

March 2010

# The Parish Post

## A Word from the Weiss

### Snow, More Snow, and Feminist Theology

You may have noticed it snowed a bit in February. I did. Like many clergy around Pittsburgh, I was faced with the decision of whether to cancel Sunday worship (which I did) and some other parish events (which I also did). Having to cancel things puts me in a foul mood. Being unable to get out of my driveway doesn't help. One day, however, as I battled feet (feet!) of snow, I paused to reflect on my situation. Feminist theology, of all things, came to mind. Briefly, this theology seeks to appreciate the "feminine" side of God, as well as the importance of women in a particular faith. Christian feminist theology (it's also found in Buddhism and Judaism, among other traditions) makes an interesting point about sin—something we contemplate a bit during Lent. It claims that, while people often think of *sins of commission* (actively doing something wrong), women are more likely guilty of *sins of omission* (failing to do something right). In particular, says this theology, the sin of women is failing to stand up for themselves when others mistreat them. Whether by nature or upbringing, women have historically been subservient to men...and so have stayed quiet, when perhaps the right thing would be to speak up. Now, feminist theology sprang up in the late 20th century; in 2010, in civilized societies, some may say that this is less of an issue. (Some may ask their wives what they should say.)

How did shoveling snow get me here? Well, it occurred to me that, as much as I might grunt and groan and curse the snow, it was my own fault that I couldn't get my car out of the driveway. I had failed to keep up with the snow, even though I knew that I needed to. I had, if you will, committed a sin of omission...I had failed to do the right thing. And this led me to wonder, as I head into Lent: Do I need to grow more in dealing with sins of commission...or sins of omission? Is God looking for me to *give things up?...or take things on?...or a little of both?*

*Along with you in the journey of faith, Fr. Chuck Weiss*

*(That's me on the far right, in my clerical collar.)*



## There's Snow Way To Thank You Enough

I want to thank those who have recently taken snow shovel (and/or snow blower) to hand and pitched in mightily at St. Thomas. We faced some particularly daunting snowfalls last month (and before) which led to a complete lack of parking at the church, not to mention on North Jefferson Avenue. At the risk of leaving someone out, many thanks to Bob, Bob, Mike, Mick, Joe, Ben, Pam, Ed, Rick, Dale, Wayne, Jeremy, Andrew, Jakob, Nathan, Emma, Chuck, Nickolas; and to Michelle, for multiple phone calls to find a snow removal service for the big jobs.



Many Thanks! —Fr. Chuck

## Women Plan Somber Lenten Lunch



In keeping with the Season of Lent, the ladies of St. Thomas have agreed to the following when they gather for this month's lunch:

- No laughing.
- No smiling.
- No talking about men.

This raucous event will take place on Saturday, March 6, 12 PM, at Damon's in McMurray. If this sounds like a good time to you, RSVP to Sue Rodgers.

### St. Patrick Potluck!



On Sunday, March 14, we'll share a meal of our favorite Irish and green foods. Contact Sue Rodgers for more info...

## Lenten Worship Schedule

*Palm Sunday*  
10:00 AM

*Maundy Thursday—Instructional Eucharist*  
7:00 PM

*Good Friday—Contemporary Stations of the Cross*  
7:00 PM

## Lenten Coffee Chat Series continues

Our Lenten Coffee Chat Series, based on questions I've heard in one form or another over the past year, began on February 21 with *How do I know that God exists?* We'll continue as follows:

March 7  
***Who is God?***

(Exploring the most common ways Christians have seen God.)

March 21  
***Why do bad things happen to good people?***  
(Discussing perhaps the most heartfelt question of all.)

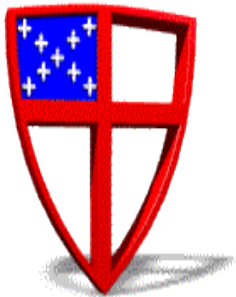
All are welcome to come listen and/or share their thoughts as we grow in faith together.



## Vestry Highlights

- On Saturday, February 20, we had our **Vestry Retreat**. We focused on two areas: Committee Structure and Program (ongoing activities), and Growth Ideas (larger questions about St. Thomas' future). Because we had to cancel our February Vestry meeting due to the weather, we incorporated that meeting into this day. We addressed the following during that portion:
- We have established a **"Snow Plan"**, with Ed Denslow as our "First Responder" and others prepared to assist him;
- **Praying for Communion**—a contemplative worship service intended to strengthen the Diocese—will be offered at St. Thomas on June 26. More information is forthcoming.
- Fr. Chuck appointed Pam Gardner as **Senior Warden**.
- Michelle Lucarelli was elected as **Junior Warden**.
- Ed Denslow was elected as **Secretary**.
- Marie DeRiso has agreed to continue as **Treasurer**.

## Diocesan and National News



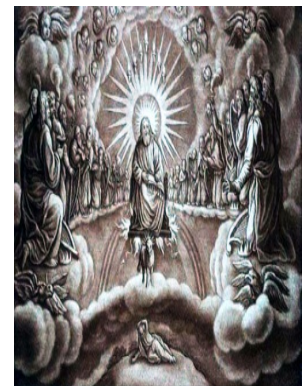
More info:  
[episcopalpgh.org](http://episcopalpgh.org)  
[episcopalchurch.org](http://episcopalchurch.org)

- Executive Council vows **long-time support for Haiti**, gives church \$10 million challenge.
- Executive Council discusses **trends in Episcopal Church membership**. The dioceses in the United States saw a 2.8 percent drop in membership and a 3.1 percent decrease in average Sunday attendance.
- Church of England says **no to full communion with breakaway entity**. The Church of England has said it recognizes and affirms the desire of the Anglican Church in North America to remain in the Anglican family, but it is not yet ready to be in full communion with the breakaway entity.

## Digging Deeper into The Book of Revelation

On 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 7:00 PM, we share in informal Bible study, based on the *Serendipity* series. We began with a 7-week course on *The Gospel of Mark*, and are now into a 7-week course on *The Book of Revelation*. We enjoy some wonderful, in-depth sharing in a relaxed atmosphere. We also laugh a lot!

All adults are welcome to join in at any point. We meet upstairs in the church.



## ***Birthdays***



Bill Edler—March 9  
Tiffany Bushko—March 11  
Daniel O’Lear—March 15  
Jennifer Yerkey—March 21

## ***Anniversaries***



The Weisses—March 5  
The Lucarellis—March 10  
The Turneys—March 20

## ***Notes from the Church Mouse!***

For cryin’ out loud, who’s praying for SNOW?? I climbed over mountains of it to grab a crumb at the Women’s Lunch, only to find out it was postponed. I guess no one has my phone number (it’s secret). Anyway, I heard they had the biggest crowd ever—12 ladies! (and one young man)—the next Saturday...On Feb. 7, there was NO ONE at church! (Spooky.)...And then, no one was Digging Deeper into *The Bible*, since they were still digging themselves out of their driveways!...Finally, by Feb. 14, people were back at church. You also had a friendly guy named Dr. Dan talk about his good work in Haiti, and Fr. Chuck explained about the “Bucket Brigade” that everyone could contribute to...On Shrove Tuesday, MORE SNOW meant NO PANCAKE SUPPER! (Groan.)...You all did manage to trudge through the snow for a combined Ash Wednesday service with St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. Paul (their Church Mouse) and I got some ashes that dropped down....On Feb. 21, the Youth Group filled 5 big buckets to the brim with toiletries to send to Haiti—good work, gang!...Well, see you around (but you won’t see me!), TOM

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