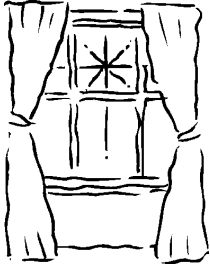


## Looking Out My Window, September 2, 2022



Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, September 21st, 22nd, and 24th after Holy Cross Day (September 14) are observed as Ember Days. This particular observance repeats three other times during the church year, always on those three weekdays—after the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost Sunday, and after December 13.

These days are set aside, near the turning of the four seasons, for prayer and fasting. Ember Day observance can be traced back to the late Roman period, the early Middle Ages. Originally, the focus in these quarterly observances was spiritual renewal as well as the ordination of clergy.

In our current observance, these are days of focus on the vocation of ordained ministry. Candidates for Holy Orders write their bishops on Ember Days. The readings and prayers focus on the ministry of the laity, clergy, and the mission of the church. These are traditional dates for ordaining clergy. You will find the prayers for Holy Cross Day and for Ember Day observance in *The Book of Common Prayer* on pages 252, 255-56.

The call to ministry comes to all of us, lay and ordained. Other than myself, our staff at Christ Church all are laity. Churches are staffed by both clergy and laity. Most of my students at Loyola University in New Orleans were Roman Catholic laity called to staff ministry in Catholic parishes—Christian formation, music, youth, and pastoral care.

How is God calling you to minister? Could it be as a deacon or priest? Could it be as a youth minister or a church musician? Could it be short-term volunteer service locally or overseas? Could it be to put your skills to work in a ministry here as a volunteer in the parish and community? If such a sense of calling recurs, an initial step would be to speak with me as your priest.

I invite you, as an Ember Day observance, to share in the prayer of the boy Samuel in the sanctuary when he first encountered the presence of God and God's call to prophetic ministry: "Speak, for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:10).

God's peace,

David W. Perkins+  
Interim Rector