purposed to bring about an expanded spiritual understanding. “Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something / Upon which to rejoice.” Which is to say not only that for the sake of my own spiritual well-being am I obliged to consider, even during a period of self-denial, that which precipitates joy; but furthermore that that very fact is occasion for joy because it means that never along the Way are we called to abnegate our expansive nature. And so, to answer the first question: the effort of expanding the province of joy continues in the quietude of Lent.

As it happens, I have found nothing short of ‘steadfast faith’ to be more elusive than ‘quiet joy.’ To experience it, we have only to follow Christ, “In the quiet of the desert:” but, we are out of our depth, praying, for example, that it may please God “to give to all nations unity,” all the while knowing that “neither division nor unity / Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance.” We are all expatriates of Eden; as such, this environment contaminated by evil in which we find ourselves is our common lot. Now, once again, the liturgy of Ash Wednesday recalls to me the ultimate consequence of inevitable sin. Meanwhile, I am faced with what to make of this “Journey to no end.”



between what I know myself to be and the refinement that is “the hope of glory.” Even a person who claims no conscience must concede to the shortcoming of having failed tests of objective truth, and so is unavoidably challenged to respond to the conundrum. (Incidentally, I have yet to meet a happy objectivist.) I noted despair for the dishonest conceit that it is; other times I have been tempted to bitterness, but bitterness is a mockery of the intellect as any good Stoic will tell you. Perhaps only the present moment is certain; but that I cannot abide because I too much enjoy literature; beside, we profess already to knowing the “Conclusion of all that / Is inconclusible;” every week we cite perfection, “and his kingdom will have no end.” Here is another occasion for joy in the seeking, but not an answer. Eventually we could name every trivial response, and then summarily dismiss it, but we are left with the fact of having to admit of the fault to begin. Christ bridges the gap. We certainly were not ignorant of defilement before the time of Christ, but neither did we have the faith to say, “Lord, I am not worthy / but speak the word only.” The most honest and unencumbered response is contrition which must needs precede the most heroic response that is repentance. Ash Wednesday we make a temporal space in which to offer to God “a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart.” During the season of Lent that follows, we attempt to free the soul of some “Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the mind,” that we might hone the faculty that compels us to regard the good over the expedient, that we might better “Redeem / The time.”

The question becomes one of how to bridge the gap

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## Reading “Ash Wednesday” (from p.4)

That God values our regard for the good is endlessly refreshing. I walk in a world where “there is not enough silence / Not on the sea or on the islands, not / On the mainland, in the desert or the rain land;” perhaps the best I can hope for in terms of righteousness is the belief and telling that God values our regard for the good; everything else is a matter of resolving to be better than I am. “This is the time of tension between dying and birth.” Nevertheless, I am resolved to shed such complacency as I am able... to “be shaken and reply.

“Blessèd sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden,  
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood  
Teach us to care and not to care  
Teach us to sit still  
Even among these rocks,  
Our peace in His will  
And even among these rocks  
Sister, mother  
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,  
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.”



**OUTREACH**

Members of St. James are to be congratulated on their increased involvement in community outreach. We provided meeting space for Twelve-Step programs and hosted the Blessing of the Animals and the spring and fall Brown Bag Concerts in support of the Startzman Free Clinic.

We were Bell Ringers for the Salvation Army, regularly collected food for People to People Ministries and held a rummage sale that provided low cost/no cost items to those in need. New programs sponsored this year included a picnic for Meals Together (soup kitchen), a Ton of Love food drive (2,618 pounds collected) for People to People and Meals Together and the distribution of books and magazines to Glendora.



Please add your name to the sign up sheets on the bulletin board for greeters and Coffee Hour hosts/hostesses.



## The Editor's Bit

For this month's *Editor's Bit*, I decided to see what weird and wonderful things were going on during my birthday. As you might expect, tales of the bizarre are easy to find if you have access to the Internet, and yours truly is something of an Internet junky. Only this week I was completing an online survey that included the question “How many hours per week to do access the Internet?” Now that's

tricky because I have a cable modem at home and a local network connection at work, ensuring I am connected at all times. I regular have streaming radio at home and check my work e-mail every 15 minutes. So, when I put down 300 hours, I wasn't sure whether I was even close to correct or about to get a call from “Internet Anonymous” – “Hi, my name's Russell and I use the Internet.”

Anyway, I am beginning to drift, which is a symptom of prolonged Internet use. How many of you who use an web browser have found yourself clicking on a link to another site, then another link, then another, until you're reading an article about penguin courtship rituals or drive-through ATMs for the blind? The worldwide web is actually designed for the grasshopper mind. Click. Jump. Click. Jump. Click. Jump. On and on it goes until you drop the mouse or your computer freezes through overuse.

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## Vestry Memories: Pat Watson



As I reach the end of my three-year term on Vestry at St. James, my recollections and reflections are numerous. The one most significant lesson I've learned is that there *are* Angels among us! Our relatively small congregation has a number of individuals who, again and again, “step up to the plate” when a need is demonstrated. When there appears to be

no easy way for the parish to meet that need, these individuals and families give generously, whether the gift is monetary or a gift of property or self. The St. James community is truly a dynamic group of individuals who, working together, accomplish amazing things.

## Vestry Memories: Alan Kiefer

This was my third time as a vestry person and I found it to be the mellowest time yet. Good senior and junior wardens made things especially enjoyable. Serving with Evelyn is always a pleasure. Vestry people were very committed to improving St. James and our retreats enabled us to get to know one another better. St. James seems to be growing, expanding, and settling down all at once. Stronger fellowship, a fantastic choir, and new outreach visions paint a bright future for St. James. We seem to have weathered the storm of a national controversy and I am proud that we have identified ourselves as an inclusive church.



## MEN'S RETREAT

There will be a men's retreat at the Christian Children's Home, just north of town, March 26-28. Cost will be \$50 for the weekend, plus the shared cost of meals. Contact Damon Hickey for further information.

St. James Women's Retreat will be held October 8-10, 2004, at Loyola of the Lakes. Please mark your calendars NOW. Further information will be out shortly or call Janice E. Miller at (330) 262-1166.



All women are invited to the next retreat meeting 2/12/04, parish hall, 7 p.m.

## February Birthdays



2	Josh Wilburn	15	Mary Burns
4	Maxine Hayes	18	Jackie Kiefer
5	Linda Peterson	19	Delainey Johnson
7	Travis Kraker		Audrey Thomas
	Mary Lou Nuzum		Marilyn Blanchard
9	Katie Cross		Anderson
10	Denny Brayer		Stephanie Perrone
12	Alice Bunting	23	Sarah Miller
14	Joan Skelly		John Strong
		25	Susan Anderson
			Marie Miller
		27	Kim Watkins
		28	Mark Kraker

## February Anniversaries



2/4/89	Bob and Lori Varga
2/9/64	Hal and Roberta Looney

## Altar Flowers



The cost for flowers is \$40 plus tax for two arrangements. You are welcome to share dates with another family. If you wish to donate, please sign the calendar in the North Street Entrance. Flowers are ordered by Karin Harriman, altar guild directress, from Com-Patt-ibles, who sends a bill to the parishioner. If you have special instructions, please indicate it on the calendar or give Karin a call at 262-5980.

Feb 1	Jane Richardson in memory of her husband William.
Feb 8	Pete and Margo Miller in celebration of the birthday of their daughter Vanessa.
Feb 15	Shirley Buytendyk in celebration of the birthday of her grand-daughter Krysten.
Feb 22	Martha Dutton in memory of her husband Horace.
Feb 29	Lent - no flowers.

If you would like to provide flowers for the Sunday services, the 2004 calendar is posted in the North St. entrance.



## Exercise: A Gift To Yourself And Your Family

*from Ruth Brown*

In February we celebrate St. Valentine's Day as well as recognize American Heart month.

### A Faith Perspective on Exercise

There are many great reasons to care for ourselves by exercising. The first reason that comes to mind, is that **God encourages us to take care of our physical bodies in a responsible way** (1Cor.6:19). Such a responsible lifestyle includes a healthy diet, exercise, a balance of work and leisure, and stress management. At the same time, we must guard against our lifestyle choices becoming an end in and of themselves. Care of our bodies is important and should be done out of thankfulness to God.

### A Research Perspective on Exercise

New polls are reporting that between 40-50% of Americans are exercising on a regular basis, but many of these persons don't exercise at a level benefiting their hearts. Of those who do not exercise, 51% report it is because they don't have time. Many studies have shown that regular vigorous exercise helps delay the start or severity of many chronic diseases, in addition to helping people feel more fit, more in control and more energetic. Exercise is a gift you can give yourself and your family.

### Exercise Guidelines for God's People

All of us need assistance occasionally to live healthy lifestyles. Listed below are some suggestions for working exercise into a Christian lifestyle, if I can be of help in any way, please contact me. May God bless your efforts

- Commit your health and lifestyle choices to the Lord and ask for His strength to make and live out these choices.
- Consider exercise as one part of an overall plan of stewardship and aim for balance in the physical and psychosocial dimensions as they relate to your relationship with Christ.
- Develop an exercise plan that is do-able, fun and convenient.
- Set realistic exercise/fitness goals and record your daily progress

- Set aside a consistent time for exercise at least 3 times per week
- Start slow and gradually build up your program and stamina
- Share your plan with someone else and employ them as a prayer partner and support person
- Remind yourself of the physical, emotional and spiritual blessings of an active life
- Enjoy living an active and healthy life with God's blessings!!



At St. James, there are two different ways to request intercessory prayers for yourself or for others: through inclusion in the **Prayers of the People** or on the **Prayer Chain**. Everyone is always welcome to ask for either or both forms of prayer, but a separate request needs to be made for each. Prayer requests normally remain on either list for a one month period, unless you specify otherwise, after which you may ask that they be renewed.

**Prayers of the People** are part of the Sunday morning worship services and are included in the Sunday bulletin. To add someone who is sick, has a special need, or has entered into new life, you may post a request on the Prayer Board at the back of the church using the form provided there; or you may ask Evelyn or make a request through the church office.

The **Prayer Chain** is a ministry offered by a group of St. James volunteers ("Prayer Warriors") who pray individually each day for each person for whom a prayer request has been made to the Prayer Chain. You may request prayers for yourself or for someone else by contacting Prayer Chain Coordinator Mary Hickey ([maryhickey@earthlink.net](mailto:maryhickey@earthlink.net) or 330-262-7059), Evelyn, or the church office. If desired, requests may be specified as "Confidential."

Last month I discussed the online course, “The Search for Jesus: A Provocative Look at Who He Was and What He Did.” Three of the articles that have been posted since then raise basic issues about interpreting the Bible. In “The Mighty Deeds of Jesus,” Episcopalian and Jesus Seminar member Marcus Borg says that, because other people, including people in our time, have experienced paranormal healings, he believes that Jesus also performed such healings and exorcisms. But he rejects what he calls “nature miracles,” including “such stories as walking on the sea, stilling a storm, multiplying loaves and fish, and changing water into wine.” Were he to accept these stories, he says, he would be elevating “Christianity above all other faiths by saying that God has acted in this tradition as God has never acted anywhere else. It would also mean that God acted in the past very differently from how God acts in the present, which violates the principle that God is never-changing.”

But why assume that God doesn’t perform nature miracles anymore? Jesus himself told his followers that they would do deeds even greater than his, and the Acts of the Apostles says that they did. The Orthodox and Catholic churches have long believed that miracles still happen, although they have been skeptical about particular miracles. At least in the Catholic Church, this belief-in-principle, skepticism-in-practice ensures that miracles are confirmed before they’re accepted. But Borg simply doesn’t believe that God intervenes directly in human affairs, as the biblical writers did. Instead, he sees God as some sort of mystical force within and behind all creation, accessible to us all, but especially to Jesus.

Retired Episcopal bishop John Shelby Spong takes Borg one step further in “Resurrection—Myth or Reality?” The title reveals Spong’s bias that something cannot be both myth and reality. He asks, “Does anyone really think...that a physical resuscitation of a body dead for three days is actually possible? Would anyone believe it if someone today made that claim? If it is not possible

today, can we seriously argue that it was ever possible?” So why would anyone make such a claim today? “To protect their power,” says Spong. That’s why, he says, “leaders” used the Bible to argue for the divine right of kings; to suppress Galileo’s discovery that the earth revolved around the sun; to discredit Darwin’s theory of evolution; to claim that droughts and plagues were God’s judgments; to defend slavery, segregation, and apartheid; to keep women second-class citizens; and to oppress gay and lesbian people. According to Spong, because “the Bible was wrong” in all of these instances, it “might also be wrong about the literal details of

Easter.” In fact, he says directly that the Bible *is* wrong about the literal details of Easter: “An angel did not descend...A deceased man did not walk out...The risen Jesus did not walk, talk, eat, teach...”

In a response to Spong, “The Resurrection vs. the Revisionists,” Tom Bethell argues that, if anyone was “wrong” in the case of Galileo, Darwin, slavery, women’s status, gay rights, etc., it was those interpreting the Bible, not the Bible itself. By trying to forge a link between belief in the resurrection of Jesus and how people have used or misused the Bible throughout history, Bethell says, Spong is really trying “to represent his own moral disagreement with the Bible as factual error within it.” Bethell concludes, “The truth is that Jesus—his life, his teachings, his

resurrection—is difficult for us to accept. But we must do so.”

At the risk of trespassing on Richard Figge’s territory as *The Joyful Noise* film reviewer, I think that Tim Burton’s new film, *Big Fish*, is relevant to this discussion. *Big Fish* is about a terminally-ill man who has spent his life telling “whoppers” about his experiences. His estranged son returns home to seek reconciliation with his father. The son wants to know what “really happened” in his father’s life because, he believes, the unadorned facts will enable him to glimpse who his

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## Big Fish

The feelings you take with you after viewing Tim Burton's **Big Fish** may depend in large measure on the expectations you bring with you to the theater. The script by John August, from a novel by Daniel Wallace, tells the story of a father and son who have been estranged from one another for some time. The father, Edward Bloom (Albert Finney), is an inveterate teller of tall tales about his life. His son Will (Billy Crudup), entranced by these stories as a boy, has heard them all a thousand times, can tell them word for word, and the old man now seems to him a self-centered bore. What is behind the lies? Who is his father really? It seems to the son that they never really talked.

But now Edward is dying, and Will's mother Sandra (Jessica Lange) calls him home from far away. Now there will be a confrontation and a last chance to find out who the man really is.

The film was warmly recommended to me, and I braced myself for a long, hard evening of stark realism and emotional trauma, perhaps leading to painful truths and some kind of redemption for the central characters.

What awaited me instead was a loving, intriguing, sometimes elusive, often funny, and always life-affirming tale about family mythologies, legends, and the imaginative stories we tell to make sense of our lives and relationships.

Will works as a journalist for an American news agency in Paris. When he comes home, he brings his beautiful French wife Josephine (Marion Cotillard), a photographer. Suddenly Edward has a new audience, and she is enchanted by his stories. It is also the filmmaker's opportunity to take us back into the fabulous past, with Ewan McGregor as young Edward and Alison Lohman as young Sandra.

To miss the playfulness of the film would be to miss the sense of the story. At one level, the big fish is a legendary catfish that swallowed Edward's wedding ring, which is recovered when Edward wrestles with the fish

again at the time of Will's birth. At the beginning of the film, we are told in voiceover, "Some fish can't be caught. It's not that they're bigger or faster than other fish; they're just touched by something extra." The big fish of the title is also, and most importantly, Edward himself. That "something extra," whether of fact or imagination, sets him apart and makes him special.

As a boy in a small Alabama town, he excelled in whatever he did and soon found he didn't want to be a big fish in a small pond. We see his encounter with a witch (Helen Bonham Carter) whose eye reveals the manner of death of the beholder. He rescues his town from a giant (Matthew McGrory), and setting out into the world he visits a mysterious town called Spectre, which may be Heaven, but leaves again and joins the circus, meets the girl of his dreams and wins her, performs incredible acts of daring heroism in Korea—and the stories go on and on.



When Josephine says she wants to take a picture of her father-in-law, Edward replies, "You don't need a picture of me. Just look up the word 'handsome' in the dictionary." It is a charming quip, but it is also a reflection of the man. Pictures "capture" people and things, and he refuses to be captured or pinned down or limited in the imagination. Like the fish, he is always the one who gets away. His medium is words, his element is water, is everything that flows.

Director Tim Burton's element is visual story telling, and as Edward embroiders his stories, so Burton embroiders his narrative, drawing on past films and masters—from the gratuitous inclusion of the unforgettable banjo player from *Deliverance* to Federico Fellini's world of popular entertainment and the circus. The climactic sequence of *Big Fish* is also an affectionate bow to the happy, redemptive conclusion of Fellini's *8 1/2*.

Will may have tried to get as far away from his father as possible, but as a newspaperman he is also a storyteller. Significantly, when he sets out to find the truth behind his father's stories (he calls them lies), his assumptions

(cont. page 11)

# February 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	<b>2</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	<b>3</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer  10:00 am: EVELYN AT LOCAL CLERGY MEETING	<b>4</b> 7:30 am H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir	<b>5</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Outreach Meeting	<b>6</b>  MISSION AND MINISTRY CONFERENCE	<b>7</b>  MISSION AND MINISTRY CONFERENCE
<b>8</b> 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	<b>9</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Vestry Meeting	<b>10</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	<b>11</b> 7:30 am H.E. 11:00 WWW.Come 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir	<b>12</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer  EVELYN AT FRESH START	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>  EVELYN ON VACATION
<b>15</b> People to People Sunday 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>16</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer  Office Closed for President's Day  <i>JN Deadline</i>  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>17</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>18</b> 7:30 am Morn- ing Prayer 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>19</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>20</b>  EVELYN ON VACATION	<b>21</b>  EVELYN ON VACATION
<b>22</b> 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	<b>23</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	<b>24</b> 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	<b>25</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> 7:00 am H.E. 11:00 WWW.Come Noon: H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 H.E. 8:00 Choir	<b>26</b> 10:00 am H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	<b>27</b> 6:00 pm Stations of the Cross	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 am H.E. 10:00 Brunch	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

## Scriptorium

(from p.8)

father really is. Through a series of flashbacks we see the father's life through his stories, complete with witches, giants, impossible quests, incredible victories, haunted forests, dramatic rescues, paradise found and lost, and a huge catfish. Through the stories other people tell about him we get other glimpses of his life that are consistent with his stories, if less spectacular. As he's dying, his son finally realizes that his father's stories *are* who his father really is, and that it's by becoming part of his stories that he can truly come to know his father. Like the son in the film, Borg and Spong want to know what "really happened" to Jesus and what the miracle stories about Jesus "really mean." By separating "fact" from "fiction," they hope to unpack the stories' meaning so that they can discard the stories themselves. Then, they believe, we can glimpse who or what God really is. But maybe God's stories, as told in the Bible, *are* who God really is. And maybe it's by becoming part of those stories that we can truly come to know God.

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## Speaking of Movies

(from p.9)

are always off on the mean and cynical side of the truth. Then, astonishingly, he starts to find out that the stories may not have been the complete fabrications he took them to be.

In the end, it is not the revelation of sordid or prosaic truths that offers a resolution. Rather, after Edward suffers a stroke and can scarcely speak, Will is able to take over his father's role of storyteller and in a joyous sequence that takes us along, lovingly provides the triumphant narrative of his end, drawing in the unforgettable characters of the often-told stories.

The denouement at the funeral, which I won't reveal, further blurs the line between what is real and what is imagined and finds truth and meaning in both. In the course of this playful and charming film, we discover the purposes of storytelling and the qualities of humor, imagination, patience, tolerance, and kindness that nourish and sustain enduring relationships in a family or community.

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## Editor's Bit

(from p.5)

But again, I digress. Back to the topic of what was happening on my birthday – apart from the inevitable depression brought about by realizing that I am another year closer to the Big Sleep and no closer to writing that first novel. At the rate I am going, my best hope is to

wait ten more years and publish a collection of essays called "The Editor's Bits and Pieces." Regular readers of the *Joyful Noise* wouldn't buy a copy, but maybe some of the 200 million folks who don't read the *Noise* will!

Over in the gloriously named Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Timothy Dumouchel was suing his local cable company. His accusation is that the cable folks were at fault in "...making his wife fat and turning his children into 'lazy channel surfers.'" Accepting zero responsibility himself, he went on to say "I believe the reason that I smoke and drink every day and my wife is overweight is because we watched the TV everyday for the last four years."

In all fairness to "The Chubby Family," Mr. Dumouchel did write to the cable company four years ago to ask to be disconnected. Unfortunately, the company erred and simply stopped *billing* him, but keep his cable link open. It took Dumouchel four years to let them know about this, by which time the damage had been done.

He is demanding nearly \$4,500 and a lifetime supply of free Internet service from the company, Charter Communication. Presumably he can spend this on a Bowflex and membership of Weight-Watchers. Or he could buy more beer and cigarettes to use while he surfs the Internet. Then he can sue web site owners for making him a fat, grasping drunk with no self-control.

It's sad that people can reach the point where responsibility goes out the window, to be replaced by a point of view that blames everyone else for personal shortcomings. Of course, if I'd spent less time surfing the web, maybe I could have finished that novel. Now, which web site do I sue?

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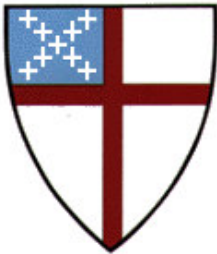
## Vestry Memories: Gwen Bayless



My three years as a member of vestry is coming to an end. Looking back on this and my two previous experiences, I conclude that each term was unique in its own way and time, and each term was an opportunity for service and personal growth. I have enjoyed the time spent with Evelyn and the

various groups, as with each election the dynamics change; however, hard work and dedication to task always prevailed. I have been truly honored to serve this parish in this manner.

The Episcopal Church



St. James Episcopal Church  
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## What's Happening at St. James

- 9th Feb**                      **7:00 pm Vestry Meeting**
- 24th Feb**                    **Shrove Tuesday: Pancake Supper 6:00 pm**
- 25th Feb**                    **Ash Wednesday: Holy Eucharist 7:00 am, noon, and 7:00 pm**
- 27th Feb**                    **6:00 pm Stations of the Cross**
- 29th Feb**                    **9:00 am Holy Eucharist followed by Brunch**

### February 2004

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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29						

### March 2004

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