At St. James the Less, the lovely altar is the focal point of our church. Dressed with gorgeous flowers, candles and beautiful fabrics it is the place we show our love for God. Our altar is a holy place because it is the place we remember the goodness of God and our hungry hearts are nourished by God’s outpouring love and perfect grace in the bread and wine made holy.

So what does it mean to experience an “Altar in the World”? The evocative title of Barbara Brown Taylor’s book invites a rediscovery of the meaning and purpose of altars in our life with God.

In her book, she invites us to consider a larger dimension of what God is doing in our lives beyond our Sunday worship. She helps us to consider that the altar on Sunday morning invites us into an altar in the world. If the world is an altar it also holds the memory God’s goodness and outpouring grace in our lives. If there is an altar in the world, then we are nourished outside the church as much as inside.

Altars invite us to make sacrifices of thanks and praise. If the world is God’s altar we are then invited to be open and hungry for God’s nourishment in all places and at all times.

Isn’t it true? Isn’t it true that in our daily lives is where God speaks most... continued on next page
clearly to us? When we pay attention, the bird, the tree, and river teach us of God. When we are listening, our daily lives are filled with wisdom. When we think about it, we can see clearly while we are going about our jobs and volunteer work that we are also ministers to the people around us. God is using everything of this human journey to teach our souls of his love.

During Lent I invite you to a wider view of God’s activity. Don’t just look to the altar at the church, look for an altar in the world. Reflect on the places God is nourishing you and displaying his awesome grace in your life.

With you on the journey, Lisa+
Rev. Lisa Senuta, Rector

Did you know?
You may find Lisa’s sermons Online at www.stjamestheless.org/sermons and on her blog, http://lisasenuta.wordpress.com

Recommended Reading in Lent


Copies are available in the Parish Hall for $15.

Each Sunday at Thirty Worthy Minutes (9:15am in the Parish Hall) the discussion will cover topics from An Altar in the World, including the “Practice of Paying Attention,” and “Practice Getting lost.”
A Note from The Senior Warden

At our winter wonderland Annual Meeting we gave a big Thank You to our wonderful Senior Warden John Stevens and outgoing Vestry members George Clay, Matthew Berry, Alixe Small and Ceci Wooster for their dedicated service to St. James the Less. For those who were not able to get through the blizzard, please take time to thank each of them as we are all very grateful for their good work and commitment to the parish. We also welcomed our new Vestry members Matt Alcorn, Nancy Morr, Jim Carini, and Hope Martin. I look forward to our work together on the Vestry in the year ahead.

Recently I returned from the National Association of Independent School conference that I attend each year. To begin and end the conference there are always inspirational and motivational speakers. One of this year’s speakers presented on the theme “A Plan to Matter,” delineating the following points:

- Plan to matter in your daily lives and in your work.
- Take an active role in sharing and giving daily support of others.
- Take time to create an environment of empowerment.
- Help someone reach a goal.
- Where exactly you want to get to?
- What direction you need to go to get there?
- And what stops you need to hit along the way?

These are all elements of the teachings of our faith and we can see witness to this in our parish every year. The speaker also shared what has been most important he has learned. He thought the key to getting the most out of life is understanding three crucial things:

- Where exactly you want to get to?
- What direction you need to go to get there?
- And what stops you need to hit along the way?

This resonated with me regarding St. James the Less and our next steps. This past year we have accomplished the parish vision statement and now the Vestry will work, through God’s will, to frame a mission statement to help guide us and determine mission objectives. We might consider this as our Plan to Matter in service to each other, to others in the community-at-large and to God. We have had a productive and rewarding year which is important to recognize, celebrate and be thankful for together. I look forward to our work together with all Vestry members and Junior Warden Katie Synek. At any time please share your thoughts, ideas and support.

Nancy G. Whiteman, Senior Warden
A Note from the Deacon

This Lent we begin a new journey of discovery...of giving up...of discernment.

It sounds compelling and a journey I want to take, especially with a most remarkable and spiritually wise teacher - Barbara Brown Taylor - and her book, An Altar in the World - as our resource.

Hopefully I’ll learn a new way, using a better spiritual lens, to see God in the world, and the places God is nourishing me and displaying His awesome grace in my life.

I’d like to think I’m off to a good start, seeing Him in a number of places:

- healing...
- nature...
- prayer...
- unexpected joy...
- mercy...
- a flower...
- water...
- a gentle breeze...
- forgiveness...
- compassion...
- mountains...
- a baby’s cooing...
- love...
- chance encounters of all kinds...
- music...
- life’s struggles...

but I know that just scratches the surface of God in this world.

I’m ready for this journey of discovery. It’s time to take off ye olde glasses.

Blessings to all on the path of life,
Rev. Ron Valentine,
Deacon and Chaplain

Quilts Beyond Borders

Saturday, March 14th from 9:00AM to 3:00PM

Come when you can, stay as long as you can.
Invite your friends to come sew too!

Everyone who can sew in a straight line is welcome to join us in the Parish Hall on Saturday, 14th March as we stitch quilt tops for orphans. The pieced quilt tops are then sent to a group of long-arm quilters, who undertake the quilting and binding. We are a mix of church members and friends.

We have now made over 170 quilts, most of which have been sent to orphans in Ethiopia, which is at high altitude and therefore cold at night.

Please bring with you: sewing machine, pins, threads, scissors, extension cord and power strip.

Let Sue Babbs know if you want a kit to sew, so that she has enough cut ready for sewing.

Driver needed: We will be buying lunch from Panera or Three Tarts. We need a volunteer to collect the food for us (and stay to eat with us, if you like). This allows all of us to sew for longer.

Full details from Sue (847 446 5251) or suebabbs385@gmail

World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 6, 2015 at 10:00am

World Day of Prayer is a global, ecumenical movement of Christians, joined together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday of March. This year’s service will be held at Northfield Community Church at 10:00am. Come on the day to worship and pray with members of all the churches of Northfield. Contact Sue Babbs for more information.
A Note from the Director of Music

"Into the woods, and who can tell what’s waiting on the journey?"

As we enter into another season of Lent, I am drawn to the imagery that nature provides us, specifically the woods. And it may come as no surprise that Stephen Sondheim’s ‘Into the Woods,’ (most recently made into a fantastic movie), has sparked a lot of thought about the woods for this lover of musical theatre.

In this musical, various fairy tale characters must go into the woods to accomplish a task; some have hopes and wishes for themselves, others have been set about the journey, but all must pass through the physical and proverbial woods in order to achieve their goals.

Whilst in the woods, the characters encounter a wide range of experiences, including meetings with others who help them along the way, and with those who delay their journey; decisions and turning points that cause them to ponder their life before and after being in the woods; losses of loved ones, and situations that require them to work together with unlikely friends for survival.

‘Into the Woods’ is so richly packed with many many layers of understanding, far too many for me to unfold here. However, a journey ‘into the woods’ is what I am seeking this Lent: a chance to be in a place other than my comfort zone, a chance to allow the Spirit to bring an awareness to me, a chance to be alone and to be spiritually brave, to rediscover what makes the journeying worth the effort.

- Anastasia Cameron Balmer
  Director of Music

Worship During Lent & Holy Week

Ash Wednesday, February 18th

+ Ashes To Go — 7:00AM and 3:30PM in the Church Parking Lot
  Join Revs. Lisa and Ron as they distribute ashes in the church.

+ Service with Communion and Imposition of Ashes — 10:00AM

+ Service with Choral Music and Imposition of Ashes — 7:00PM

Holy Week - March 29th - April 5th

+ Palm Sunday - Sunday, March 29th, One Service at 10:00AM
  This liturgy enacts the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry to Jerusalem just prior to the crucifixion.

+ Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 2nd, 6:00PM Meal, 7:00PM Eucharist.
  This liturgy enacts the Last Supper in which Jesus washed the disciples feet and shared the bread and wine with them as his body and blood given for all. The liturgy ends in the Sanctuary and the altar is ceremonially stripped of its adornments to symbolize the betrayal and abandonment of Jesus.

+ Good Friday - Friday, April 3rd, 9:30AM, Noon and 7:00PM.
  On this day the church is adorned in black commemorating Jesus’ death. Services are focused on prayers for the world and for all in need. Join us at noon for communion using the reserved sacrament and at 7:00PM for a beautiful Taizé prayer service with music.

+ Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 5th, 8:00AM and 10:00AM.
  Join us after Lent in the church to celebrate the Risen Savior!
Glen Tracy Visits Madagascar

When Glen Tracy set off on a ministry trip to the Diocese of Toliara in Madagascar last month, he had hopes of glimpsing a rare red bird in the Baobab forest. And to his amazement, he got his wish.

Glen describes riding through the arid landscape, past 3,000 year-old trees on an ox-drawn cart, accompanied by a capable guide who knew the botanic names and medicinal uses of each plant. Sitting beside him was Eric Robison, his companion for the trip and a parishioner and Master Gardener from St. David’s in Glenview. While Glen was sure he would likely not see the bird, at one point he looked up and could hardly believe his eyes when, sure enough, there it was.

Later, as they sat at dinner with Bishop Todd and Rev. Patsy McGregor, their hosts at the Diocese of Toliara, everyone was invited to share their “Christlike moments” from the day. Glen told the group how thrilling it was to see this rare bird, and how it felt like a “Christlike moment” for him and perhaps the highlight of his two-week trip.

“Christlike moments” are not foreign to Glen. I had the privilege of interviewing him this past week and he freely shared how he came to know Christ in a deep and powerful way in 1995 during the breakup of his first marriage. Addicted to drugs and alcohol, and reaching rock bottom in every way he could imagine, a friend shared the love of Christ with Glen and mentored him.

He remembers the moment his life was changed forever as he encountered the love and mercy of Christ while he sat at his desk, filled with a light he has never known before. As a result of this encounter, Glen’s life was forever changed and he has been sober ever since.

Glen was invited by Patsy McGregor to come to Toliara three years ago and even before that time he was encouraged by the folks at St. David’s and the McGregors to visit the ministry that St. James the Less and St. David’s have long supported in Madagascar. But as he said, the timing never felt right.

Last year Todd asked him again and Glen admits that he didn’t know if he could afford the time away from his business. But after a chance meeting with Eric Robison, the master gardener, following one of the Babbs’ presentations at St. David’s, everything fell into place.

Glen expresses a look of wonder as he describes all the ways the trip came together: generous donations came unbidden, Eric offered companionship and expertise, and Glen was able to find a window to leave his business for two weeks.

Just as God’s provision surprised and blessed him in 1995, Glen was amazed to experience God’s hand again, this time leading him to Madagascar.

While in Madagascar, Glen and Eric led a team of workers, along with their translator, Zafi, who worked from 7am to 6pm everyday while they were there.

The laborers teamed up and accomplished an incredible amount, especially given the fact they only had three wheelbarrows, a couple rakes and had to do everything by hand. They built a garden, leveling the ground and worked with a local nursery to plant local, sustainable vegetation.

The majority of people have no doors on their simple homes, have no electricity, and no shoes. He describes how his perspective on life when we are willing to surrender to the workers, who are extremely poor and would usually receive $5 a month for their labor.

These workers, who usually had a hard time working together because of various tensions, came together as a team and some even worked without pay for several days to finish the garden after Glen and Eric left.

Glen was personally impacted in many ways. Perhaps most startling for him was the extreme poverty the people in Madagascar experience. The majority of people have no doors on their simple homes, have no electricity, and no shoes. He describes how his perspective on what we truly need in life is forever altered.

Glen shares how he and the McGregors were proud to offer $5 a day to the workers, who are extremely poor and would usually receive $5 a month for their labor.

Glen speaks highly of the incredible work Todd and Patsy are doing and all that they have accomplished and how they daily experience the power of prayer. He hopes everyone will take the opportunity to go and see what they are doing. He will also be sharing his experience at the Men’s Discussion group Monday, March 23 at 7:30pm and hopes to go back to Madagascar sometime in the next few years.

As I reflected on my time hearing Glen’s stories, I am struck by the incredible, surprising mercy of God present in Glen’s life (and for that matter, in all our lives). In the gifts of red bird sightings, in overwhelming love and deliverance from addiction, in providing ways to serve outside our comfort zones, God opens doors to freedom and new life when we are willing to surrender and say, “Yes.”

- Kate Rickard, Communications Coordinator

LENTEN 2015 EDITION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SNAPSHOTS OF THE TRIP

January 2015

LENTEN 2015 EDITION
### Levi’s Table: Serving the Grove in Northbrook

Our Levi’s Table ministry started in the spring of 2000. The Vestry wanted to establish a new ministry that truly reached out and helped people in real need. We provide a wide range of activities and services, including a monthly birthday party, worship services, taking them on trips such as to The Botanic Gardens as well as individual involvement, sharing their joys while providing moral support on their sad days.

The Grove of Northbrook is located at 263 Skokie Blvd. (just north of Garden Fresh Market). Any interested volunteers should contact Sue Babbs, Bill Fox, or Ron Valentine.

+++  

---

### Opportunities to Serve

**Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2:30pm**  
Ash Wednesday Service

**Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2:30pm**  
Monthly Birthday Party

**Sunday, March 1, 9:30am**  
We will be bringing any residents who wish to attend our 10:00am service

**Wednesday, March 11, 2:30pm**  
Eucharist Service

**Wednesday, March 18, 2:30pm**  
Monthly Birthday Party

**Wednesday, March 25, 2:30pm**  
Afternoon Prayer Service

**Friday, April 3, 2:30pm**  
Good Friday Service

**Sunday, April 5 9:30am**  
We will be bringing any residents who wish to attend our 10:00am service

**Wednesday, April 8, 2:30pm**  
Easter Eucharist Service

**Wednesday, April 15, 2:30pm**  
Monthly Birthday Party

**Wednesday, April 22, 2:30pm**  
Afternoon Prayer Service

**Sunday, May 3, 9:30am**  
We will be bringing any residents who wish to attend our 10:00am service

**Wednesday, May 13, 2:30pm**  
Eucharist Service

**Wednesday, May 20, 2:30pm**  
Monthly Birthday Party

**Wednesday, May 27, 2:30pm**  
Afternoon Pentecost Prayer Service

---

### Cyclones Chedza & Fundi Hit Madagascar

On January 16th, as Glen Tracy and Eric Robison arrived in Antananarivo a cyclone hit Madagascar. Then, on February 7th a second one passed through the town of Toliar a itself. Todd and Patsy are fine, and the newly landscaped land is underwater but otherwise looks unharmed. Glen reckons that as the soil is so sandy the water will drain away quickly. We are still waiting to discover the full extent of the damage caused by Cyclone Fundi.

Bishop Todd McGregor writes:

Cyclone Chedza hit our Diocese in the Morondava area (on the western side of Madagascar), about 300 miles north of Toliar a where Patsy and I live. The heavy rains, flooding and wind caused considerable damage throughout the whole island.

At least 68 people were killed, around 135,000 people were affected by floods, 46,000 were displaced and 2,322 homes were destroyed.

There is damage to schools, colleges and churches.

The Diocese of Toliar a is operating cyclone relief and needs support for the following emergency assistance:

1. FOOD: distributions over two months for 3,000 people - $12,000
2. TEMPORARY SHELTERS: for 300 families - $12,000
3. PURCHASE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDS: for the upcoming planting season - $5,000
4. REPAIR OF 8 DAMAGED CHURCHES AND PROPERTIES - $54,500

Thankfully, the current relief funds committed by our partners total approximately $30,000. This is great news and we praise the Lord for raising up generous donors. A further $53,500 is needed to help alleviate this devastation.

If you wish to make a donation, checks can be made out to St James the Less, please put “Madagascar cyclone relief” in the comment line, or you can donate Online at [https://secure-q.net/Donations/SAMS/3388](https://secure-q.net/Donations/SAMS/3388)

More information can be found on the outreach bulletin board & at [www.peoplereaching.org](http://www.peoplereaching.org/)

Kneeler for the Cathedral at the Cathedral!

A kneeler has been designed for the Bishop’s Chair at the currently being-built Cathedral for the Diocese of Toliar a. Bishop Todd’s chair will be moved from St Lioka’s, Ankilkaly, to St Patrick’s Cathedral. If anyone would like to stitch the kneeler (or donate towards its cost), please contact Sue Babbs. It is hoped that it will be completed in time for the dedication of the Cathedral on St Patrick’s Day 2016.

---

**Donate Today!**
Easter Offerings and Flower Donations

Please use the envelope inserted into this newsletter to make a special Easter Offering or Flower donation. To be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin, all donations must be received by March 31. Please mail your donation in, drop it in the offering plate, or leave it in the church office.

Men’s Discussion Group

Monday, March 23, 7:30pm

The Men’s Discussion Group at St. James the Less, which meets monthly, has invited Glen Tracy to come and share first-hand his experience in Madagascar this January. Mark your calendars and plan to attend! Please connect with Phil Montross if you have questions or want to be a part of hosting this event.

“Are you still waiting for God to answer you, or is your life the answer you have been seeking, hiding in plain view?”

- From An Altar in the World, p. 182.
“... let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being RAISED UP, and things which had grown old are being MADE NEW, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made...”

- Solemn Collect on Good Friday, BCP 280

St. James the Less Staff Contacts and Address
550 Sunset Ridge Rd., Northfield, IL 60093 | (847) 446-8430 | www.stjamestheless.org

Rev. Lisa Senuta, Rector | lsenuta@stjamestheless.org | (847) 446-8430 x 201
Rev. Ron Valentine, Deacon | chaplain@stjamestheless.org | x 208
Virginia Hunt, Administrative Assistant | virginia@stjamestheless.org | x 200
Kate Rickard, Communications Coordinator | kate@stjamestheless.org | x 202
Anastasia C. Balmer, Director of Music | music@stjamestheless.org | x 204
Joanne Straughn, Bookkeeper | bookkeeper@stjamestheless.org | x 202
Nancy Whiteman, Senior Warden | vestry@stjamestheless.org

Regular Sunday Schedule
8:00 am - Holy Eucharist - Rite I
10:00 am - Holy Eucharist - Rite II with Music*

9:15 am - 9:50 am
Thirty Worthy Minutes for Adults* | An engaging time of learning and discussion

10:00 am - Godly Play*
An interactive and creative lesson for Preschool through 2nd Grade
*Nursery for Children ages 0-3 Provided