

the Joyful Noise

of St. James' Episcopal Church

The Season of Lent - Reflection and Sharing

by Peggy and John Hockett

We thought we would work independently to research what Lent means, using the Web as a tool. When it came time to meld our ideas for this article, we found we had organized them in much the same way – odd for people who do not always think alike – but decided that there was enough difference to justify giving you both points of view. Look for P or J (ladies first!) at each paragraph.

(P) Those of us who communicate with friends via computer get many different types of email including inspirational messages. I received one not to long ago which has been on my mind ever since. I'm going to share it as a beginning of thoughts about Lent.

I asked God to take away my habit.
God said, No, it is not for me to take away but for you to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.
God said, No, his spirit is whole, his body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience.
God said, No, patience is a byproduct of tribulations, it isn't granted, it is learned.

I asked God to give me happiness.
God said, No, I give you blessings; Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain.
God said, No, suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow.
God said, No, you must grow on your own. But I will prune you to make you fruitful.

I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
God said, No, I will give you life, so that you may enjoy all things.

I asked God to help me love others as much as He loves me.
God said... Ah, finally you have the idea.

The author of this piece is unknown, but each of the answers to the requests could be a subject of meditation and self-examination.

(P) By the second century the church was using the season of Lent as a time for instructing converts and preparing those to be baptized. They were taught how to live, think, and believe as Christians. Part of this preparation was to focus on His time of testing while in the desert and before His sacrifice. As the church is a community of people; the community shared in the experience and relived it with those to be baptized. Over the centuries, Lent has become a season for reflection, repenting and renewal for the individual and the church community.

(J) The Lenten season was in place by the 2nd century as a time of instruction for new believers and a time of reaching out to those who

(continued page 4)

In This Issue

- 1 Notes from the Nurse
- 3 Evelyn's Epistle
eBay Update
- 5 Men's Retreat
Music News
- 6 Anniversaries and
Birthdays
Editor's Bit
- 7 Health Watch
Brown Bag Schedule
ECSF
- 8 Scriptorium: Going to
the dogs?
- 9 Speaking of
Movies: Of Paintings
and Calendars
- 10 Calendar
- 12 What's Happening

Editorial Information

The Joyful Noise is published monthly September through June as a ministry of St. James Episcopal Church. Submissions in accord with the Mission of St. James are encouraged. The address of the Editor is 429 Kinney Circle, Wooster, OH 44691 and you may e-mail: astolat@sssnet.com

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Astolat
Publications

Notes from the Nurse

A few people have mentioned that they might be interested in a Support/Wellness/Educational meeting once a month with speakers. There are a lot of folks, either trying to lose weight, gain weight, or just get healthier. I will post a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to see what the interest level is and what time would suit the majority of the people, possibly brown bag lunch, evening or maybe alternate. If this is indeed something that we would like to pursue, I would need someone to help coordinate it.

Don't forget to have your blood pressure screened so you can be eligible to enter the contest for the great prizes (massage, pedometer, cookbook)

Blood Pressures will be taken at both services **March 7th**; **April 4th**; **April 25th**; and **May 30th**.

Saint James Episcopal Church

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Gwen Bayless (Vestry Clerk)	(330) 264-1874
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Margo Miller (04) New Member Ministry	(330) 264-7201
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Pat Zoller (05) Outreach	(330) 264-9909

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.

Evelyn's Epistle

My Dear Friends,

This Lenten Season we will follow tradition and gather for the Wednesday Evening Soup Supper and Program on the Wednesdays in March with dinner from 6 – 6:30 pm and Program from 6:40 – 7:30 pm.

The program this season will be on Scripture Study. I have realized that every conflict in the Church (with a big C) is supported by or based on scripture. How is it that two individuals can read the same passage of scripture and come up with different understandings of its meaning?

What I have planned is a five-week look at how we read scripture. The first week will deal with the what, why, and how of the Bible and the next four weeks will be hands-on, small group scripture study using a different method of Bible study each week. One week it will be a Historical- Critical look, the next, the African Bible Study method, and another week we will use Comparative Texts. What I hope we will gain from this time is an appreciation of how the Bible is read in different ways, interpreted in different ways, and used in different ways.

Many of you are more versed in scripture than I could ever hope to be and some of you are uncomfortable even opening the Bible. Being a scripture expert doesn't guarantee perfect understanding nor does inexperience make someone unable to understand or interpret scripture. I have always gained new insight or appreciation when scripture is being shared people.

Also, during the Lenten season, we will have the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 6 pm. Each week we will use a different set of meditations focused on Jesus' walk to the cross.

There will also be booklets of daily Lenten meditations and daily prayers available at the back of the church for your use.

I hope you will make the time in your life this Lent to be deliberate in growing as Jesus' disciple.

In God's love,

Evelyn

Start Some Serious Looking!

An eBay Update

from Peggy Hockett



There were some questions during the annual meeting about how eBay is going. I probably sounded somewhat discouraged because some of the donations didn't do as well as I thought they should and it is hard to determine what items will do best. However, because there were people who found something to donate, the church is over \$400.00 richer. This has happened since October when we got started and I must admit that I took about 6 weeks off for the holidays. So we have had some success. Thomas Cloyes has volunteered to help with the photography and as I get better at it, we should be able to get 6 to 8 items a month up for auction. We can make money this way and it is really painless for the donor.

If you have something you would like to donate, fill out one of the forms in the eBay basket found on the table at the side entrance of the church. If you desire a minimum selling price please put it on the form. If there is no minimum given we will determine the opening bid and if necessary the reserve price. Attach the form to or place it in the box with the item. Bring it to the church hall and put it into the box labeled eBay. It will be placed near the Male rest room and item pick up will be on Wednesday evening and Sunday.

If you have questions or an item too valuable to leave in the hall you can contact me at jphockett@earthlink.net or (330) 345-7825. Keep in mind there is a listing fee and a final sales fee of about 2%. Also there is a good deal of time involved in research and listing. Therefore, we will research the item on EBay to see if the item will bring over \$20.00. This is no reflection on the item; it is a reflection on the eBay market. If we find there is no demand for your donation we will return it to you. If the item is not sold it will also be returned to you.

A big thanks to all of you who have given the process a try. The last donation that just successfully sold was a set of Fostoria glassware donated by Pat Watson. At present we really can't tell what items are "hot" on eBay, SO LOOK AROUND AND COME UP WITH SOMETHING TO TRY. That means autos to zithers. Look in the garage, basement, attic or the back of the china closet and see what you can spare to give a boost to church finances.

The Season of Lent

(from p.1)

had fallen away. In the Roman calendar it emphasized preparation for Holy Week and Easter through emulating the trials of Jesus in His 40 days in the desert. As Christ rejected worldly power and glory, Christians retreated from the world through fasting, self-denial, meditation and prayer. Modern churches deriving from the Anabaptist movement do not observe Lent since they rejected the Roman calendar some 400 years ago as a Papish distortion. Only in the last 200 years have these groups included Christmas and Easter as part of their observances. Beginning with Ash Wednesday (February 25 this year), Lent is observed on 40 weekdays until Holy Saturday, since Sundays foreshadow the joy of Easter (April 11).

(P) Perhaps Christians today most strongly associate Lent with “giving up something” and fasting. But this in and of itself doesn’t mean much. It was once thought that discomfort and sacrifice automatically gave one “points for entrance to heaven.” “Giving up” something can be a form of self-discipline, and is a reminder of Christ’s suffering and sorrow for the sins of humanity. It doesn’t necessarily mean giving up food. It could be television, computer games, eating out. This is a personal decision as we search for and reflect upon those things that we may have allowed to gain power over us. The Franciscans speak of it as a period of detachment, getting away from some of the worldliness we allow to control our lives, taking the complexity out of our lives.

(J) Within the community of our faith, we observe Lent in various ways. We may choose to deny ourselves certain foods or pleasures or activities. To do so should be done as an offering, which at once brings joy and a sense of obligation met. However, giving up one thing poses a question: with what is it replaced? It is possible to make our offerings greater by giving the time so released to prayer and reading of the Scripture. In this season we need to gain time to reflect on Christ’s trials and sacrifice. We should also find time to reflect on our lives. As we choose our offerings we have a chance to lay aside things that complicate our lives and keep us from effective stewardship and witness. Is this not a way to please God?

(P) There is another aspect to Lent and that is giving or adding something for Lent. This again is a personal thing. Some authors suggest adding conscious acts of kindness, taking quiet meditative walks, giving to your favorite charity what you would have spent on things

like eating out, a second glass of wine, or your favorite chocolate treat. Consider taking time for special meditations, doing the scheduled Stations of the Cross and attending evening prayer sessions. Time is a very precious thing in most of our lives and dedicating it for special Lenten devotions can be very meaningful and make the Easter glow all the richer.

(J) Another sort of offering is to “take on” rather than “give up.” Our church community needs our differing talents in carrying out its mission. An obvious need exists to care for our members who are isolated, who need transportation or who just need to know we love them. You can think many more opportunities to give. Our town and county need the involvement of Christian minds and hands. What are you giving to the solution of our problems with the schools, substance abuse, social problems? We know that hard times are coming for many in our area. Can we help with a word, a friendly hand, food or money? Many of us are blessed with so much that we truly do not know where each thing is. Do unto others...

(P) Last year I spent the season of Lent in a hospital. I was buoyed up by the many cards, prayers and visits by members of our community and of course by Evelyn. I got home a few days before Easter and there was no way I would have had the strength to attend Easter Service. Then one of the most memorable experiences of my life happened. Kim Watkins brought me Holy Communion and Claire Walworth gathered up some members of the choir and others and brought Easter to me. They sang my favorite hymns and touched me in prayer. (I still get tears when I think about it.) I can’t describe the feeling or the change that took place in my spirit but there was a change. This was for me the greatest lesson that can ever be learned about what community is all about and how each of us is a part that contributes to a powerful “whole” in spreading God’s Grace and Love. Love is God’s greatest gift to us.

(J) Aside from sharing the experiences of worship, study and fellowship provided for in the St. James Lenten calendar, the nature and depth of our participation in Lent is a matter known only to God. Like those who joined in that Passover meal which we know as the Last Supper, we face unknown days. Like them, it is on our shoulders to show God’s love. It is not easy to be like Christ. Lent provides a time for focusing, as members of a caring community, on doing just that.

“How Faith Responds to Change” will be the theme for this year’s Men’s Retreat, to be held at the **Christian Children’s Home Retreat Center in Wooster, March 26–28.**

Beginning with dinner together on Friday evening (March 26) and ending with breakfast on Sunday morning (March 28), the weekend will include worship together, discussion, sharing, quiet time, meal preparation, and eating. Discussion questions will include

- In our lives and work, what are the challenges we face to being practicing Christians?
- What are Americans’ social, cultural, and political values, and how are they changing?
- How do we respond to Christian fundamentalism and evangelicalism, and should we be more outspoken in our own beliefs?
- How do we handle differences—does the Anglican “middle way” still work?

Men who can participate in *all or just part* of the weekend are encouraged to sign up (on the bulletin board at the church). The closeness of the Retreat Center to town makes part-time attendance a possibility. The suggested contribution is \$50 per person. Depending on how many men participate, that may be enough to cover the entire cost, or there may need to be a small added surcharge to cover food costs. No one should stay away because of cost. If you can’t afford \$50, come anyway!

Checks should be made payable to “St. James Episcopal Church,” with the notation, “Men’s Retreat,” and be given or sent to Damon Hickey, 208 W. University St. We will need a final count of who’s coming to which meals one week before the retreat.

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.



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



The Spring Brown Bag series of concerts will begin March 18th and continue until May 13th with nine concerts being offered. Annie Gerig and Judithe Jacob open the series on March 18th with music in Celtic and folk styles celebrating St. Patrick’s Day.



Karen Gardener and Christina Matthews return with the 11th Hour Saxophone Quartet from College of Wooster. The *COW Jazz Ensemble*, under the direction of Jeff Lindberg, will make its third springtime visit on April 8th. The College will be represented again on April 29th when the newly formed *Woodwind Quintet* plays its first off-campus concert.

Musica Felice with Ken Shafer on harpsichord, Amy Glick on violin, Marna Mateer on cello, and William Mateer on recorder, will return following their first concert in the fall for an encore on April 8th. Denise Rotavera-Krain and Marlene Eberhart, flutes, performing under their new name *Silver Moon*, can be heard on April 22nd.

A second new artist in the series is organist Loretta Bower. A resident of North Canton, she will play her first Brown Bag on April 15. The *Unholy Sextet* of Stuart Ling, Terry Ling, Toni Shreve, Gloria Mackey, David Hider, and Ned Brooks will encore pops favorites and introduce new singer Jason Runnion on their concert May 6. The series will close on May 13 when Stephen Brown presents his ever-popular organ pops on May 13.

The half-hour Brown Bag Concerts are Thursdays beginning at 12:05 a.m. Jean Barnes and Mary Hickey are hosts for these musical treats to which audience members are invited to bring their lunch.

Evensong at Trinity

The Choir of St. James will sing **Evensong on March 14 at 4:00 p.m. in Trinity Cathedral.** Music to be performed at this service includes *Let My Prayer Come Up* by John Blow for the Introit, Kellow Pye’s setting of the Psalm, Jason Metheney’s *Preces* and Stuart Ling’s *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*. The anthem will be Thomas Morley’s *Agnus Dei*. The service begins with organ music performed by Jason at 3:30.

March Anniversaries



2/20/65	Ken and Mary Lou Nuzum
2/22/97	Sam and Lynda Hornak
2/31/62	Norm and Mary Lou Lathrop

March Birthdays



1	Anne Richard		Kyle Ofori
	Nina Kurzenburger		Dwight Hayes
8	Flo Sprosty	23	Lois McCall
	Andrew Symonds		Jim Richard
12	Cameron Gorman		Marilyn Hyatt
15	Steven Slaydon	24	Roger Kienzle
	Charles Walworth		Diane Hales
16	Pat Freeman	25	Jenece Gerber
	Ricky Aughenbaugh	27	Sharon Peterson
	Stan Hales	28	Susan Baxter
17	Stuart Ling		Grace Walworth
	Katherine Blanchard	29	Terry Hyatt
21	Pat Petsch	31	Roberta Looney
	Lynda Hornak		Rosanne Burger
	Kevin Ofori		



The Editor's Bit

Since the last *Bit*, I've climbed another rung of the corporate ladder to become a Vice President. This new position imbues me with startling new powers, which include (a) the clout to order new business cards, (b) the opportunity to be brow-beaten even more by the President, and (c) the ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound. Well, I haven't tried the latter, but I'm fairly sure it

will work.

So at the last company meeting, I promised that as the new President of Vice, I would be taking positive steps toward ensuring that our company becomes a world leader in all aspects of wickedness. I made it quite clear that I would be analyzing all the Seven Deadly Sins with

a view to setting up an action plan, complete with measurable targets and substantial return-on-investment figures. Why, one trip to the Carnelian Room restaurant in San Francisco (<http://www.carnelianroom.com>) with a few colleagues could take care of Gluttony and Avarice for the 2004 fiscal year.

But when someone asked me to list the Seven, I found it more difficult than I thought it would be. Of course, this just confirmed that a President of Vice was indeed necessary, because clearly we had forgotten such important details. It was time for some vital investigation.

In alphabetical order – rather than preferential – the list typically runs Anger, Avarice, Envy, Gluttony, Lust, Pride (or Vanity), and Sloth. I'm not sure what's particularly wicked about a tree-dwelling, three-toed mammal that eats plants, but at some point we might conjecture that Thomas Aquinas was attacked by one, whereupon he decided to make sure his *Summa Theologica* included a warning to avoid the hapless beast.

Before Thomas put together his list of sins, an Egyptian monk, Evagrius Ponticus, had already made his own list of eight way back in the 4th century. Ponticus spent most of his life as an ascetic, wandering the desert and writing about the struggles of spiritual life. Although apparently never attacked by a sloth, he did feel it necessary to have eight rather than seven sins. The prospect of rediscovering a hitherto forgotten sin was, sad to say, intriguing.

Alas, it turns out that the mysterious "eighth sin" was "vainglory," which was eventually thrown in with pride – a sort of "two for the price of one" deal – by Pope Gregory in the late 6th century. There is a subtle difference between "vainglory" and "pride." The former is essentially boasting about oneself and loving self-glory, whereas the latter refers to excessive self-appreciation. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Satan is clearly full of sinful pride, but I wouldn't call him vainglorious. And although vainglory is always bad, pride can be good if it is not excessive.

Which brings me back to my original promise of being a good President of Vice. And having re-read this very article where I talk about myself and how I have been promoted, I'm beginning to think that maybe I *am* on the way to being a good VP! As Al Pacino says in the movie *The Devil's Advocate*, "Vanity, definitely my favorite sin."



Speaking Of Aging

from Ruth Brown

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will some day be old.

Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to try to straighten out everybody's affairs.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details—give me wings to get to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience.

But seal my lips on my own aches and pain – they are increasing and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with – but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all – but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

**A Mother Superior who wishes to be anonymous

Brown Bag Concert Schedule

- March 18** Annie Gerig, recorder and Judithe Jacob, guitar and vocals
- March 25** Karen Gardener, saxophone, Christina Matthews, piano, and 11th Hour Quartet
- April 1** Musica Felice: Ken Shafer, Harpsichord, Amy Glick, violin, Marna Mateer, cello, and William Mateer, recorder
- April 8** College of Wooster Jazz Ensemble. Jeff Lindberg, Director

- April 15** Loretta Elaine Bower, organ
- April 22** Silver Moon: Denise Rotavera-Krain and Marlene Eberhart, flutes
- April 29** College of Wooster Woodwind Quintet
- May 6** The Unholy Sextet, introducing Jason Runnion
- May 13** Stephen Brown, organ pops

Donations benefit viola Startzman Free Clinic. Complimentary Coffee and Tea Provided

Episcopal Community Services Foundation

from Mary Hickey

This year during Lent, each parish in the Diocese of Ohio is asked to help members of their congregations become more aware of the mission of the Episcopal Community Services Foundation and to gather our individual monetary contributions to support this work.

ECSF's objective is the living out of our baptismal covenant which asks that "we seek and serve Christ in all persons," and particularly to provide hope, dignity and self-respect for the marginalized in our society. ECSF grants assist programs located geographically within our Diocese which address the full spectrum of human need—housing and homelessness, hunger, health, crime prevention, legal aid, race relations, and the special needs of the elderly, children and youth. Last year, approximately 1/3 of the grants went to parish-based and 2/3 to community-based programs.

Contributions to ECSF flow back to our own community and parish efforts in life-giving and transforming ways. In recent years, three agencies in Wooster have received ECSF grants—People to People Ministries, Viola Startzman Free Clinic, and Wooster Interfaith Housing.

At the recent Mission and Ministry Conference, Bishop Grew led a workshop in which he said "People in the Church don't get to choose whether or not they will be about mission....Mission is at the center of Christian

The Scriptorium

Book Reviews
by Damon Hickey

People who aren't "dog people" can get tired of listening to people who are talk about their dogs. So for all of you who aren't, my apologies. This column is about dogs – dog books, to be precise. But it's also about God (which, as "dog people" love to point out, is "Dog" spelled backward).

I used to be mainly a "cat person," but Mary and I decided several years ago when our last cat died that we wanted to be free of the responsibility for pets. But then...no, a stray dog didn't wander into our lives and win our hearts. Not exactly. I found out that I had prostate cancer, and after much agonizing, I decided on radiation treatments rather than surgery. Then I started to feel an overwhelming, inexplicable, but very specific longing: for a longhaired adult, male, St. Bernard. In other words, a *really big dog* – in fact, the biggest dog there is, weight-wise, and one of the messiest: a championship drooler and a walking hair factory. Mary thought (not for the first time) that I'd gone crazy, and that she'd end up having to take care of the monster. But my longing included wanting to take care of him myself. Maybe I needed something big that needed me, even though I was feeling scared and vulnerable. The fact that St. Bernards were raised by Christian monks to be rescue dogs and that they were named for a saint (and are called "Saints") had something to do with it too.

To make a long story short, I shared this strange longing with several people, and within a few weeks a friend told me about a "rescued" St. Bernard that he'd heard about. The dog turned out to be a longhaired, adult, male St. Bernard. His problem is that he was abused as a puppy, and had developed fear-aggression. He growls, barks, and tries to bite strangers (especially strange men) because he's afraid they'll hurt him. But once he gets to know you, he's a big sweetheart. He needed me; I needed him. I named him Dunstan after St. Dunstan, a 10th-century Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury. We brought him home on the weekend. The next Monday I

started my daily radiation treatments in Cleveland. When I got back to the car and opened the door, I could smell his scent, and it felt immensely reassuring. He's been with us for 4 1/2 years now, is 6 years old, and weighs a little over 200 pounds. (And the radiation appears to have been successful.)

I think of Dunstan as my "spiritual guide dog." For example, I've learned that, when he sees a stranger and perceives him as a threat, if I pull him over next to me, get him to sit and lean against me, stroke him, talk with him, and even straddle him, he pays more attention to me and less to the perceived threat. I can feel his tension and fear and aggression drain out of him. He's taught me, when I'm in situations where I feel challenged and threatened, and where I'm starting to become angry and defensive, that I can relax into God as Dunstan relaxes into me. I can feel my own fear and aggression drain away, opening me up to new possibilities for meeting the situation creatively and productively.

There are at least four books that address the spirituality of the dog-human relationship. Three are by the Monks of New Skete, a Russian Orthodox monastery in Cambridge, New York, who breed and train German Shepherds: *How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend: A Training Manual for Dog Owners* (now in its second edition), *The Art of Raising a Puppy*, and *I & Dog* (a

deliberate pun on Martin Buber's, *I & Thou*). The Monks of New Skete also produce a 3-VHS tape series, "Raising Your Dog with the Monks of New Skete." I know of no better books or videos about raising and training dogs. If you don't have a dog, I still recommend *I & Dog*, which is a beautiful blend of photographs and brief text. My other favorite is *Dogs Never Lie about Love*, by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson. Masson says he's not religious, but I consider him a spiritual writer.

Here are some of my favorite passages from these books:

(cont. page 11)



Of Paintings and Calendars

In his short life (1632-1675), the Dutch artist Jan Vermeer produced only about 40 paintings that we know of, working mostly on commission. He was not known nor highly regarded outside of a small circle in his lifetime but was rediscovered in the 19th century, and his works have continued to charm and fascinate ever since. One of the most intriguing is a 1665 portrait of a young woman in profile who appears to be turning to look at the viewer. Her mouth is slightly open. Is she about to speak?

We don't know much about the picture, which may be part of its charm. Who is the young woman, what is her story, and what is her relation to the painter?

From such questions and many conjectures, Tracy Chevaliers wrote a novel that Peter Webber has now been made into a film. They both bear the title of the original painting, **Girl with a Pearl Earring**.

The girl's name is Griet, and her father's poverty forces her to go into service the Vermeer household. The family is presided over by Maria (Judy Parfit) the formidable mother of Vermeer's wife Catherine (Essie Davis). Maria seems to be the one with the business head, and the necessity seems clear. The Vermeers, we know, had 15 children, four of whom died in childhood, and Jan (called Johannes in this film and played by a brooding Colin Firth) produced only a picture or two per year. Maria is not about to let her son-in-law miss out on an opportunity for a commission, and she watches the doings of the servants with a gimlet eye.

It is not a happy household that Griet enters. There is precious little communication, understanding, or human warmth. Yet it soon becomes clear that Griet is highly intelligent, and unlike the others, she shows an intense interest and appreciation for Vermeer's work and all the technical details of his craft, from the mixing of colors to the composition of his paintings.

No consideration of this film can ignore the central contribution of cinematographer Eduardo Serra. Nearly every shot, masterfully composed and subtly lighted, is worthy of Vermeer, and in the leisurely course of this

film we get a palpable sense of the world in which the painter moved. It is the visual element that lingers in memory, far more than the dialogue. This is in no way to denigrate the fine acting, especially that of Scarlett Johansson in the title role. So subtle and complex is her performance in what we see on the screen that we are struck only afterward by the sparseness of dialogue.

A patron named van Ruijven (lustily played by the versatile Tom Wilkinson) takes an erotic interest in Griet and commissions Vermeer to paint a picture of her for his own private viewing. As an intimacy develops between artist and model, the story wisely avoids the easy and obvious possibility of their actually becoming lovers. There is, however, an erotic charge in the air that is expressed with both restraint and power, as when she finds he has been watching her taking off her headgear and letting down her hair, or in the scene where he pierces her ear for the pearl earring, which he has taken from his wife's jewelry. Griet becomes his partner in the creation of a work of art that will immortalize them both, and if she is the object of men looking at women, in the final work she is pointedly and enigmatically looking back.

While another recent film couldn't be more different, it too plays with the notion of women as objects of the male gaze. *Girl with a Pearl Earring* was inspired by obscure circumstances in 1665. Nigel Cole's **Calendar Girls** is based on a celebrated real event from 1999, when a group of middle-aged women in Yorkshire, members of the Women's Institute, doffed their clothes to make a calendar to raise money for a good cause.

Inevitably, this film will be compared to *The Full Monty*, the 1997 film in which a group of unemployed English steel workers organize a striptease act. But the bawdy humor and the anger at the heart of that film find no counterpart in this funny, warm, and charming comedy-drama. The women are members of a chapter of the Women's Institute in the village of Rylstone in North Yorkshire. It seems like a pretty staid organization, whose monthly lectures feature such topics as "Broccoli" or a slide lecture, in vast and terrible detail, on

(cont. page 11)



March 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	1 4:00 pm Warden's Meeting 5:30 Evening Prayer	2 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 10:00 am: EVELYN AT LOCAL CLERGY MEETING	3 7:30 am H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Lenten Supper/Program 7:30 Choir	4 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Outreach Meeting	5 6:00 pm Stations of the Cross	6
7 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	8 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:00 Vestry Meeting	9 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	10 7:30 am H.E. 11:00 WWW.Come 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Lenten Supper/Program 7:30 Choir	11 5:30 pm Evening Prayer EVELYN AT FRESH START	12	13
14 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee 4:00 pm Evensong at Trinity Cathedral	15 5:30 pm Evening Prayer <i>JN Deadline</i>	16 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	17 7:30 am H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Lenten Supper/Program 7:30 Choir	18 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 12:05 am Brown Bag Concert	19 6:00 pm Stations of the Cross	20
21 People to People Sunday 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	22 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	23 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	24 7:30 am H.E. 11:00 WWW.Come Noon: H.E. 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Lenten Supper/Program. 7:30 Choir	25 12:05 am Brown Bag Concert 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	26 MEN'S RETREAT	27 MEN'S RETREAT
28 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Sunday School / Choir 10:00 H.E. 11:00 Coffee 2:00 pm Jason Metheney's Concert	29 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	30 5:30 pm Evening Prayer	31 7:30 am H.E. 11:00 WWW.Come 5:30 pm Evening Prayer 6:00 Lenten Supper/Program 7:30 Choir	1	2	3

Scriptorium

(from p.8)

By their very nature and need, dogs draw us out of ourselves: they root us in nature, making us more conscious of the mystery of God inherent in all things. When we take the time and energy necessary to raise our puppies correctly, when we learn to truly listen to them, seeing them as they really are and guiding their development accordingly, a deeper part of ourselves is unlocked, a part more compassionate and less arrogant, more willing to share life with another life. And whenever that happens, we know the real meaning of happiness. (From *The Art of Raising a Puppy*)

I am not a religious man, and I pause before using the word *soul*. But my experiences with the dogs in my life...convince me that there is some profound essence, something about being a dog, which corresponds to our notion of an inner soul, the core of our being that makes us most human. In human animals, this core, I am convinced, has to do with our ability to reach out and help a member of another species, even when we do not stand to benefit from the other – in short to love the other for its own sake. If any species on this earth shares this miraculous ability with us (and perhaps there are many more we do not yet know about), it is the dog, for the dog truly loves us sometimes beyond expectation, beyond measure, beyond what we deserve, more, indeed than we love ourselves. (From *Dogs Never Lie about Love*)

The vulnerability present in the smallest of God's creatures calls out to our noblest instincts, triggering a desire to nurture and protect, to care for and understand. What we rarely imagine is how quickly the roles can change. Dogs have an astonishing capacity to respond to our own vulnerability, our sudden need for assistance. It's the flip side of a relationship written in paradox. (From *I & Dog*)

Speaking of Movies

(from p.9)

someone's vacation travels. Members tend either to nod off during the talks or, like old friends Chris Harper (Helen Mirren) and Annie Clarke (Julie Walters), to stifle shared laughter at the wild absurdity and dullness of it all. When Julie's husband dies of cancer, the women decide to raise money for the hospital where he was treated. Inspired by a calendar in a garage and a girlie magazine in her son's room, Chris hits on a unique idea. Instead of their usual annual calendar featuring gardens of Yorkshire, why not make a calendar showing the fifty-something members pursuing their normal

activities in the buff? It is not something that would ever have occurred to most of them, but they are willing to do it for a good cause. How this gets done occupies the first half of the film, and it is all handled with a delicacy and discretion that earn the film a PG-13 rating. Working past some obligatory (and not always fully developed) plot conflicts, their project turns into an astonishing success and leads to media attention that brings problems of its own.

In the end, the Rylstone project that hoped to raise enough money to buy a comfortable sofa for the hospital waiting room netted over half a million pounds and built a new wing on the local hospital.

Calendar Girls overturns every notion of the traditional pin-up calendar. The models are neither young nor provocative in pose. The calendar is not intended to titillate or to support the profitable porn industry, but rather to serve the good of the wider community. And through this collaborative effort the women come to see themselves in new ways.

The acting too is an ensemble effort, which nonetheless centers on the fine performances of Helen Mirren and Julie Walters. A gentle, funny, and delightful film, *Calendar Girls* celebrates not men looking at women, but female friendship, resourcefulness, and energy, and it affirms at the same time that the most beautiful flowers grow in autumn.

ECSF

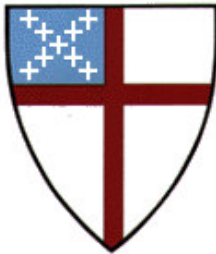
(from p.7)

theology since it springs forth from our understanding of the very character of God." In another workshop, several individuals whose lives have been changed by ECSF-supported programs shared their stories, which were truly inspiring. There is wonderful and exciting work being done on our behalf in our communities!

In a letter accompanying last year's ECSF annual report, Bishop Grew wrote: "I pray that every parish will become a community that witnesses to the reconciling love of Christ through ECSF. The funds that are raised for the Foundation go directly to organizations and agencies that are providing help and encouragement to the people in our society who are the most vulnerable. Jesus teaches us that our treasure and our heart have to line up together. If we say that our hearts are filled with compassion, forbearance, mercy, sympathy, and love, then something of our precious resources needs to support that claim."

The Episcopal Church

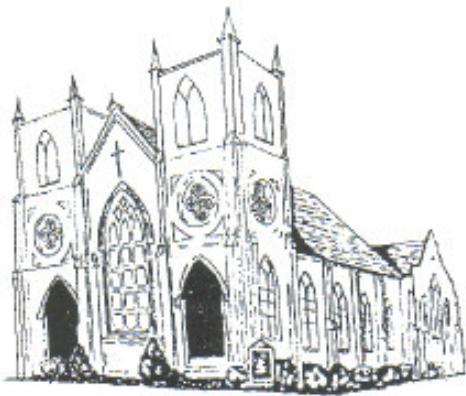
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What's Happening at St. James

- 1st Mar Warden's Meeting, 4:00 pm
- 3rd Mar Lenten Supper and Program begins, Parish Hall 6:00 pm
- 14th Mar Evensong at Trinity Cathedral, 4:00 pm
- 18th Mar Brown Bag Series begins, 12:05 am Brown Bag Concert
- 26th Mar Men's Retreat, Christian Children's Home Retreat
- 28th Mar Jason Metheney's *Quinque Psalmi* concert 2:00 pm
St. Sebastian Church, 476 Mull Avenue, Akron

March 2004						
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April 2004						
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