



THE CLOAK

A publication of

St. Martin's Episcopal Church

September 2017

Reverend Melodie Speaks to us about Listening to God and plans for a Church-wide Listening Day on September 30

Dear St. Martins church family,

You are very warmly invited to participate in *A Listening Day* (prayer time) planned for St. Martins parish on Saturday September 30, 2017 from 10:00 – 4:00.

You may sign up for an amount of time (your choice) on the Sunday before or any time during the week before Saturday or simply show up and sign in the book. All we ask is that you give us some feedback on what God is saying to you regarding the mission of our church, by writing it in the book.

As is often the case the only time that many people come to pray is on a Sunday morning or Wednesday morning services. In these services we have very little quiet time. We are busily putting our petitions before God, asking for reconciliation and receiving the bread of life. These are all very important in our corporate life as a Christian community together. We also need to take time on our own to develop our personal spiritual lives.

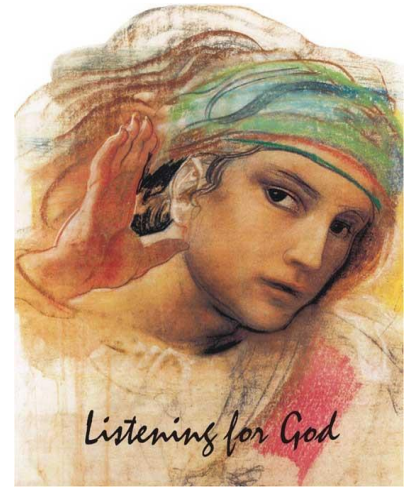
We need to take time to listen to what God is saying to us as individuals and as a congregation. And ask the question: What is God calling us to do and be as a congregation here in Lebanon and beyond?

What this day is not: We have heard what listening days are in society, often a day to convince others of a plan one might have for the community. Or to hear complaints about how the community is being run. This is not that sort of a day.

What this day is: *This is a day that we have set apart for listening to God.* This day is what we will base our churches work on in the year ahead and beyond. It is a time to ask God these and other questions: Where are we going as a congregation? What do you want us to do? Are there needs that God has put on your heart for our community?

Who is involved? This day is for everyone who has an interest in St. Martins and how it relates to the community within the church and the surrounding community outside the church. **If you are unable to come physically to the church you can select a time to pray (be silent before God at home) and send in your comments attention the rector.**

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Join us in Worship

**Sundays for
Holy Communion
10 a.m.**

**Wednesdays
Holy Communion and
Healing
9:30 a.m.**

Children's Sunday School
resumes on September 17

Ecumenical Eucharist Aug 13 Scrap Book

Special thanks to all who planned and helped make this year's Ecumenical Eucharist at Monteith Park, Albany, such a success.



BSA 404 Pack, Troop, & VENTURING Crew

Recent activities include successful Parking Lot Sale in August with many thanks to all at St. Martin's who donated items for sale and purchased items. Over \$800 was raised to help offset dues for low income scouts.

Thanks, too, for continuing to bring **refundable cans and bottles** (the bins are in the back hallway past the kitchen). At 10 cents a can, the funds add up.

Coming events:

Fall Court of Honor at St. Martin's

New time - 6 pm - followed by potluck dinner
Monday, September 18

Watch for "Adventure" Fundraiser coming soon!

Support adventures and receive a Popcorn Bag Thank You gift.

ECW BRIEF NOTES:

Ladies Fun Lunch: Autumn lunch will be Monday October 16 at Cascade Grill on Knox Butte Road at I-5 in Albany.

Next Meeting: Brief ECW meeting on September 3 after church.

Soup Suppers return on October 18. Sign up sheet coming soon.

Coffee Hour: We need people for September 10 and 17, and again in October. Team up and help with hospitality.

Listening Day September 30, Continued from Page 1

The listening day is not a formal retreat, as there is no program or leader, It is more of a vigil, in that we each take a portion of time throughout the day to intentionally pray about St. Martins parish and the surrounding community.

The focus is to hear what God is saying to us. It is not doing something, but is being part of something. A listening day is like a vigil and a retreat put together. It is a time of simply being in the presence of God and listening to what God has to say to us.

You may use a meditation to guide you in listening, or light a candle, or simply sit in silence.

There will be a book at the church with times listed for prayer throughout the day. The book will also have blank pages in it where you may write in what you believe God is calling us to do as a parish. It could be that you feel something very strongly or it could be a fleeting thought. God speaks to each one of us in a different way. It means being willing to be a bit vulnerable and to share with the rest of the congregation. We may find that we are called to do something or stop doing something in order to do something else.

We the vestry of the church will take your comments written and use them to guide us in planning our year ahead for the mission of St. Martins at our Vestry retreat held in October.

Henry Nouwen says "Thro the discipline of contemplative (listening) prayer, Christians have to learn to listen again and again to the voice of Love and to find there the wisdom and courage to address whatever issue presents itself to them...when we are securely rooted in personal intimacy with the Source of Life, it will be possible to remain flexible without being rigid, willing to confront without being offensive, gentle and forgiving without being soft, and true witnesses without being manipulative."

Two practical suggestions

1. Be humble enough to acknowledge that the busyness and hyperactivity of modern life is a hindrance to listening. 'Be still and know that I am God Ps 46:10'. There is nothing wrong with working hard but if there is no freedom to pause, no punctuation/no opportunity to reflect on and write new paragraphs in our lives then we will wear out. A major characteristic of our age is high activity, rushing to get things done- an every second counts mentality. Activity without receptivity, doing without being, taking priority. IF we don't come apart we will come apart! We need to recapture 'sacred idleness'.
2. Practice focusing our attention. Listening to God by focusing our attention on all the channels open to us as Christians, namely the Scriptures, the Divine office and liturgy, silence and solitude, the circumstances of life, as in William Temple's statement. 'When I pray coincidences happen, when I don't pray they don't; the wisdom of others. All channels used by the Holy Spirit to communicate the life and love of God to us. Ps 95:7 NEB 'You shall know God's power today if you listen to God's voice'. (from Trevor Miller Northumbria Community retreat talk).

I look forward very much to this day in September where we all will take time out of our busy lives to be present to each other and be in the presence of the risen Christ, listening to God.

With Love and prayers, Rev. Melodie

Brief Vestry notes from August 30

Vestry discussed ideas for the new sign out front and getting written bids for repair of the roof and painting before the rains start again.

Vestry minutes are posted on the bulletin board



“One Buck Seminary”,
our lively monthly discussion group
led by Bishop John Thornton,
returns on Saturday,
September 16, at 8-9:30 am
with a discussion of St. Augustine
and the ideas of free will and
original sin, with how these ideas
might relate to us today.

All are Welcome. Reading packets
available.

Joke for the CLOAK



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Personal Care Kits

Thanks so much to everyone for generous donations for our ministry at the Soup Kitchen, with Care Kits and Knapsacks full of school supplies for the kids. Remember to pray for students and teachers as school begins. Our next visit is Friday, October 27.

Are you looking and listening for a ministry that calls out to you?

Want to help others but don't have a lot of time or money? You could assist Rev. Melodie+ in getting supplies ready to give to the needy who come to the church for help.

Watch for **“Meal in a Bag”** menus for providing specific non-perishable meal items ready to hand out when people come to the door.. It's not just homeless, so we can have items to cook.



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