

THE MOSAIC

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Pastoral Ponderings



When the next pandemic strikes, someone should tell people to take a picture of themselves. Take a picture so that when it is over, you can remember the person you used to be. Take a picture so that you can take stock of who you are now. When the season of Lent began last year, we were living our daily lives -- with work, school, errands, and recreation probably similar to the year before that and the year before that. Halfway through Lent, everything changed. This last year has been like no other in our lifetimes.

I recently went to our YouTube channel and watched the recordings of our first Zoom worship services. Right away, I saw that my hair was shorter. I also remembered how torturous it is for a preacher to watch herself preach. More importantly, I observed our collective learning curve. We learned how to keep from talking over each other (most of the time) and how to sing together with our devices muted. The choir learned how to create musical files with multiple voices and then how to add their singing faces to those files, making themselves into a virtual choir.

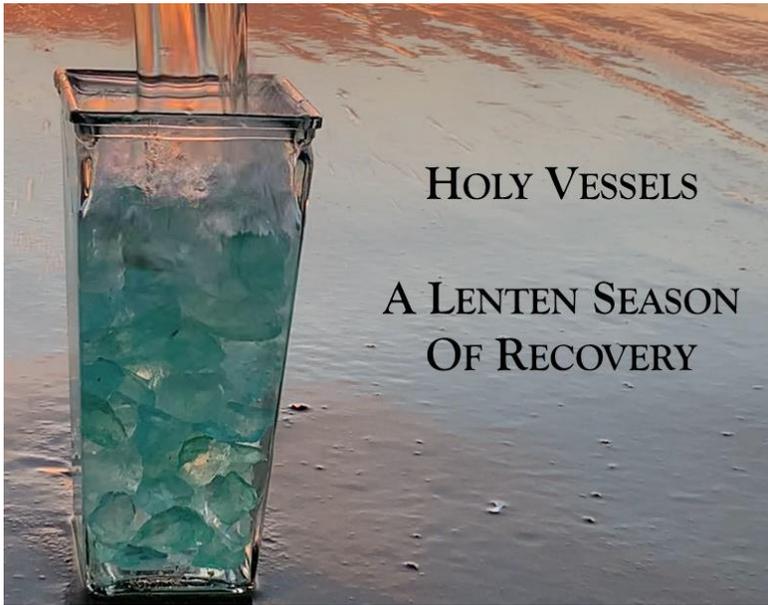
Over the last year, some of us have learned how much we need other people, how hard it is to live in isolation. Some of us have discovered an inner strength, a greater reservoir of hope and faith than we knew was there. Some of us have discovered a capacity for turning inward in the midst of trauma. It might be an appropriate self-care response, but it caught us unawares and we may feel guilty for not having been more responsive to the needs of others.

Lent is the season in the church year which calls for self-reflection and awareness. It may feel like “we have lived a year of Lent”, in the words of the Rev. Marcia McFee. The church’s wisdom was that Lent should just last six weeks. A year of Lent is intense and exhausting. If you are weary, if you are depressed or anxious, if you are sleeping or eating too much or too little, you are not alone. And you do not have to bear it alone.. We all want to be here for each other, but we don’t always know how to do that. If you need a listening ear, a sounding board, and/or someone to pray with you, please reach out and share those needs with another Emmanuelite. Take advantage of our small group gatherings like Wednesday Bible study and occasional potlucks and others.

Every Sunday we rejoice with the news that more of us have received vaccinations. Change is coming, albeit slowly. In this, and in all things, God is at work for good. Like sea glass, we will emerge from this battering with new beauty and purpose. As the apostle Paul said, “I am confident of this, that the One who began a good work among you will bring it to completion.”

Peace,
Kathy





HOLY VESSELS
A LENTEN SEASON
OF RECOVERY

Holy Vessels
Ash Wednesday, February 17-
Easter Sunday, April 4

As the Body of Christ, we are simultaneously those in need of healing and those who offer healing in the world. Feeling somewhat less than whole after a year of pandemic, we will spend this season exploring some of the stories about Jesus' healing in Matthew's gospel. Our theme songs offer invitations to Jesus the Healer and prayers that we might be holy and whole.

February 17 7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Matthew 11:28-30
Feb 21 10:00 a.m.	Lent 1 – physical health Matthew 8:1-4, 16-17
Feb 28 10:00 a.m.	Lent 2 – community health Matthew 8:5-13
March 7 10:00 a.m.	Lent 3 – mental health Matthew 9:27-33
March 14 10:00 a.m.	Lent 4 – intellectual health Matthew 9:18-26
March 21 10:00 a.m.	Lent 5 – environmental health Matthew 8:18-27
March 28 10:00 a.m.	Lent 6 -- integrated health Matthew 9:1-8, and Palm Sunday
April 1 7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Matthew 10:1-18
April 4 10:00 a.m.	Easter Sunday

*Come to me,
all you that
are weary
and are carrying
heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.*

*Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me; . . .
for my yoke is easy and
my burden is light.
- Matt 11: 28ff*

Prayer for Grieving 500,000 Dead of Covid-19 in the United States by Maren C. Tirabassi, February 22, 2021

Holy One,
who blesses those that mourn and do not hurry into being comforted,
we sit down into the loss of those we know,
and those that now we'll never have a chance to know.

We grieve the stories they will not live, the songs they will not sing,
the children they will not have, the hope they will not offer
to those around them, the inventions they will not patent,
the art, poetry, ink, music,
shingling a house, legal argument,
good tune-up and tire rotation,
diagnosis, surgical procedure,
gentle placement of a ventilator,
dental cleaning, quilt,
strawberry picking,
produce counter stocking,
life-guard undertow rescue,
lullaby, recipe and vote
that will never be made.

We grieve the birthday candles on cakes they will never taste.
We grieve for their parents and their children, their families,
their colleagues and their friends.
We grieve memories slipping away waiting for memorial services.
We grieve that the very sadness ebbs away from weariness
or the new whisper of good news.

O God, our masks are wet with tears and our fingers shake holding balloons
at nursing home windows.
Comfort us, we pray. Amen

<https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/>



Sea Glass: The Ocean Has Polished Our Broken Glass and Turned it Into Treasure

by Sara Burrows

at <https://returntonow.net/2020/08/31/sea-glass-trash-treasure/>

After centuries of tumbling in ocean waves, our broken glass has been transformed into entire beaches of colorful little gemstones called “sea glass.” Much of the glass humans have broken and thrown away throughout history has ended up in the ocean. Luckily, unlike plastic, glass is a natural material made out of sand, that [eventually turns back into sand](#) once it has eroded into tiny enough pieces. Before it breaks all the way back down into sand, it is tumbled by the ocean into these dazzling little stones called “sea glass.”

Today, [entire beaches](#) of sea glass can be found in the northeastern United States, Bermuda, Scotland, the Isle of Man, northern England, Mexico, Hawaii, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Nova Scotia, Australia, Italy and southern Spain.

Naturally produced or “genuine sea glass” originates from broken bottles, broken tableware, or even shipwrecks. The glass shards are rolled and tumbled by the ocean’s tides for decades until all the sharp edges are smoothed and rounded. The glass loses its slick surface and gains a frosted appearance. The process takes between 30 and 100 years.

Sea glass collectors can often tell where and when the glass originated by its color. The most common colors of sea glass – kelly green, brown, white, and clear – come from modern beer, juice and soft drink bottles, as well as plates, drinking glasses, windshields and windows. Less common colors include jade, amber, forest green and ice blue, which came from whiskey bottles, medicine bottles and ink bottles from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and lime green, which comes from soda bottles in the 1960s. These colors account for about one in every 25 to 100 pieces of sea glass found.

Even less common colors include purple and cobalt blue (from early Milk of Magnesia bottles, poison bottles and Vicks VapoRub containers) and aqua (from Ball Mason jars). These colors account one in every 200 to 1,000 pieces found. Extremely rare colors include gray, pink (often from Great Depression-era plates), teal (Mateus wine bottles), yellow (1930s Vaseline containers), turquoise (from tableware and art glass), red (car tail lights and nautical lights) and orange. These colors account for every 1,000 to 10,000 pieces collected. Even harder to find is antique black glass that dates over 500 years old, thought to originate from pirates liquor bottles in the Caribbean!



*Glass Beach, Fort Bragg, CA
photo by Joshua Sortino
at unsplash.com*



*Glass Beach
Fort Bragg, CA*

This past year certainly has had much more than its share of difficulties, turmoil and loss, and 2021 seems to be beginning with much of the same. Yet, through the grief and anxiety we have experienced, I have confidence that we hold onto a faith which rests in the assurances of God's love, mercy and justice for all humanity. Despite its beginnings, I pray that this new year brings for you and your loved ones healing, renewed hope and the promise of much better things to come.

I am writing this note in profound gratitude for the gifts you have given to International Ministries in support of my ministry. I could not be here doing the work I most love doing, and serving in the ministry to which God has called me to serve, without you. I am aware that your generous giving is not easy and it entails sacrifices, especially in uncertain times. Thank you, so much for expressing such generosity. I pray that all I do and say are worthy of your continued support.

The artwork that accompanies this note, *Love Your Neighbor*, was created by my niece, Corey Sale Grunert, specifically to be able to share with you. We offer this print as a gesture of gratitude for supporting this ministry to refugees, asylum seekers and displaced peoples.



Corey paints in a medium called water color mosaics. You can find more of her work at her Facebook site <https://www.facebook.com/WatercolorsBySG/photos> or on Etsy at www.etsy.com/shop/WatercolorMosaicsSG

Thank you again for your partnership in this ministry with me. If there is anything that I can do to serve you, or any questions about immigration, asylum seekers and refugees which you need answered, please do not hesitate to ask. I am here to help.

Blessings,

Ray



Interfaith Prayer Walk for Climate. around the NYS Capitol.

March 11th, 2021



from 11AM-1PM

Park at First Lutheran Church
181 Western Ave. Albany

For more information: ken@greenfaith.org

#FaithforClimate #SacredPeopleSacredEarth



GreenFaith



NY RENEWS
NY Renews



Capital Region Interfaith
Creation Care Coalition

Masking and distancing will be required.

Happy Birthday...

Sally Cole
Jasmine Osborne
Jonathan Malone
Rory Garner
Lucy Wong



2nd
5th
10th
13th
22nd

If your birthday is not published in our monthly listing, please notify Dorothy at 465-5161.

Deadline for the April
MOSAIC is March 18



**Remember the
Food Pantry...** toilet tissue

Daylight Saving
Time begins
March 14!



**Thank
you!**

Thank you to one
and all for your
healing prayers
following my hip
surgery; all is well, and I am well on
the mend. -- Mark Chaffin

Spring Begins
March 20 !!!



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