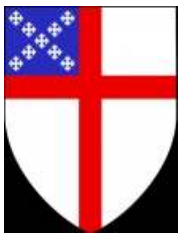


Phone: 360-249-3281

Website: www.stmarksmonte.com



Rev. Lorraine Dierick, Priest
Rev. Bonnie Campbell, Priest
Rev. Dorothy McMeekin, Deacon
Rev. Joyce Avery, Deacon
Corby Varness, Preacher
Jim Campbell, Preacher
Sarah Monroe, Seminarian

Worship
Sundays at 10 a.m.

Adult Bible Study
Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

St. Mark's Sermons

All of the sermons preached at our Sunday worship services by our ministers and preachers are placed on our website to be read and studied further within a couple of days of being preached on Sundays.

Visit our church website and look for and click on Recent Sermons on the middle right of our Home Page.

St. Mark's Bishop's Committee Minutes

All of our BC meeting minutes are found on our website.

Look for and click on Administration on the middle left of our Home Page, then click on BC Meeting Minutes on the right side of the page. A list of all meeting minutes from 2009 on is found below the Upcoming Meeting Agenda.

This newsletter is also found on our church website: look for and click on Newsletters on the middle left of our Home Page.

ST. MARK EPISCOPAL CHURCH
124 NORTH SYLVIA STREET
PO BOX 533
MONTESANO, WA 98563

St. Mark Episcopal Church Newsletter March-April, 2012

[We have a new St. Mark Video showing all about us!!](#)

Continuing Activities

Weekly Bible Study, Wednesdays, 10:00AM at St. Mark's

Our weekly Bible study generally uses the weekly Lectionary readings used in the Sunday worship services—no preparation is needed! Please join us for this study each week from 10:00-11:30AM at the church.

Feed Your Spirit Book Club--Monthly on Third Mondays, 12 Noon

Our monthly book club meets on the third Monday each month. We read a new book each month and discuss each one for an hour (or more as some might feel led to do, over your brown bag lunch).

Invite your friends and neighbors to join us! The webpage is at:

<http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article.php?id=193>

St. Mark's History Books for Sale

To purchase a copy, please contact Jim Campbell at jbcmonte@comcast.net or by phone at 360-612-0205. Webpage is at: <http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article.php?id=167>

Upcoming Events

Lenten Lunch/Prayer Series (Fridays), 11:30am , at Various Churches in Montesano

Once again the Montesano Ministerial Association will be sponsoring the Lenten Lunch Series on the Fridays during Lent. There will be several opportunities for you to participate in the upcoming Lent Season and they are listed here.

2/24 Lenten Luncheon #1 @ 11:30 a.m.

Montesano United Methodist Church

3/2 Lenten Luncheon #2 @ 11:30 a.m.

Montesano Church of God

3/9 Lenten Luncheon #3 @ 11:30 a.m.

St. John's Catholic Church

3/16 Lenten Luncheon #4 @ 11:30 a.m.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

3/23 Lenten Luncheon #5 @ 11:30 a.m.

Montesano United Methodist Church

3/30 Lenten Luncheon #6 @ 11:30 a.m.

St. John's Catholic Church

Lunch of soup will be served beginning at 11:30 with a short 30 minute service beginning at 12:15.

This will give you the opportunity to stop in during your lunch time for the Lenten Series and not miss any work.

Easter Season Events at St. Mark's:

Palm Sunday Communion Service: April 1st, 10:00AM—reading of the passion story and blessing of the palms.

Maundy Thursday Communion Service: April 5th, 6:30PM—includes foot washing like Jesus did for his disciples, and a meal after the service.

Good Friday Service: April 6th, 12:00 noon at St. Mark's.

Good Friday Ecumenical Service: April 6th, 7:00PM at the Montesano Church of God.

Easter Sunday Communion Service: April 8th, 10:00AM—celebration of the Risen Christ (plus baptisms of anyone who would like this). Contact Rev. Lorraine Dierick or Rev. Bonnie Campbell if you would like more information. (Easter Egg Hunt for the kids at 11am, too!)

Recent News

Ash Wednesday Service (2/22/2012), at St. Mark's

A service of the imposition of ashes and communion, followed by two wonderful soups and bread meal to begin Lent was held with not only with some of our own members, but also some of our friends from the Montesano Church of God and First Methodist churches, and St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Elma.

102th Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day Event (2/21/2012), at St. Mark's

In spite of poor weather, this event again was very faithfully and well attended and supported again by the Montesano local community! This year we again raised funds to support the local food banks (Montesano Food Bank and Coastal Harvest), and for the Childrens Advocacy Center--totaling \$1100. We also served over 1000 pancakes, ham, applesauce, and beverages to our friends from Montesano, Aberdeen, and even from Bremerton and Chehalis. Thanks to all who helped, and contributed to this successful event. A few pictures are at:

<http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article/313/about-us/events/shrove-tuesday-pancake-days/2012-shrove-tuesday-pancake-day-event>.

Church Annual Meeting at St. Mark's (2/12/2012), at St. Mark's

This short meeting was held following the Sunday morning Holy Communion service, in the Parish Hall. Rev. Joyce Avery provided most of the lunch for all. Review of the last year at St. Mark's, the 2012 approved budget, and elections for the Bishop's Committee and Delegates for Convention were discussed. Then our Seminarian, Sarah Monroe, showed us pictures of her ministry with the homeless in Cambridge at EDS in her second year there. She was visiting for a week to attend her sister's wedding and to see her friends.

Snow Day! (1/15/2012) at St. Mark's

An overnight snowfall left about 3-4 inches on everything Sunday morning in Montesano. There had been a plan to have our Annual Meeting that day after worship, but that went away, with just 9 of the faithful able to get here. The service was laid back, with healing prayers and a great sermon by the Varness family (led by Corby), and wonderful joyous singing. A great lunch was served, which included a celebration of Rev. Lorraine Dierick's birthday with a cake and laying on of hands in prayer.

Pictures: <http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article/306/about-us/upcoming-events-recent-news/2012-events/snow-day-epiphany-ii> Sermon: <http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article/305/worship/recent-sermons/2012-sermons/epiphany-ii-2012-sermon>

Jim Stewart Event (1/7/2012), at the Museum of History in Aberdeen

An open house to celebrate the life of Jim Stewart was held at the Aberdeen Museum of History. Many of his friends and those whose lives he had impacted came! Read were parts of some cards and letters with beautiful and kind words of love for Jim and support for his family. Jim and Vera were long time members and benefactors of St. Mark's; Jim died just before Thanksgiving after a long stretch at Montesano Health & Rehab, a few years after Vera. Jim's family had already celebrated a private memorial service for him at St. Mark's, so this event was for the public in the Grays Harbor area who knew him. His son's Bill and Bob each spoke, and their remembrances of Jim are at:

<http://www.stmarksmonte.com/article/303/about-us/upcoming-events-recent-news/2012-events/jimmy-stewart-remembrance>.

Summary of St. Mark's Finances—2/12/2011

Net Operating Year to Date—-\$140.61

Total Operating Expenses--\$3,101.63

- Highlights—All bills paid current, including our annual property insurance bill.
- Outreach to Date--\$44 Diocesan Assessment Required/Paid--\$437

Total Operating Revenues--\$2,961.02

- Tracked closely, to the budget plan!

Non-Operating Revenues--\$0.13 Non-Operating Expenses--\$0

Net Non-Operating Year to Date— +\$0.13

Net All Operating and Non-Operating Year to Date-- -\$140.48

Funds Summary—Total is \$20,542.23 (last month--\$20,620.79)

- General/Designated Checking Account—\$2,743.17 (last month--\$2,883.80)
- General/Designated Savings Account--\$518.27 (last month--\$518.25)
 - Operating Fund (General)--\$3,695.42 (last month--\$3,836.03)
 - History Book Fund (Designated)--\$-683.98 (last month--\$-683.98)
 - Seminary/Education Fund (Designated)--\$250.00 (last month--\$250.00)
- Memorial Fund/Savings Account--\$985.25 (last month--\$985.12)
- Diocesan Investment Fund--\$15,536.62 (last month--15,474.70)
- Clergy Discretionary Fund/Checking Account--\$758.92 (last month--\$758.92)

Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori's Lent Message 2012

I greet you at the beginning of Lent.

In this year I'm going to invite you to think about the ancient traditions of preparing in solidarity with candidates for baptism, to think about the old disciplines of prayer and fasting and alms-giving and study, through the focus on those beyond our communities, in the developing world, who live in abject poverty.

I invite you to use the Millennium Development Goals as your focus for Lenten study and discipline and prayer and fasting this year. I'm going to remind you that the Millennium Development Goals are about healing the worst of the world's hunger. They're about seeing that all children get access to primary education. They're about empowering women. They're about attending to issues of maternal health and child mortality. They're about attending to issues of communicable disease like AIDS and malaria and tuberculosis. They're about environmentally sustainable development, seeing that people have access to clean water and sanitation and that the conditions in slums are alleviated. And finally, they are about aid, foreign aid. They're about trade relationships, and they're about building partnerships for sustainable development in this world.

As you pray through the forty days of Lent, I encourage you to attend to the needs of those with the least around the world. I would invite you to study, both about how human beings live in other parts of the world and our own responsibility as Christians.

What the Bible says more often than anything else is to tend to the needs of the widows and orphans, those without. Jesus himself says, "Care for the least of these."

I invite you to consider your alms-giving discipline this Lent and remember those in the developing world who go without. I wish you a blessed Lent and a joyful resurrection at the end of it that may be shared with others around the world.

God bless you.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church

Reasons to Be Episcopalian **(from the book of 101 Reasons, compiled by Louie Crew)**

81 Catholic lite. Great rite. Less guilt. *William Barnett-Lewis, Diocese of Milwaukee*

82 The Prayer Book bids us to come to God's table for strength and renewal, not for solace and pardon only. *Agnes L. Haviland-Moore, Diocese of Connecticut*

83 When you count acolytes, Chalice bearers, ushers, greeters, nursery people, altar guild, choir, and so on, there are more people involved in an Episcopal service than any other. And there are more opportunities to be involved. *Donna H. Barthle, Diocese of Central Pennsylvania*

84 I love our church because we have poetry in our Prayer Book and in our Hymnal. *Barbara Cawthorne Crafton, Diocese of New York*

85 My Jewish mother and Roman Catholic father found themselves welcomed into the Episcopal Church over fifty years ago as they sought a home for their young family. I grew up in the Episcopal Church feeling that everyone was welcome. My father, a blue collar worker, served on the vestry with a doctor, corporate executives, public officials, and educators. They shared a common vision of a church that was big enough to make all differences less important. *The Very Rev. Dr. James A. Kowalski, Diocese of New York*

Other Articles on Faith and General Religious Information

(Different commentaries from the website Episcopal Café in the past few weeks, all written by contributors referencing other web articles they have read recently. Episcopal Café is linked on our own website Home Page, or go directly to: <http://www.episcopalcafe.com/>)

Using our Money as if God was Watching

Tithing is generally understood as giving back for God's work ten percent of one's income? But what counts as income? Net income? Gross income? Do you count employee deduction to the United Way as part of one's tithe or separate? Our first impulse is to write rules defining what income is. That's what the IRS does.

But not the Mormons. It turns out their definition of income is left pretty much up to the individual believer. The driving question for them, though, is not "what is income?" Instead, it's "am I cheating God?"

NPR reports:

Many religious traditions stress the importance of charity. But Mormons are remarkable for the amount and the precision with which they give to their church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that each Mormon in good standing should tithe 10 percent of his or her income. The money goes right to church headquarters in Salt Lake City and then is distributed back to congregations around the world.

"That's written in stone, and preached from the pulpit," says Gordon Dahl, an economist at the University of California, San Diego, who is Mormon. But while the church is very precise about that figure — 10 percent of income — it does not tell its members what income means. "Which is really interesting to us economists, because we want to know how people define income," says Dahl.

As anyone who has ever done their taxes knows, figuring out what counts as income is harder than it sounds. As we enter tax season and either open up the software or talk to our preparers or slog through the instruction books, we find that the IRS has hundreds of pages of rules defining income.

But what does God think? If we think God is watching, how do we think about our money? Dahl thinks that the IRS could actually learn from how Mormons make these decisions. Studies have shown that people are more willing to pay taxes if they think taxes are fair. People who think someone else is getting special treatment are more likely to cheat. Dahl theorized that if you know how people naturally think of income, you can craft the tax laws to better match people's motivations.

But first he had to get Mormons to tell their stories. Tithing is a very personal act, and Dahl says people were unwilling to talk about how much money they sent in. So Dahl and his colleague Michael Ransom surveyed 1,200 Mormons and presented them with hypothetical questions about giving.

"Suppose your parents gave you \$500 for Christmas," he told them. "Would you pay tithing on that money?" That was a resounding yes among Mormons. Gifts of cash are definitely considered income. What about a gift of a sofa worth \$500? Not so much. Few Mormons said they would tithe on that. What if you got a cash gift from someone you knew had already paid tithes on the money? The majority of Mormons in the study said they were happy to tithe on it again.

The concept of double tithing doesn't seem to upset Mormons the same way double taxation does. In fact, Dahl found that Mormons were willing to tithe on money that came out of a retirement account — even if they had already tithed 10 percent of it before they invested.... Dahl says he found that Mormons, in general, tended to adopt the more simple and generous definitions of income.... "...They're worried about being petty with God," Dahl says.

I asked a Mormon bishop in Salt Lake City if a few more rules defining income might make tithing easier on Mormons or bring in more money for the church. He said all this soul-searching about what you owe God is kind of the point. Of course, this only works if the individual believer is actually free to act on her or his ethical deliberations.

From the Rev. Lee Shaw of Utah (former LDS). I read through the ... article. I find it generally true. Tithing is a BIG thing in the LDS church. It is a place where guilt can be played and blessings can be withheld. If you are not a tithing member you cannot go to the temple, church offices, especially for men, are denied you, and it is preached on a regular basis. Mormons grow up expecting to tithe. It is part of the church culture, as is the guilt. In December you go to "tithing settlement" with your bishop. He asks you if you paid a full tithe. I know there are stories of asking to see tax returns, I never experienced [being asked for my tax return] and feel [that] is folk lore. But you are expected to give a full financial accounting to your bishop so that your temple recommend will be renewed.

There is always the debate between "net" and "gross" on what to tithe. Mormons differ on that very much. I always did it on the "net", figuring I didn't see the "gross" earnings anyway.

Mormons are diligent about getting money from members. There is also the building fund and maintenance fund that many ask for. The first Sunday of every month is "Fast Sunday" where you fast for two meals and give the cost of those meals to the church for their welfare program. On that day, at least in my time not sure about now, you had "deacons" (boys 12-14) going door to door to members to collect their "fast offerings." That Sunday is also "Fast and Testimony Sunday" with no speakers, just an open mic for folks to stand and "bear their testimony" about the church, i.e. giving witness in Protestant language. Let me tell you some of those meetings get really, really bizarre as some folks go off on all kinds of tangents about their faith and life.

Which returns us to the study: people feel good about taxation if it feels fair. It also bring us back to the point of the tithe which is not so much the 10% but the conversation with God in the context of our money and our communities.

Posted by [Andrew Gerns](#) on March 2, 2012 6:00 PM

The Right Question by Richard Helmer

Do you want to be made well? ~ John 5:6

When I first arrived at my present parish, one lay leader told me that many in the congregation felt "decapitated." It was as violent an image as one could imagine after several turbulent interim years, and I was sorely tempted to try to find the rolling heads and reattach them – to "fix" the ailing parties all. It was equally tempting to spend hours and hours telling the good folk of a parish teetering on the edge of decline and running in the red how badly they'd been treated – and then bask in the imagined recognition of how much better I would be perceived than my predecessors.

Instead, thanks to a bit of grace, I started to hear her words as opportunity: What if behind the sorrowful metaphor was a yearning to be unleashed for ministry? Rather than my trying to fix things, coddle, and hold hands, I started to ask questions of our members in as many ways as I could: What do you think God wants to see happen here? Where do you feel called by passion and prayer? How can I help support your living into that call?

Six years later, the place is thriving. Sure, we have the benefit of young demographics in an affluent community. Sure, we get a steady stream of Episcopalians moving in from other places. But we also live in one of the most militantly secular, skeptical, "spiritual but not religious" locales in the country, where the catch phrase spoken and unspoken is "You're not the boss of me." We further engage in ministry in one of the most expensive real estate markets in the world, where financial resources of even the most affluent are stretched quite thin. I could bang my head against that wall 24/7, but I intentionally decided a few years back not to.

We do indeed challenge the surrounding culture, but not with insults, put-downs, or hand-wringing. Instead, we offer a passionate alternative of an engaging life of faith in Jesus Christ in community. A few years ago, word started to spread in the surrounding neighborhoods. It's amazing these days to watch people come in the door for the first time and the expressions of wonder on their faces when they discover Church can be traditional yet engaging, familiar yet transformative, rooted yet relevant. Even more amazing is watching them then offer their hearts in prayer, their gifts in thanksgiving, and their hands in service.

There's no magic to this, and we still have our challenges. I've learned, sometimes the hard way, that pretending I don't have authority is just as bad as abusing it or taking it for granted. We don't offer the most innovative or beautiful worship in our Diocese, but what we do, we do with authenticity and prayerful commitment. We struggle like everyone else does with volunteers stretched thin, facilities in need of constant attention, and tight budgets. Our key is that we have enough leadership committed to prayerful, healthy community: Christian community that identifies and serves the needs of its members and the needs of the wider world. We stubbornly refuse to succumb to the binary thinking that the two are mutually exclusive.

Fundamentally, we're thriving because the people of God are engaged, empowered, and accountable. My job is to do everything I can to get the institution behind them in where the Spirit is calling them. I'm also fond of saying that my job is to stay both prayerfully engaged and, when necessary, to get the hell out of the way.

When I meet with our staff and lay leaders, we work to ask questions that empower and seek opportunity. Funny how that approach works. Even the most skeptical and cynical among us find something of value going on, and they step up. When problems arise, we endeavor to address them quickly. If the problems are intransigent, we work around them and watch for a solution to emerge (often we ultimately stumble across more than one), permitting God's grace to resolve things in God's time.

A growing, diverse, vibrant community, I've learned, adopts a "can do" attitude, and gloominess about decline is instinctively quarantined long before it can spread like the pathology that it is. When the occasional saboteurs attempt to rise, the community isolates the shenanigans early and loves the perpetrators back to health often.

It's all because of this experience that I see the present narrow focus on institutional Church structures and resources as sometimes disheartening, and at times narrowly wrongheaded. With it, we who are about the business of Church governance are at great risk of looking irrelevant to the faithful who make up a huge portion of our Body, and potentially neglecting a vast share of our ministry.

Of course, it is in our genetic predisposition as a Church to debate polity, to question authority, to be suspicious of ideas from the top. These form a significant, perhaps indispensable part of the machinery of the legislative process, of our Episcopal way of grinding to a decision. Anyone who's an effective leader these days understands all this and deals with it in good faith, and more than a bit of good humor.

As somewhat of an aside, I have a thought about the oft-articulated fears regarding the power of our bishops. My advice is this: Look to the Roman Catholic Church – and I mean the people, not the hierarchy. If we must assume the worst intentions of our leaders in the episcopate (I do not, but some do) we must never forget the power of the laity to discern a vibrant, free faith despite every destructive power grab and form of dissembling denial in the book. Yes, God is that powerful, despite the best and worst efforts of institutions and their leaders to undermine grace. Our bishops cannot completely ruin the Church, even if they try. And most of them, praise God, have much more built-in accountability in this Church to reckon with than do their Roman brethren.

What I really see at risk right now – as we institutionally wrestle with shrinking financial resources and as we no longer can lean, thank God, on our historical position as a denomination of elites – is our unintentionally disenfranchising ourselves from our most precious resource: the People of God... the People of God who listen for the needs of those around them and offer their gifts of all kinds in prayer, sacrament, and service... the People of God who answer Jesus' constant question about wanting to be healed with an emphatic "Yes!" and then get to it with what they've received. Most of them are not all that concerned about what happens at General Convention this summer, especially when it comes to structural decisions. My main reason for going as an alternate deputy is to work so that they don't have to be.

Do we truly want to be made well?

It is incredibly easy to stay stuck in the pathological patterns of destructive suspicion, blame, and condescension that we pick up from the wider American – if not globally Western – political discourse these days. It is also incredibly easy to see our institution – as fragile, compromised, declining, and inept as it might be right now – as a problem to be fixed rather than a resource to be pressed into service for the sake of Jesus' vision amongst the people: the Kingdom, the Reign of God.

What is wrong with The Episcopal Church? Lots. But the question itself I find wrongheaded. "Fixing" a temporal institution for today will inevitably sow the seeds of different institutional problems needing to be fixed tomorrow. If we haven't learned this yet from the great secular financial crisis, we need to take a closer look. While we rush perpetually around to fix and adjust, the world's real needs for healing might escape our distracted notice.

Maybe we need to start asking the right questions, and those for me begin with what's working. Asking those questions puts us in the right frame of mind to channel institutional resources, focus, and leadership towards our strengths. Asking those questions empowers us to see problems and obstacles as opportunities. Maybe it's time to admit that our weaknesses, our ailments hold more keys to our future in the transformative hands of our God than we give them credit for. I don't throw around accusations of heresy lightly, but when we behave as though we have problems we must resolve before we can be healed, we Episcopalians fall into a form of Pelagianism that is as familiar to us as it is dangerous. It is there that our vision can narrow rapidly into insularity and irrelevance.

So my thinking these days around General Conventions, special conventions, pending legislation, and political quarrels perceived and real, is less about which is the right answer to our woes.

Rather, I am pondering this more: Which is the right question?

The Rev. Br. Richard E. Helmer is rector of [Church of Our Saviour](#), Mill Valley, CA, and a novice in the [Brotherhood of Saint Gregory](#). He is an alternate deputy to General Convention and secretary of the Standing Committee of the [Diocese of California](#). His sermons and reflections have been published widely online, and he blogs occasionally at [Caught by the Light](#).

Posted by [Ann Fontaine](#) on February 17, 2012 4:05 AM

Ministry of small things by Linda Ryan

The peculiar grace of a Shaker chair is due to the fact that an angel might come by and sit on it. ~Thomas Merton

Say "Shaker" to someone and, if they're over the age of about 50, they'll probably come back with "chair." Shaker chairs were popular because their simple lines and beautifully finished wood. The Shakers produced chairs with planed and turned parts that were interchangeable to make a number of different styles: tall, short, wide, narrow, with or without arms, with or without rockers, with or without wheels, etc. No matter the style, though, each piece of each chair had the hallmark of a human being who cared about the piece he produced or the seat she wove or braided. It might have been a small part of the total chair, but it was their part and done as completely, beautifully and precisely as they could make it. Those chairs have withstood the test of time, becoming more and more valuable as the years have passed, becoming important pieces in museums and private collections. I have a doubt that a hundred years from now the overstuffed recliners and pouffy chairs of today will be sought-after antiques. I wonder, too, would angels come and sit on them? We know that saints in the Body of Christ, the members of the Shaker church, sat on theirs.

Handmade items often have something special about them, most likely the attention to detail that may escape the notice of most but which an aficionado would spot immediately. For the true craftsman, there is nothing too small to be excused from perfection, not a wrinkle, tiny rough spot in a place that no hand would ever feel, spot of discoloration or rust on a tiny gear hidden deep inside a watch case or anything else. It is the mark of someone with passion for what they are doing, even to the level of the very small things.

Small things. Without small things, great things never happen. Small ideas and concepts can lead to great inventions and discoveries that change the world. One person's passion can ignite a fire that circles the globe. Jesus himself used a mustard seed, not the smallest of seeds, to be sure, but still a small thing, to illustrate the power of a tiny bit of faith growing into a sizeable thing. I wonder what Jesus would have made of a sequoia seed?

When most people consider the word "ministry" they think of ordained preachers, ministers, rabbis and priests. Sure, those are probably the most visible of ministers, in a kind of spotlight when they lead worship, teach classes or model the virtues like visiting the sick and imprisoned, but ministry is more than that. There are ministry opportunities everywhere – the workplace, home, school, church, almost anywhere where two people can meet and interact. Come to think of it, though, there can be ministries that involve non-humans and even the environment that don't attract a lot of attention but which are really needed. Not every ministry is high profile, but even the smallest of ministries is important, kingdom building-wise. They don't have to be big things to be effective; the ministry of small things is just as important and, luckily, there are plenty of them to go around. It can be as simple as turning a piece of wood that will become part of a chair.

I'm a firm believer in the ministry of small things, the kind of ministry I know I can do. It would be great to be known as a great preacher, but maybe simply driving someone to the doctor's office or grocery store, or hearing the words of a friend who needs someone to listen is, to me, a ministry of small things that, hopefully, will make the world even a miniscule amount better. I'd love to write a best-selling book, but perhaps writing essays and meditations is my niche, especially if even one person finds something in the words that gives them some insight or even just a smile.

The Dalai Lama once said, "If you think small things don't make a difference, try spending a night in a room with a mosquito!" A lot of times mosquitoes get swatted, but they don't give up being mosquitoes. A ministry of small things may not make a person rich, famous or even earn them brownie points in heaven, and they may get the person swatted sometimes, but sometimes the small things lead to big things that make heaven just a little bit closer.

Oh, and one more thing. Ministries of small things are not limited offers. A single person can do more than one, and there is no expiration date.

From the Diocese of Olympia Website: Western Washingtonians Receive Ashes to Go

Placing themselves in easy-to-spot locations—from Bellingham to Vancouver, in the South Sound and on the [Kitsap Peninsula](#)—several clergy and lay leaders offered the imposition of ashes to commuters and others braving the elements throughout the first day of Lent. Many people familiar with the ritual welcomed the ashes, which they might have otherwise missed, but far more engaged an opportunity to ask questions, learn about the Episcopal Church and simply take a moment for conversation with a stranger on the street.

Together with two lay leaders and two priests, Archdeacon Gen Grewell went to the streets of downtown Olympia, where it was windy, rainy and, eventually, a little sunny. A couple of people stopped at red light at an intersection rolled down their windows and requested the imposition of ashes. Before being asked to move along from a nearby Starbucks, Grewell offered ashes to a woman who had paused to look at the [Ashes to Go](#) sign. “She responded by asking, “What does it mean?”

“I said it reminds of us of our mortality and this is Ash Wednesday,” Grewell explained. “She paused and then said, ‘Yes, please.’”

Lance Ousley, Canon for Stewardship and Development, posted himself outside the Broadway Market on Seattle’s Capitol Hill.

“I met Mark and Daniel, two homeless 20-somethings who were hungry for food but engaged me in conversation,” he recalled. “They didn’t receive any ashes, but they gave me a new perspective on the homeless on the hill. They looked like any number of youth group kids stuck in Nirvana-time, still humming “Smells Like Teen Spirit,” but these kids were the real deal blending in because these clothes are all they have. Both had bounced from foster home to foster home before hitting the streets to break free from that bondage. For them Seattle Grunge wasn’t a look, it was their life with no music but the blues.”

Another man wanted Ousley to pray for him and his fiancé and their relationship. One woman asked for ashes and “smiled brightly, as if she had just emerged from a refreshing splash of cool water.” He even ran into a former parishioner from Texas, who recognized him on the street in his cassock and surplice.

“I may have administered ashes today to people on Broadway, but I received much more than I gave,” Ousley said. “It’s amazing how God gives us more than we can ever give.”

Arienne Davison, Canon for Multicultural Ministries in the diocese and associate priest at Grace Bainbridge Is., [blogged her experience](#), saying the responses of ferry commuters on Bainbridge Is., where she and St. Barnabas rector Dennis Tierney offered ashes, spanned a wide range.

“‘Are you really offering ashes to go?’” one woman asked.

“A man apologized, ‘I’m Roman Catholic so... (I can’t) but thank you for being here.’ Another, ‘I’m Roman Catholic, but I’m sure it still counts.’”

“‘I wasn’t going to be able to make it to services today with work and dragging two kids. Thank you so much!’ one woman shared before walking hurriedly to her destination.

“We saw parishioners and people neither of us knew,” she concluded. “We offered smiles, warm greetings, ashes and blessings as folks made their way to work ... I discovered this morning that the Episcopal Church on Bainbridge Island isn’t only on Wyatt Way or Day Road. Turns out, it can be anywhere people could use some warm Christian hospitality on a cold rainy day.”

March 2012 Monthly Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	27	28 2pm Birthday Party @ Monte Health & Rehab 7pm AA	29 10am Bible Study	March 1 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	2 7pm AA	3
4 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	5	6 7pm AA	7 10am Bible Study 12pm Monte Ministerial Association Meeting	8 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	9 6pm TCM Retreat @ The Priority, Lacey 7pm AA	10
11 10am Holy Communion 2pm 2:00PM Willapa Region at St Andrew's House Meeting 7pm AA	12	13 9:30am Worship Team 7pm AA	14 10am Bible Study	15 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	16 7pm AA	17
18 10am Healing Service 7pm AA	19 12pm Book Club	20 7pm AA	21 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Bishop Committee	22 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	23 7pm AA	24
25 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	26	27 2pm Birthday Party @ Monte Health & Rehab 7pm AA	28 10am Bible Study	29 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	30 7pm AA	31

Birthdays:

John McMeekin—8th
Caleb Williams—18th
Tessa Fry—31st

Anniversaries:

Kevin & Corby Varness—25th

Sarah Monroe—14th
Anne Williams—23rd
Jim Campbell—16th
Robert Dierick—25th

April 2012 Monthly Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 1 10am Palm Sunday 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	2	3 7pm AA	4 10am Bible Study 12pm Monte Ministerial Association Meeting	5 12pm AA 6:30pm Maundy Thursday/Meal 7pm Gamblers Anon	6 12pm Good Friday Service 7pm AA 7pm Good Friday Ecum Service	7
8 10am Easter Sunday 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	9	10 7pm AA	11 9:30am Worship Team 10am Bible Study	12 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	13 7pm AA	14
15 10am Healing Service 7pm AA	16 9am Clergy Conference @ Cle Elum	17 7pm AA	18 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Bishop Committee	19 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	20 7pm AA	21
22 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	23	24 2pm Birthday Party @ Monte Health & Rehab 7pm AA	25 10am Bible Study	26 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	27 7pm AA	28
29 10am Holy Communion 7pm AA	30 7pm AA	May 1 7pm	2 10am Bible Study	3 12pm AA 7pm Gamblers Anon	4 7pm AA	5

Birthdays:

Jamie Dierick—3rd Bill Brumfield—10th Kevin Varness—11th
 Aaron Williams—12th Kim Dierick—16th
 Callee Madrid—18th Denny Dierick—28th

Anniversaries:

Frank & Mary Venske—7th
 Jim & Rev. Bonnie Campbell—15th