



March 2025

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT



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A Note from the Rector

Beloved of Holy Spirit,

Beloved of Holy Spirit, Lent is upon us! Our theme this year is Walking the Way, the Truth, and the Life. This is taken from John 14:6 in which Jesus says, I am the way and the truth and the life.

To begin our journey, we will dedicate a set of fourteen Stations of the Cross, which we have received as a gift from the Diocese of Northern Indiana. Brother John Huebner, a friend and Franciscan Friar, will be our guest on Sunday, March 2, to share the story of how they came to us.

We will follow Jesus in learning to turn our lives fully over to God, loving rather than blaming, taking an honest inventory of our lives, experiencing God's love and mercy, and ministering with commitment and compassion.

Please mark your calendars for these important days as we journey into the observance of a Holy Lent:

March 4 – Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner and talent show

March 5 - Ash Wednesday

April 13 – Palm Sunday

April 17 – Maundy Thursday evening Agape Meal, Holy Communion, Foot/Hand Washing

April 18 – Good Friday

April 20 – Easter Sunday

In Christ's love,
Dena

March 2: Introducing "After Church" Sermon Dialog

Sermon Dialogue after 10:30 worship on Sundays Some people have commented about how edifying it would be to have a few minutes to discuss Sunday's scripture readings and the sermon while it is still fresh on their minds. So, beginning Sunday, March 2nd, Dena will be glad to meet for a short discussion following the worship service on Sundays. ***If you're interested, bring your refreshments into the Community Room.***



MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Douglas Peacock	03/03
Julie Larson	03/05
Teresa Matthews	03/06
Brit Small-OIE	03/06
Kathleen Phillips	03/07
Dave Hollister	03/10
Tom Moloney	03/10
Rod Vestal	03/10
Eleanor Kinsey	03/11
Beth Mangum	03/12
Jim Woodruff	03/16
Daniel Trevor	03/19
Connor Caskey	03/21
Shannon Dowler	03/22
Ann Smith	03/22
Genevieve Burda	03/24
Mary Maupin	03/24
Peggy Wilson	03/24
Erika Schneider	03/26
Susan Peacock	03/31

March 2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

SUN	2	8 am Men's Breakfast 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
TUE	4	11 am Tai Chi 6 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
WED	5	9:45 am Centering Prayer 6:00 Holy Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes
SAT	8	9:30 am Sisters in the Spirit 1 pm Honeycomb Music Circle
SUN	9	9:00 am <i>To Grasp Hope Even in the Darkness</i> 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
MON	10	6 pm NAMI
TUE	11	11 am Tai Chi
WED	12	9:45 am Centering Prayer 6:00 pm Soup Dinner and Lenten Program
SUN	16	9 am <i>To Become the Bridge Over the Divide</i> 10:30 am Holy Eucharist After church - Outreach Committee
TUE	18	11 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Vestry meeting
WED	19	9:45 am Centering Prayer 6 pm Soup Dinner and Lenten Program
THU	20	3:30 Communication Team
SUN	23	9 am <i>To Leave More of "The Snark" Behind</i> 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
MON	24	6 pm NAMI
TUE	25	11 am Tai Chi
WED	26	9:45 am Centering Prayer 6:00 pm Soup Dinner and Lenten Program
SUN	30	10:30 am Holy Eucharist After church - Welcoming Committee

A Christian's "Survival Tool Kit"

9 AM on March 9, 16 and 23 with Deacon Ty
Christian Education in the Community Room

Who hasn't been challenged by life circumstances? Who hasn't been feeling left behind lately? Sometimes we just need to talk about fixes for that darkness which threatens to smother us. Anxious times push Christians to remind one another: there are spiritual survival skills we can put to use in everyday life. In the most desperate circumstances, Christians have always found ways to thrive, and we can too!

March 9 at 9 AM To Grasp Hope Even in the Darkness

Practical prescriptions for mourning and loss can be hard to grasp. For me (Ty), add together reactivity to the effects of 2+ years of pandemic and my wife's death, and the ongoing effects of "Helene" along with changes in a divided nation and here at church. We'll converse about what Rx might be possible when losses in our hearts are heaped high. A helpful resource in transitioning from a familiar world to an awkward new one: John O'Donohue's *To Bless the Space Between Us, A Book of Blessings* (New York etc, Doubleday, 2008). "... there are certain times when blessing is nearer to us than any other person or thing" ("Introduction", xiv).

March 16 at 9 AM To Become the Bridge Over the Divide

Spiritual practices help us grapple with our interior loneliness and estrangement. We'll converse about barriers to becoming stronger in making connections that matter—connections within ourselves, in families with hostile divides, and inside anxious communities. And, rest assured we can find our unique way to do this with God's help. A helpful resource in bridging from "my" world to a different, even hostile one: Miroslav Volf's *A Public Faith—How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Grand Rapids, MI, Brazos Press, 2011). An argument for—and supportive of finding ways to be open to—sharing wisdom.

March 23 at 9 AM To Leave More of "The Snark" Behind

Practices that reverse anger, cynicism, and despair can be hard to take with you into the world. We'll converse about everyday madness and what to do so as not to feel so stuck. A helpful resource in bridging from everyday upset to "uncommon decency": Richard J. Mouw's *Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World* (Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2010). Holding onto strong beliefs doesn't have to make the chip on my shoulder any bigger!



LENT WEDNESDAY SOUP SUPPERS

**Come for the Meal at 6:00pm
and Stay for the Discussion at 6:30**

**March 12, 19 and 26
April 2 and 9**

Stories and Fellowship with our Latina/Latino Neighbors



Join us on Wednesday evenings during Lent. Rebecca Sharp will facilitate meaningful conversations with friends from La Esperanza. We will hear their stories and discuss how faith and local communities shape their lives.

Our guests will include:

- A woman who has lived in America undocumented her entire life.
- A U.S.-born woman who resides here with her husband.
- Individuals from Mexico and Honduras.
- A DACA recipient (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), part of a federal program that allows undocumented immigrants who arrived as children to work and temporarily avoid deportation.

Come, listen, and learn from these powerful stories.



An Efficient Man

He drove up and entered the queue. The wash cycle had just started for the car in the bay. The one in front of him was paying for their turn. He threw the transmission into park and sat patiently, listening to the music. Everything he'd prepared for his upcoming presentation was in the folder, next to his laptop, on the seat beside him.

He was an efficient man.

Eventually, the first car slowly exited the wash stall, shiny and clean, with diamonds of rinse water trailing onto the pavement. The car in front of him pulled into position and the cycle began again.

He pulled his car forward. The menu board offered four selections: Ultra Wash, Super Wash, Deluxe Wash, and Wash. He digested the options and made his choice: Deluxe Wash. Ultra and Super Wash included additives and sealers he didn't trust (carnauba wax, windshield treatment, finish protection). Wash excluded the undercarriage cleaning, which he did want. Deluxe was definitely it. He was an efficient man.

He thought back to that day when he pulled into his younger brother's driveway to find him hunched under the open hood of his car, garden hose in hand. Curious, he bent into the engine compartment.

"What the heck are you doing?"

"Cleaning my car," his brother replied. The mist from the spray bounced off the engine block in a light fog.

"You're washing your motor?"

His brother looked up with that "why-are-you-asking-the-obvious-doesn't-everybody-do-this" rolling of his eyes.

"Why are you doing that?" queried the man.

"To get all the road grime and dirt off the engine. If the motor's caked with mud, the car runs hotter.

A clean car runs better. You need to do this to your car.” His brother frequently gave him advice with a knowing conviction.

From that day on, the man took his brother’s advice to heart, for he was an efficient man. His turn in the car wash finally arrived. “Pull forward. Pull forward,” the robotic Voice monotonously intoned. “Stop! Stop! Stop!” admonished the red lights and the Voice. He moved the shift lever to the “P”, absentmindedly picked up the folder and set it down again immediately. He didn’t need to do that. He was prepared. He leaned over and turned down the music, and sat back against the seat, closing his eyes. He knew well the timing of the machine’s cycle, just long enough for a quick catnap. The radio volume was low enough for him to hear the machine’s completion.

He was an efficient man.

The pickup stopped at the selection board just as the new wash cycle began. The driver sat riffling through some invoices, impatiently waiting for the car ahead of him to pull out of the stall. He watched the big wash carriage move forward through the final rinse cycle and stop. Green lights flashed on, signaling the driver to exit the wash bay.

The car sat there.

One minute.

Two minutes.

The pickup driver blew his horn, growing slightly aggravated.

The car didn’t move.

The guy got out of his truck, a little perturbed. He needed to get on with his day. He didn’t need this crap. He rapped on the driver’s window. This guy was gonna get a piece of his mind. The window stayed up.

“Hey DUDE! Get moving! I don’t have all day!”

Nothing.

The guy wiped the rinse water off the window and cupped his hands around his eyes, shielding the reflections, and peered inside. The man sat in front of the steering wheel, not moving. The guy yanked the driver’s door open.

To his surprise, the man rolled part way out of the door, his head and one shoulder lifelessly resting on the wet concrete floor. The manila folder and the computer with the Powerpoint display inside lay on the passenger’s seat, an unfinished business frozen in eternity. There would be no presentation today.

He was an efficient man. 

A Phishing Expedition Leads to a Lenten Christian Education Offering

By Deacon Ty (jtjones100@gmail.com)



Several years ago, as I was struggling to orient my tourist's street map at a busy intersection in downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I received an unwelcome text asking me to return a call ASAP about the unauthorized use of my credit card. When I did so, a smooth professional voice introduced herself as "from your bank" and... well, some of you can guess from your own experience what happened over the next few minutes. I was too quick to comply with her offer to use "what the bank needs from you" to fix my problem, and I found myself caught up in an extensive phishing scam. It took Carol and me many, many hours and significant efforts to make it right again.

Truth be told, years later I am still a little post traumatic about responding to requests for information online. To this day I can get a trigger reaction: sudden reactivity and an irrational anxiety that I'm about to do something really dumb. Without realizing just how much "my stupid" had cost me emotionally, I have had many opportunities to critique my naivete, but (lesson learned) I'm not going to waste energy beating myself up over it anymore.



Recently, maybe like me, you can sense how our little corner of the world feels even more threatened than it seemed through that first year we were still learning to live with Covid! And that's the #1 reason I imagined offering a more conversational set of programs as a Lenten Christian Education offering. I'll look forward to moderating our Sunday morning conversations in March. **Look elsewhere in this issue to learn more about the three Sunday morning "topic areas" in which we can share and compare more about where we find ourselves post-Helene in this raw new year.** Each one's experience shared can be of help to us all, and I do look forward to enjoying more of your company.

Everyone is welcome!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Keith Pierce

A New Chapter: From Ministry to Business to Mountain Life



Keith's life has been shaped by faith, family, and a passion for music. Born in Decatur, Georgia, to parents with roots in East Tennessee, he grew up in the Atlanta suburbs and spent most of his life there. He attended Furman University in South Carolina and later The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky.

While in seminary, Keith transitioned from his Baptist upbringing after accepting a part-time job as a youth pastor in an Episcopal church. He went on to spend a decade in ministry, serving on church staffs in Indiana, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee.



In 1994, Keith married Kristen, the love of his life, and together they raised two daughters. However, in his 30s, he made the difficult decision to leave full-time ministry. "I left for two reasons," he recalls. "The pay ceiling, and it didn't seem to be a good fit with two little kids. I was away too many nights and weekends."

He transitioned into commercial real estate, working as an analyst specializing in metrics, statistics, and market trends. While this may seem like an unusual shift, Keith had honed his analytical skills as a political science major at Furman. "It was a lot like working puzzles," he said. The work was intellectually satisfying, and he remained in the field for 20 years. However, the high-pressure environment eventually took its toll. "I didn't want a career anymore—I just wanted a job. I was done with climbing the ladder," Keith admits.



By 2024, after years of dreaming and planning, Keith and Kristen made the thrilling—and slightly terrifying—decision to leave their longtime home in Georgia and start fresh in Western North Carolina. Kristen took a position as a hospital chaplain at Pardee, and just a week after settling in, they visited Holy Spirit Church. To their delight, it immediately felt like home. Keith now works remotely, doing similar research and reporting as

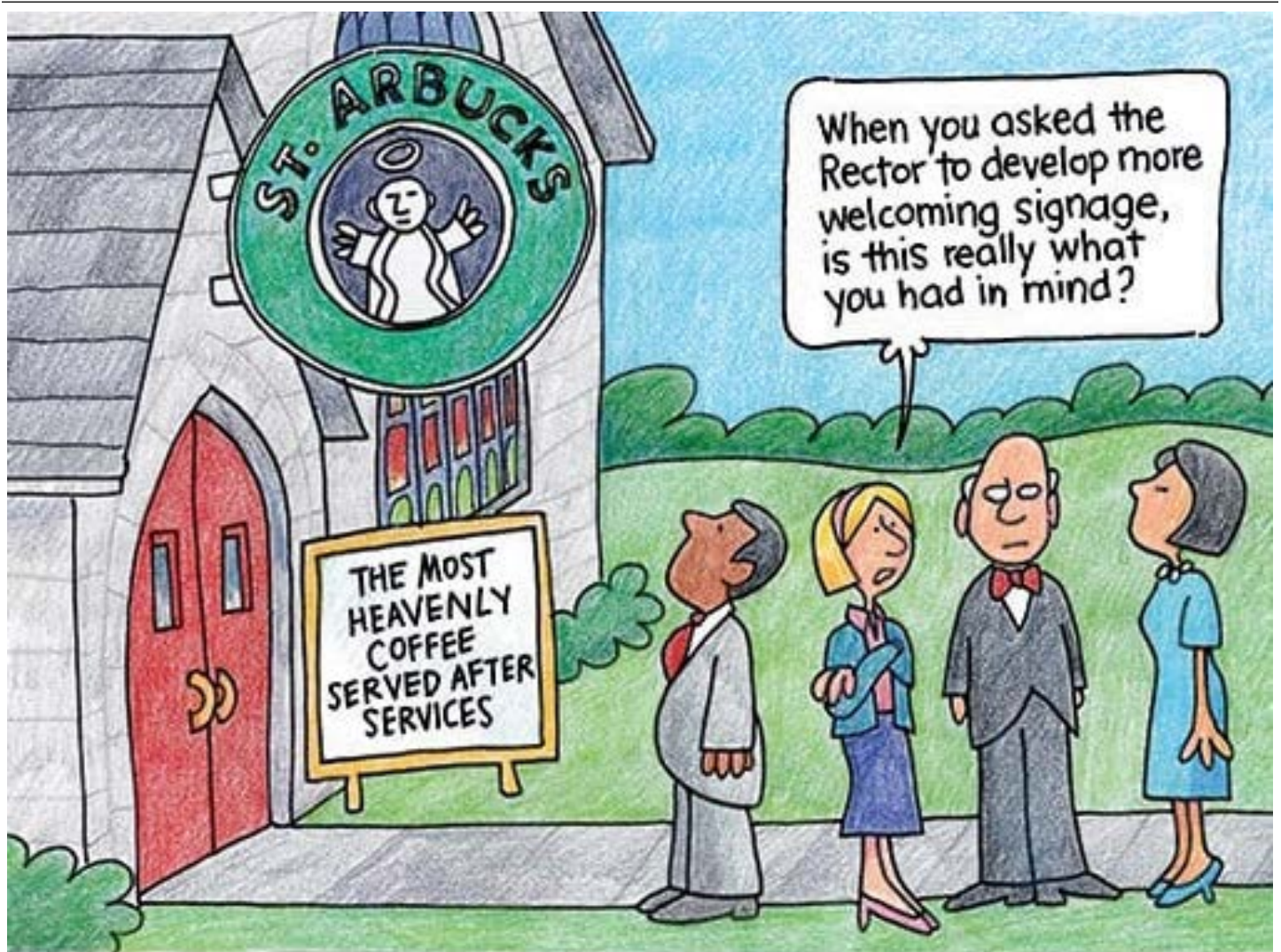
he did in commercial real estate, but in the utility field. He leads a team that prepares studies and reports on how utility companies can help solve critical problems.



front row L-R is: daughter Lydia, Asa, Lydia's boyfriend Logan, daughter Emily, and her husband Caleb.

These days, Keith embraces a slower, more intentional pace of life. Music remains his greatest passion—whether listening to, writing, or playing rock and folk tunes on both acoustic and electric guitars (LOUD electric guitars!). He enjoys reading about religion and history and spending time with Kristen and their beloved dog, Asa.

Laughing, Keith reflects on how Holy Spirit has already challenged his expectations. ““I thought I’d enjoy waking up on a Sunday and deciding whether I felt like going to church or not. Turns out, most weeks I feel like going.”

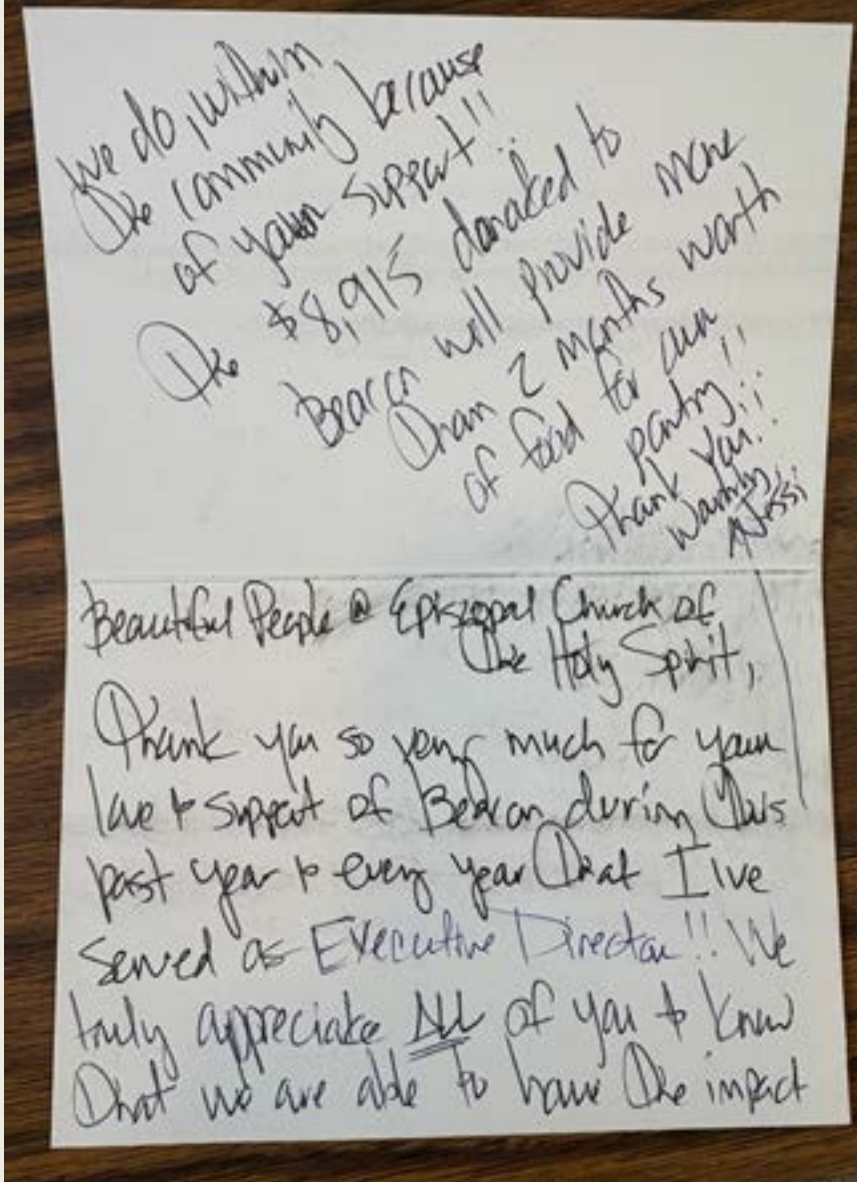


First Sunday Offering for March: *Beacon of Hope*



Beacon provides food assistance to roughly 1,000 low-income families each month in Madison and surrounding counties.

They distribute upwards of 40,000 pounds of food each month to our community, helping to increase food security for those in need.



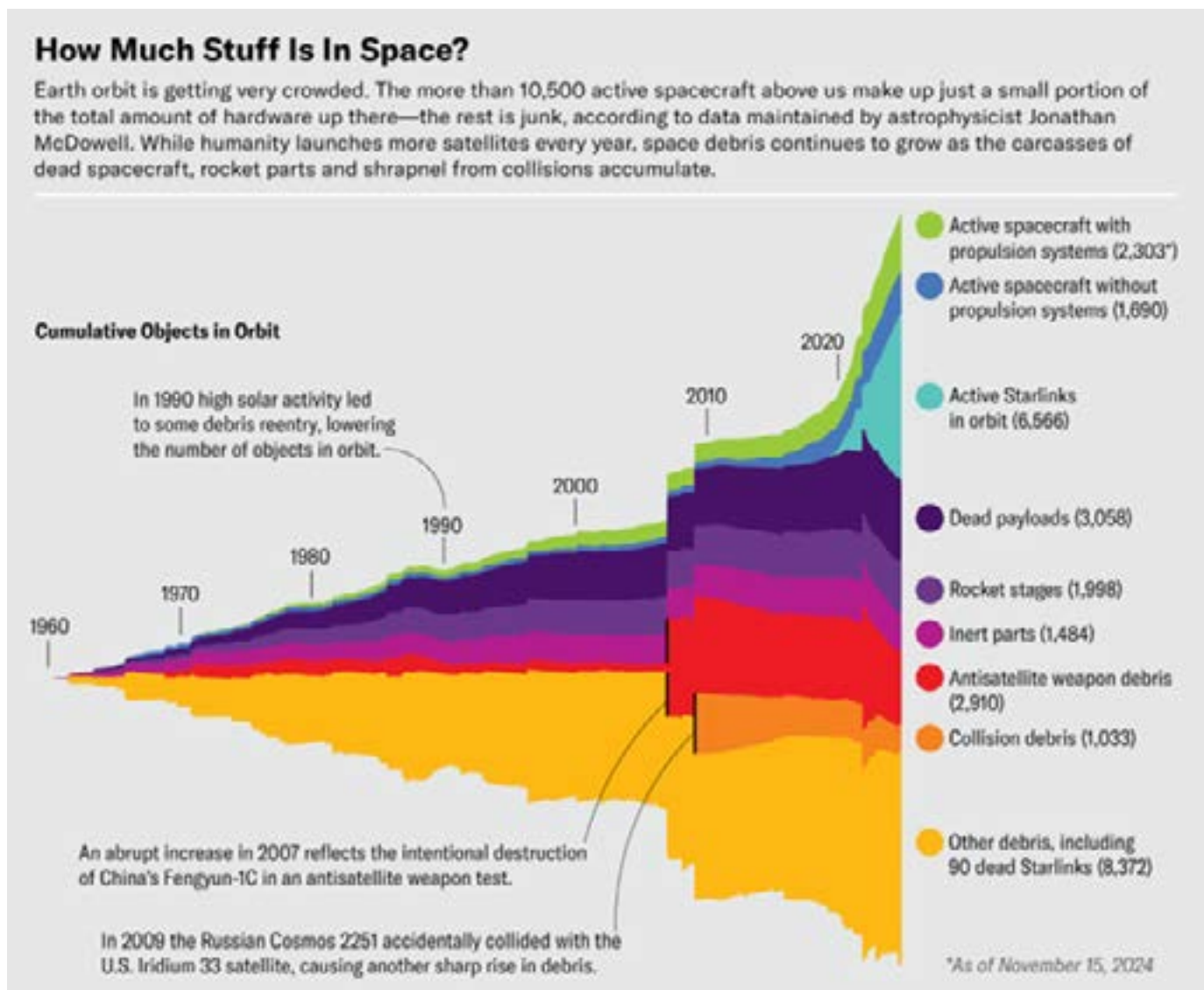
Thank you card
for Holy Spirit's
2024 support,
from Beacon of
Hope's Executive
Director Jessi Koontz



Science Moment: Space Junk

Submitted by Gail Kase

Currently there are more than 25,000 pieces of human-made junk larger than 10 centimeters orbiting Earth. This debris travels at relative speeds 15 times faster than a bullet, about 25,000 mph. Orbital space is finite and is being rapidly consumed by a few organizations, most notably SpaceX, OneWeb and Amazon. SpaceX owns and operates the majority of all working satellites, and the company aims to launch tens of thousands more to provide global broadband Internet coverage. At his pace, orbital space will become unusable—especially the most popular region, Low Earth Orbit (LEO), which extends up to 2,000 kilometers. Currently, every satellite that is launched is equivalent to a piece of single-use plastic, in that its fate is to become trash. The technology to recycle some space trash is being developed. SpaceX is working on creating reusable parts of its rockets. New technology alone isn't enough to fix the space junk problem, but current global space policy lags behind technological advances. Ultimately the governments that permit spacecraft to be launched are liable for any damage their space objects cause.



Let This Darkness Be a Bell Tower (Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29)

~Rainer Maria Rilke

Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.
Let this darkness be a bell tower
and you the bell. As you ring,
what batters you becomes your strength.
Move back and forth into the change.
What is it like, such intensity of pain?
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.
In this uncontainable night,
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,
the meaning discovered there.
And if the world has ceased to hear you,
say to the silent earth: I flow.
To the rushing water, speak: I am.

From Sonnets to Orpheus; Insel-Verlag, 1923.

**“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free ...
it expects what never was and never will be.”**

~ Thomas Jefferson

March 2025 Ministry Schedule

	03/02/25	03/09/25	03/16/25	03/23/25	03/30/25	04/06/25
Vestry	Keith Pierce	Ron Pell	Amanda Hilty	Bendik Clark	Claire Gillespie	Mike Robinson
Acolyte	Gail Kase	Amanda Hilty	Peggy Wilson	Ann Smith	Gail Kase	Amanda Hilty
Offertory Musician	Tom Panek	Mark Holland	Ann Smith	Robertjohn Gillespie	Janice Mallindine	Rebecca Sharp
First Reader	Patty King	Keith Pierce	Carol VanVoorhis	Tom Panek	Barbara Schauer	Michael Smith
Second Reader	Ginny Lentz	Kristen Pierce	Beth Mangum	Kathleen Phillips	Bill Sewell	Gail Wiley
Prayer Leader	Mark Holland	Carol VanVoorhis	Patty King	Peggy Wilson	Kathleen Phillips	Gail Kase
Greeter	Kristen Pierce	Pam McNally	Barbara Schauer	Susan Sewell	Mary Jo Sparrow	Bud Wiley
Ushers	Amanda Hilty Kaye Carson	Rod Vestal Bendik Clark	Adam Reda Bill Sewell	Dick Jordan Teresa Matthews	Gail Wiley Susan Sherard	Bendik Clark Mary Jo Sparrow
Eucharistic Minister	Patty King	Tom Panek	Loraine Hilty	Pam McNally	Patty King	Gail Kase
Coffee Hour Host	Carol Woodruff	Pierces	Ginny Lentz	Claire & Robertjohn Gillespie	Ann Toney Carolyn Homra	Susan Sherard Tom Panek
Sunday Cleanup	Toneys	Rod Vestal	Peggy Wilson	Ed McNally	Loraine Hilty	Rebecca Sharp
Altar Guild	Loraine Hilty	Ginny Koranek	Nancy Whitaker	Peggy Wilson	Colleen Boll	Loraine Hilty
Bulletin Folder	Pam McNally	Loraine Hilty	Mary Maupin	Nancy Larkin	Colleen Boll	John Doran/ Martie Carson
Healing Prayer	Ann Smith	Nancy Larkin	Gail Kase	Barbara Schauer	Pat Mahon	Ann Smith
Camera	Carolyn Homra	Peggy Barnes	Teresa Matthews	Barbara Schauer	Carolyn Homra	Peggy Barnes
Supply Stocker	Genevieve Burda	Genevieve Burda	Genevieve Burda	Genevieve Burda	Genevieve Burda	Pam McNally
Trash	Bobby Wilson	Bobby Wilson	Bobby Wilson	Bobby Wilson	Bobby Wilson	Bobby Wilson

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Dena Whalen,
Interim Rector
Martie Carson, Parish
Administrator
Teresa Sumpter, Parish Musician
Rebecca Sharp, Executive Director,
La Esperanza, and Parish
Custodian
Ana Gaspar Lara, Co-Director,
La Esperanza

VESTRY MEMBERS

Amanda Hilty, Senior
Warden
Ron Pell, Junior Warden
Debra Carlson
Bendik Clark
Claire Gillespie
Gail Kase
Keith Pierce
Jennifer Reda
Mike Robinson

TREASURER
Marcus King

VESTRY CLERK
Deidre Soileau