

March 2026

# THE TORCH

ST. AIDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CAMANO ISLAND, WA

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## *From the Rector*

An ad recently floated across my social media feed promoting a specialized Lenten Retreat getaway. It had a beautiful glossy picture of an expansive horizon at that magical hour just after the sun sets. Clear, cloudless skies filled the top third of the frame with a pleasant ribbon of light orange just above the trees on the horizon where they met the air above. The lush, green, leafy trees filled the bottom half of the picture until they came to a manicured grassy knoll in the foreground. And on that grassy knoll a perfect, architecturally designed fire pit patio sat ready for retreat goers to sip wine and talk about the day's lectures as they took in the sunset view. One could not help but be inspired by this ad and feel nudged to learn more. I certainly thought to myself, "Wow! Now *that's* a Lenten retreat!"

After sitting with the retreat flyer for a little longer, in an almost meditative mode, the whole sense of the thing shifted and changed. Was this really the ideal retreat for an authentic Lenten experience? Maybe. One shouldn't rush to judgement too quickly. The lessons of Lent can come in many and various ways. But the contrast between this "retreat" and Jesus' retreat into the desert couldn't be put in sharper relief. At the end of a long day in the desert Jesus may very well have built himself a nice fire by which to keep warm. It's less likely, however, that he had a 2013 Napa Valley Pinot and a circle of friends to share it with!

Lent does not have to be a season of suffering and self-imposed hardship. In fact, it's better if it steers clear of all that prideful spiritual athleticism. But it certainly does have to be *something*. It needs to disrupt normal patterns and habits so that we can see the gift of God's presence and the direction of His gentle leading. In its finest form Lent is an expression of love that we give to God in order that we may live ever more in the strength of His love for us.

As we continue our journey through Lent invitations to encounter God will begin to appear here and there and everywhere. In fact, Fr Frank's Thursday night series is literally called "Encountering God" (in a biblical mode)! But encounters with God can occur at any time and place. The scriptures say "Drawn near to God and he will draw near to you." (James 4:8) That means watch out, once you start looking for God, God is happy to oblige!

I frequently sense this drawing near during the days of Holy Week. The sequence of days leading up to Easter tells, in vivid and dramatic fashion, the story of God's love working in and through Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. It's powerful week in-and-of itself, but the fact that Christians worldwide walk the way of Holy Week together is especially moving. It is the Body of Christ remembering who it is and whose it is. It is God's love that saved us, claims us, sustains us, and works through us.

As you continue your Lenten journey in faith may God's life-giving presence and grace bless you more and more.

Yours in Christ,  
Drew



### *From the Senior Warden*

It is truly an honor to serve as your Senior Warden this year. In this position, I will do my very best to represent all of you and be transparent and collaborative. Communication with you will be a priority for me so please feel free to contact me at any time regarding any of your thoughts regarding our Parish.

I am so grateful for the direction and leadership given by Candi in her role as Senior Warden. Her service will be a helpful tool for me moving forward.

2026 is already shaping up to be a very busy year here at St. Aidan's. There will be a Vestry Retreat on March 2<sup>nd</sup> to plan Parish priorities for the year. This meeting will provide opportunity for all Vestry Members to give input regarding plans for all Parish ministries for activities this year. I will be reporting the results of this meeting in April Torch.

As we enter this Lenten Season, I am reminded that this is a time meant for slowing down to reflect upon our spiritual journey and remember that our Lord is with us every step of the way.

Please know that my prayers include each of you and your families.

Michael Palmer

### ***Foundation for Academic Endeavors (FAE) Update.***

Our Pilot Project is going well, the St Aidan's community has once again exceeded all expectations and has thus far raised above the \$2,000 initial goal.

Our initial goal allows 10 children who are US citizens, to get the legal appropriate paperwork to remain in this country in the event of a parent or parents being deported. It would also allow the child to secure a US passport, giving them vital identification.

Now that we have exceeded our initial goal we are considering other ways to raise additional funds, and we are working with others in our community to do just that.

We will keep you abreast of our efforts on behalf of the St Aidan's community. And thank you for your financial contributions, words of support and encouragement for this worthwhile and timely effort!

FAE Pilot Project Team.

### ***Extreme Cold Weather Shelter Update***



Even though many of us see the signs of spring popping up in our gardens, we are still facing very cold nights and mornings. A total of six guests and a couple of dogs found comfort from the frigid temperatures at the shelter in January and into mid-February. Many thanks go out to St Aidan's volunteers Mark Hinrichs, Chuck Rinehart, Ray Riches, Kevin King, Bob Perry, Deb Hubenthal and John Mathis and to community members Pamela Waldo and Dave Rodenberger.

### ***Important Events at St Aidan's in March***

- March 1                    Feed My Sheep Sunday
- March 5, 12, 19 and 26:    Soup Supper Lenten Series with Fr Frank Spina, 5pm
- March 9                    Bloodworks NW, 10am to 4pm
- March 11                  Women of St Aidan's, 11am
- March 26                  Breakfast at the Cookie Mill, 9am followed by a Work Party back at St Aidan's, 10am
- March 28                  Stanwood Camano Inclusive Easter Egg Hunt, 10am
- March 29                  **Palm Sunday**

See page 4 for Holy Week Services



See calendar on page 6 for more activities and events at St Aidan's. Check weekly ePistle for any adds or updates.

## *From the Junior Warden*



Well, our winter seemed like spring, until today. Even so, our Lenten Roses are looking beautiful!

Just a reminder, please make sure that all exterior doors are fully closed and locked if you are the last of your group to leave. The door to the front of Dietel Hall (main entrance) does not self-lock upon closing. If you do not have a key, you will have to lock it from the inside and exit through a rear door.

You may have noticed caution tape around the landscape statuary in front of the kids' play area. (It isn't crime scene tape!) It has lost some of its mortar at the junction of the two stones, and is a bit wobbly on its support rod. A repair is in the works.

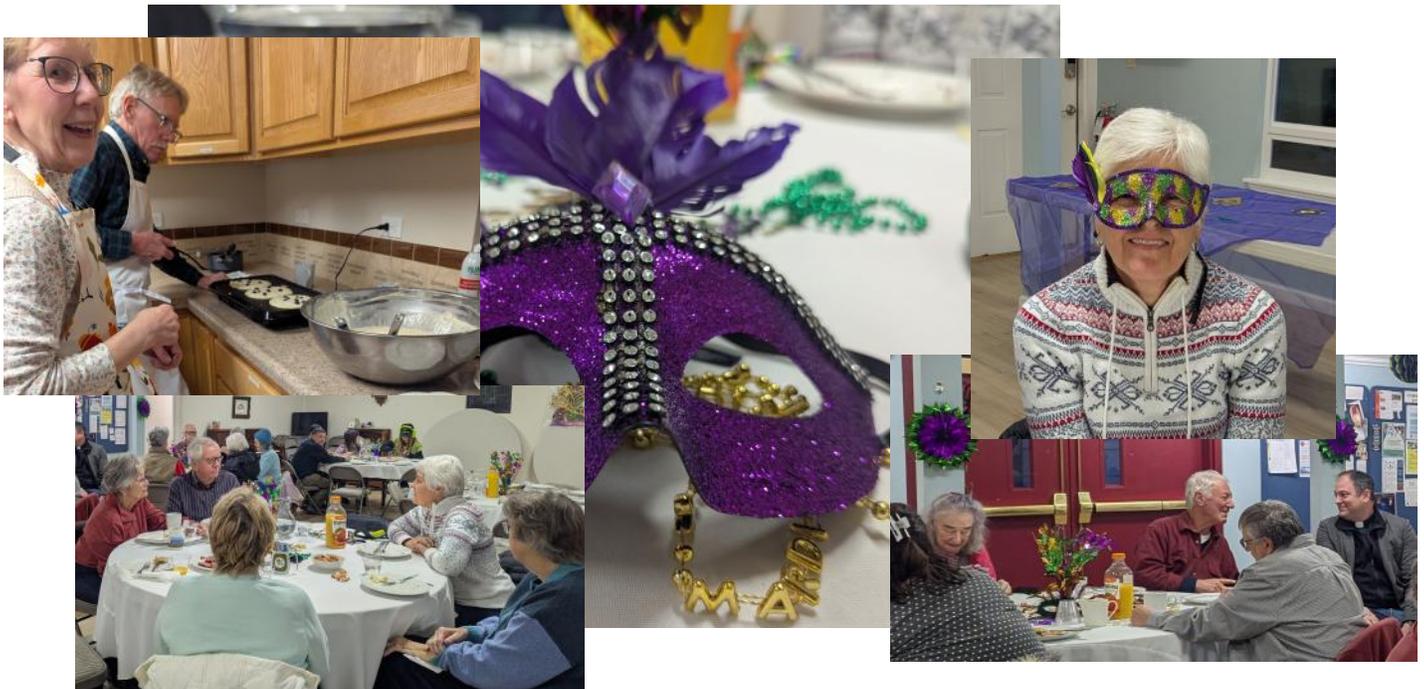
It may be winter, but the moss on the roof (and everywhere else) is thriving. Professional roof cleaning/moss treatment and gutter cleaning will be done later this month.

Work party scheduled for March 26. Meet at the Cookie Mill for breakfast at 9:00am, or 10:00 am at the church.



## *Shrove Tuesday's Pancakes and Trivia—St Aidan's, February 17th*

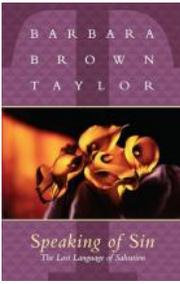
Many thanks to the hard working hosts who made this event delightful to all who attended. Pam, Bill and Joey Sontheimer, Rick & Cheri Simmins, Dave Woods, and Debby Phimlee did a wonderful job keeping everyone fed. Fr Drew kept everyone guessing with his trivia quiz.



**NEXT TORCH  
DEADLINE**

**Thursday, March 19th**

Email submissions to: [mcnallyk@outlook.com](mailto:mcnallyk@outlook.com)  
Photos, suggestions and/or comments are greatly appreciated



## Lenten Adult Forum—”Speaking of Sin”

Beginning on March 1st at 9:15am (and continuing on March 8th, 15th and 22nd) Fr Drew will be leading a discussion of Barbara Brown Taylor’s book, “Speaking of Sin.”

Contrary to the prevailing view, Taylor calls sin “a helpful, hopeful word.” Naming our sins, she contends, enables us to move from “guilt to grace.” In recovering this “lost language of salvation” in our worship and in the fabric of our individual lives, we have an opportunity to “take part in the divine work of redemption.”

## Community Engagement Update

The partnership between Bloodworks Northwest, (BWNW), continues to be a wonderful blessing for the hundreds of patients who are in need of blood. This last months’ drive gathered 33 new donors registered and 31 units of blood collected. For the frequent donors from the congregation, I would echo the advice from BWNW. To have an excellent blood donation; eat a salty meal the evening before a donation helps to retain water, being well hydrated and maybe take an iron pill if you have low iron. This is, of course, not medical advice and you should always follow your doctors’ advice.

The donors coming into Dietel Hall continues to perform extremely well. BWNW is very grateful for our generosity by hosting them on a monthly basis! March already has 29 of the 41 spots filled and April already has 26 of the 41 spots filled. Truly a blessing to those who need blood. I want to give many thanks to our frequent donors and those very special supporters especially our bakers. Returning donors continue to come to St. Aidan’s just for the cookies!

Recently I made an announcement which hinted at an upcoming event which was not a blood drive! Here is more information about that event. On May 2nd St. Aidan’s will be hosting a shredding truck for the congregation and the community at large. The truck will accept a maximum of two bankers’ boxes of papers for destruction. A donation of at least \$10.00 will be requested. When you are deciding which papers to save from destruction, our esteemed Jeff Maxwell passed to me: *“the only financial papers I keep are old tax returns (indefinitely), contracts, mortgages, deeds, etc. In other words, documents that could have some future relevance. As to documentation for tax deductions (mileage records, receipts for contributions, medical expenses, etc.), they can be tossed three years after the relevant tax return is filed. BTW, a Google search asking about records retention will likely suggest seven years, not three, for IRS purposes. The reason I say three is that there’s a six-year statute of limitations if you file a fraudulent return or understate your income by more than 25%. Otherwise, the IRS can come after you only for three years.”*

I plan on advertising this around community but please tell your friends and family. More reminders will be coming as we get closer.

Thank you,  
C. Marshall Eberhart, Community Engagement Liaison

## Holy Week Services

**Monday March 30 to Saturday April 4**

**7:00 p.m.** every evening of Holy Week services will be in-person and live-streamed on St. Aidan’s YouTube page.

**Holy Monday:** Stations of the Cross

**Holy Tuesday:** Eucharist, guest preacher

**Holy Wednesday:** Taizé

**Holy Thursday:** Maundy Thursday, Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar

**Good Friday:** Good Friday Selah

**Saturday Easter Vigil:** Great Vigil of Easter

**Easter Sunday Celebration (10:00 a.m.)**



## Food Bank Sunday (March 1)

### “Feed My Sheep”



Collections are on the first Sunday of the month. If not attending services you can drop off donations on the porch the first Saturday or Sunday of the month.

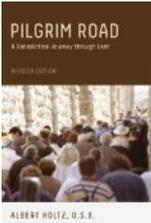
Thank you for your donations.

## Old St Aidan’s Directories

Ready for an updated directory? The Parish Office will be happy to make a new one available to you and you can drop off your old one to be shredded. It will provide a secure way to dispose of those old directories.

## Tuesday 10:30 am—Study Group

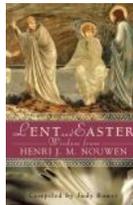
The group meets in Dietel Hall or the conference room.



The group is reading books formatted as daily readings during Lent. Most are reading “Pilgrim Road: A Benedictine Journey Through Lent,” by Albert Holtz, OSB. Some are reading “Lent and Easter: Wisdom from Henri J.M. Nouwen,” compiled by Judy Bauer.

Join us in reading one of these books or if you are following another daily reading come share what has touch you on this journey through Lent.

This is a very informal group, stop by and join in the discussions.



## Coffee Hour After Sunday 10am Service



If it is your Sunday consider bringing a light snack—sweet or savory to share during coffee hour.

First Sunday (March 1)	A-D
Second Sunday (March 8)	E-L
Third Sunday (March 15)	M-R
Fourth Sunday (March 22)	S-Z
Fifth Sunday (March 29)	ALL

### A reminder:

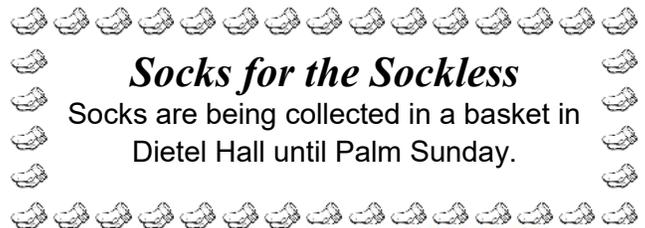
If you are hosting please stay after Coffee Hour to help clean up Dietel Hall and the kitchen and make sure all leftover food is taken home. Take used tea towels and dishcloths home to launder.

Make sure the front door is locked before leaving. If you do not have a key, no problem just lock the front door from the inside and leave by the double doors that lead to the sanctuary.

## Please **No Food** (Soiled Paper Plates or Napkins) in the Recycling Bin!



Your help and thoughtfulness are needed! The transfer station is picky about this kind of thing.



Ken Wiseman	02	Mandy Whitaker	18
Ann Boid	03	Jo Beecher	19
Erin Lavery-Mullins	03	Susan Stewart	25
JoAnne Linroth	08	Colin Kyles	29
James Miller	11	Rhoda Venditto	31
Judy Mieger	18		



## Altar Guild Teams for March

### March 1-15

**Team 4:** Jan Donovan, Karole Gorman, Bev Maxwell, Vonda Buse

### March 16-28

**Teams 1& 2:** Patty Vermilye, Freda McKeown, Donna Myers, Judy Bingay, Gayle Thomas, Candi Bialon

## Need Help?



If you need help please contact the church office.

## St. Aidan’s Technology Issues?

If you have an questions or concerns about the operation of St. Aidan’s website, Facebook pages, or YouTube please contact St Aidan’s Office until new Liaison for Technology appointed.

# March 2026—Activities Calendar\*

\*Check for status on St. Aidan's website, current ePistle or with organizers of specific groups for updates.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>The Second Sunday in Lent</b> 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:15 am Adult Form 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube) <b>Food Bank Sunday</b>  St David of Wales (Window #3)	5:30 pm AA	10:00 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I	5:00 pm Lenten Series		7 pm AA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>The Third Sunday in Lent</b> 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:15 am Adult Form 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	10am-4pm Bloodworks NW Blood Drive 5:30 pm AA	10:00 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I 11:00 am Women of St Aidan's	5:00 pm Lenten Series		7 pm AA
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<b>The Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:15 am Adult Form 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	4 pm Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm AA	10:00 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I	TORCH DEADLINE 5:00 pm Lenten Series	 St Cuthbert (Window #9)	7 pm AA
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>The Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 9:15 am Adult Form 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	5:30 pm AA	10:00 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I	9:00 am Cookie Mill 10:00 am Work Party 5:00 pm Lenten Series		10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry & S/C Inclusive Easter Egg Hunt 7 pm AA
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
		<b>H O L Y</b>	<b>W E E K</b>			
<b>Palm Sunday</b> 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	<b>Holy Monday</b> 5:30 pm AA 7:00 pm Stations of the Cross	<b>Holy Tuesday</b> 7:00 pm Holy Tuesday Eucharist	<b>Holy Wednesday</b> 7:00 pm Taizé	<b>Holy Thursday</b> 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Eucharist	<b>Good Friday</b> 7:00 pm Good Friday Liturgy	<b>Easter Vigil</b> 7 pm Great Vigil of Easter



# Altar Servers



*If you cannot serve on your assigned day please find a substitute and let the office know.*

8:00 AM	March 1	March 8	March 15	March 22	Palm Sunday March 29
Lector	Kathy Hosley	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett	Kathy Hosley
Chalice Bearers	Ann Morgan	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan	Ann Morgan
Crucifer/Acolyte	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller
Usher	JoAnn Moffett	Kathy Hosley	Kathy Hosley	Kathy Hosley	JoAnn Moffett
10:00 AM	March 1	March 8	March 15	March 22	Palm Sunday March 29
Lector	Rhoda Venditto	Nancy Pates-Riches	Rob Gorman	Rhoda Venditto	Jackie Humes-Fear
Chalice Bearers	Freda McKeown Mary McConnaughey	Jeff Maxwell Peter Dunphy	Freda McKeown	Peter Dunphy Bob Perry	Bob Perry Mary McConnaughey
Crucifer/Acolyte	Mary McConnaughey	Peter Dunphy	Isaac Taylor	Bob Perry	Isaac Taylor
Usher	Suellen Eberhart Marshall Eberhart	Ethel Maxwell Joey Sontheimer	Bill Sontheimer Bill White	Dick Bingay Joey Sontheimer	Susie Johnson Jeff Johnson
Counter	Sue Perry Kathy Hosley	Ethel Maxwell Kathy McNally	Pam Sontheimer Mary Burns	Patty Dunphy Marilyn Rockwell	Jackie Humes-Fear Julie Vaux
Childcare	Gayle Thomas Patty Dunphy	Donna Myers Kathy Hosley	JoAnn Moffett Julie Vaux	Sue Perry Vonda Buse	JoAnn Moffett Marilyn Rockwell
	March 1	March 8	March 15	March 22	March 29
Altar Flowers	Mary McConaughy	Mary McConaughy	Mary McConaughy	Mary McConaughy	Altar Guild

## Holy Week

March 30 Holy Monday Stations of the Cross	March 31 Holy Tuesday Eucharist	April 1 Holy Wednesday Taize	April 2 Holy Thursday Maundy Thursday	April 3 Good Friday	April 4 Easter Vigil
	Lector: Peter Dunphey	Lector: Jackie Humes-Fear	Lector: Jeff Maxwell	Lector 1: Rob Gorman Lector 2: Nancy Pates-Riches	Lector: Peter Dunphy
Volunteer Crucifer: as needed	Crucifer:/Acolyte: Bob Perry		Crucifer:/Acolyte: Isaac Taylor		Crucifer:/Acolyte: Mary McConnaughey
	Chalice Bearer: Mary McConnaughey		Chalice Bearer: Freda McKeown		Chalice Bearer: Jackie Humes-Fear Mary McConnaughey
	Guest Preacher: TBD				Reader 1: Jeff Maxwell Reader 2: Nancy Pates-Riches Reader 3: Jeff Johnson Reader 4: Rhoda Venditto

***Lenten Series at St Aidan's with Fr Frank Spina***  
***Thursdays beginning at 5 p.m. with a Bread/Salad/Soup Supper***  
***"Encounters with God in a Biblical Mode"***

In the Lenten season, typically as we try to observe a "holy Lent" we attempt a variety of spiritual practices. For example, we might try to pray more regularly or try different styles of prayers, or read Scripture more systematically, or try meditation, perhaps seek spiritual direction, and the like. This is all to the good. In a sense, these are efforts to "encounter God." As it turns out, there are biblical stories in which encounters with God are the dominant theme. In this Lenten season we will deal with a variety of stories in which biblical characters encounter God. Almost everyone has an element of surprise.



**February 26:** "Jacob's Ladder Dream: Accepting God's Promise or Hedging His Bets?" (Genesis 28:10-22)

**March 5:** "A Nighttime Wrestling Match: A Divine or Human Opponent?" (Genesis 32:22-32) "

**March 12:** "'Moses and the Burning Bush: Excuses Galore" (Exodus 3:1—4:17) "

**March 19:** "Samuel's Nighttime Summons: Why Did God Have to Be So Repetitive?" (1 Samuel 3)

**March 26:** "Meeting Jesus on the Damascus Road: Paul's Transition from Persecutor to Proselyte") Acts 9:1-31)

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