

June, 2020
Issue 11

Soundings

The Newsletter of Christ Church



Photo by Victor Kisob

Parish of Christ the Redeemer

1415 Pelhamdale Avenue • Pelham, NY 10803

All are Welcome



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Dear Friends,

We hope this issue will serve as one more strand in the thread connecting our Parish family while we're apart, along with our online services and music, the Parish Notes, as well as the Rector's Chronicle.

Our thanks to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts and experiences in articles and photographs.

We believe shared experiences allow us to get to know and understand each other a little better, thus deepening our fellowship.

We look forward to breaking bread with everyone once again at the Lord's table.

Yours in Christ,
The Soundings Team

Soundings

The Newsletter of Christ Church

Episcopal/Anglican

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Soundings is published by the parishioners of Christ Church to teach, provide information, promote events and parish life, to pass down the history of the church, and engage us in the life of the community.

What's On Matt's Mind?

A New World of Virtual Worship

There's a lot on my mind right now! We live in one of the epicenters of the pandemic, the nation has seen protests from shore to shore over racism and police brutality that are entering their third week with no obvious end in sight, unemployment is higher than it has ever been in my life, our church buildings are closed to the public, and worship continues online.

I've preached about the pandemic, protests, racism, and unemployment in recent sermons, and I hope you will listen to those sermons or revisit them. For this issue of *Soundings*, I want to offer a little insight into those other two things: the church buildings being closed to the public and our worship online.

I sent a letter to the Parish on June 8 detailing some of our path toward reopening our buildings. In short, a Task Force on Reopening Christ Church's Buildings has been formed. The Task Force has two goals. The first is to produce "Guidelines for Reopening Christ Church" and publish it on June 30. These guidelines will be updated as needed as we move forward. Our second goal is to reopen the church building safely for prayer on July 1. I cannot yet say exactly when or in what form public worship services will resume, but my hope is that we are able to find safe ways to worship together in person, sooner, rather than later. As I know more on that particular topic, I will let you know.

In the meantime – and since March – we have been offering worship online. Obviously online worship isn't the same as in-person worship, but there are some significant benefits that have become clear. Online worship is available on demand. Those who are busy Sunday morning, sick, away from Pelham, or homebound are able to "tune in" at their convenience and "go to church". The videos of our sermons and choral music have been very well received and shared with others. This is all a very good thing, and whenever we resume in-person worship, I am confident that we will continue offering videos of sermons and music, and

also some weekly online worship services that can be viewed "on demand".



This however takes a lot of work. Our videos are made in PowerPoint and converted to video. Each PowerPoint slide includes the words of the service and video of the person reading or praying those words. I draft the service from start to finish with text of prayers/readings and place-holders for videos of readings, prayers, sermon, and music. Time is scheduled with readers to read the two Lessons, Psalm, and Prayers of the People and they each meet with me on Zoom to record their reading. Each recorded reader video is inserted in to the correct slide of the PowerPoint presentation, edited as necessary to ensure that the text of the reading matches the words being read. Deacon Katie, Canon Susan and I meet every few weeks in the church – masks are worn, and social distancing is in effect – to record their parts of the service for the next few Sundays. Lastly, I record my own parts including the sermon. Once all of the clergy parts are recorded, I add them to the PowerPoint slides. The last thing to be recorded each week is the Prayer List, in an effort to make sure it is as up to date as possible.

Meanwhile Jeffrey Hoffman has been working on music videos with the singers. Jeffrey records the organ part for a hymn or anthem and then sends that music to our singers who each record their own parts for a given piece of music. They send their parts back to him. He syncs all of the musicians who have been singing alone, and then he can create a video that includes all of the singers and the text of the hymns. I am grateful for the work Jeffrey is doing making our online worship musically excellent. Each hymn takes him about 10 hours to complete. Anthems are far more time consuming. Once the music pieces for each Sunday are received, they are added to the PowerPoint slides. Because the hymns take so long to make, we are regularly reusing hymns a few weeks apart.

Once all of the PowerPoint slides are finished, the video is “rendered” which takes about two hours. At this point, the video is ready for proofing and editing and then the final version of the video is “rendered” – another two hours. Putting the video on YouTube takes about an hour and is the final step. Overall, the process takes me about 20 hours each week – not including sermon writing. All in all, video recording and production for online worship is quite a bit more time consuming than preparing for and worshipping on a normal Sunday. Again, I am grateful for Jeffrey – together we make a pretty good movie producing team!

Given this time commitment, what we are doing now is not sustainable once we are also offering in-person worship. Right now, everything is pre-recorded, but in the future, it will probably make sense to live stream some things from the church and post sermons and pre-recorded music online as well. As we move into the summer, we are trying to record as much for future services as possible. Some form of

online presence and worship is with us to stay. It’s not too early to consider the likelihood that Christmas will be significantly different than it has been in recent years. We made it through Easter and Holy Week well enough, but I would prefer to have a solid plan in place for Christmas by the end of the summer so that we can be sure we all get to hear and sing along with our favorite carols and be able to best worship the birth of Christ in as joyful, thoughtful, and healthy way as possible.

One last thing on my mind is how grateful I am for the *Soundings* team producing this Newsletter! We are in strange times, and it is really a wonderful service for our church to have such an excellent newsletter to keep us all posted and up to date!

God bless you all,

Fr. Matt

A Graduation Prayer

By Kimberly Knowle-Zeller

For anyone embarking on a new adventure,
this prayer is for you.

For anyone witnessing a loved one transitioning to something new,
this prayer is for you.

For those uncertain about the future,
or where your path will take you,
this prayer is for you.

For anyone who has wondered where God is calling them,
this prayer is for you.

It's a season of both letting go and holding on,
the season of remembering what was,
and looking forward to what will be.

A season forcing us to look back at where we've been,
And the people and places who have shaped us.

In this season of letting go and holding on,
remember the love of God.
The God who formed you and counts the hairs on your head,
the God who dwells in you,
whose Spirit gives you strength and courage.
The God who calls you a beloved child.

In this season of letting go and holding on,
remember the radical love of Jesus.
Jesus who loves you as you are,
who knows the pain and fear you experience,
who walked with the lonely and forsaken,
who took his love for the world to the cross,
to bring us all to new life.

In this season of letting go and holding on,
remember the presence of the Spirit,
who infuses hope in your days,
nourishes your parched soul,
and gathers others to be your community and support.

In these days of joy and fear,
remember you are not alone.
Your path may seem clear, or perhaps uncertain,
yet either way you walk,
and even in the steps that may feel foreign or backwards,
you do not go alone.

Go forth and love.
Go forth in love.
Remember your name: God's beloved.



Eternal God, we give thanks for all the graduates in our congregation who have endured through these unprecedeted and difficult circumstances and prevailed. Amen

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADUATES

Reece Isabella Elliott, Pre-K to Kindergarten
Samuel Agerberg, Kindergarten to First Grade
Nicholas Mead, Prospect Hill Elementary School

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATES

-Pelham Middle School
Daniel Avolio
William Bates Bland
Lane Cooper
Lucy Dolan
Nathaniel Hooper
Liam Mead
Luke Reische

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Zoe Anastas
Jack Cardwell
Grayce Cooper
James Cruz
Alison Emery
Hudson Hardwick
Charles Moderelli

COLLEGE GRADUATES

Peter Sigward, Skidmore College, BA Computer Science
Angus Leckie, University of St Andrews in Scotland, MA in International Relations and Economics.
Samantha K. Weeks, Ithaca College, B. A. Physics (minor) Computer Science.

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- BCP



EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EFM) is a four-year program of The University of the South, an Episcopal school in Tennessee. It provides an education in the content of Christian tradition, sometimes called a program in practical theology. Recently all studies were moved online because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we are thankful for another successful year and for the graduation of two members of our EFM class, **Sandra Rivera** (*a Christ Church parishioner*) and **Zorita Marshall**. We are happy for the time we shared with them and wish them God's blessings in their current and future ministries.

The Rev. Deacon Chisara Alimole (Mentor)
Vicki Brundage-Kish (Co-mentor)

Congratulations!

Stewardship in the Virtual Era

The Stewardship Committee sends you greetings from afar and sincere prayers that you are doing well. We are all looking forward to the time when we can safely be back on our beautiful parish campus together.

This is the time of the year when the Stewardship Committee would begin meeting together in person. We would be reviewing 2020 pledge status, checking in with parishioners who may have overlooked the opportunity to pledge in 2020, working with our beloved bookkeeper to send out pledge statements and we would begin discussing and planning our stewardship goals for 2021. As with most things in our lives these days, stewardship looks a little different through the lens of Covid-19.

We agree with Fr. Matt, that this is not the time to make personal calls to parishioners regarding stewardship. Many people's lives have been upended, there are concerns regarding personal finances and we all know friends and parishioners who have lost their jobs. Our only ask at this time is, if you are able, please do consider making a 2020 pledge if you have not already. If you have made a pledge, please continue to either mail in those weekly pledges, or consider setting up an online

giving account (*details in next column*). If you are in a position to pre-pay any of your pledge through the end of the year, this too would help the parish.

You will find a cut-out pledge card with all necessary information on the next page (pg. 7). If you would like to make a gift of any size to Christ Church, and/or make a pledge, please consider filling out this "card".

While we have lost many opportunities to be together for worship, fellowship and celebration, we have gained the appreciation of many things to which we no longer have immediate access. So that we can continue to move forward together in a financially healthy way – please know that your contributions will continue to make a difference. Pledges support all that we do at Christ Church: our buildings, staff, clergy, utilities, outreach, music and so much more.

The Stewardship Committee will meet together either virtually or in-person at a later date. If you would like to be involved with planning for 2021 Stewardship, please let Kari Black know (kblackn@aol.com).

Time · Treasure · Talent



Stewardship

Online Giving - Scheduling pledges, Sunday offerings, and other gifts

You can now schedule pledges and donations to Christ Church through our Online Giving platform. Visit our website www.christchurchpelham.org and click the "Donate Online" button. Create an account or log in to Parish Giving. You can schedule your pledge/Sunday offering any way you like (weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually). You can also schedule regular donations for other donation categories. We have been tailoring the platform to better suit our parishioners, so if you already have an account, please take a stroll through Parish Giving again and make sure everything is set up as is best for you. The interface is simple, record keeping is easy, and transactions are secure and safe. If you have any questions at all about Parish Giving, please contact Father Matt or Kari Black (Stewardship Chair).



2020 Pledge Card

Please use this card for **NEW** 2020 pledges and/or gifts to Christ Church

Return to Christ Church in **ONE** of the following ways:

Mail to Christ Church via mail (1415 Pelhamdale Ave., Pelham, NY 10803)

Email information to Marie Main (marie@christchurchpelham.org)

Set up an online pledge or gift via the Online Giving Platform
(www.christchurchpelham.org)



Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

2020 Pledge/Estimate of Giving: \$ _____

This estimate is weekly

This estimate is monthly

This estimate is annually

I would like offering envelopes

I would like to make a gift to Christ Church in the amount of: \$ _____

I would like a call from the parish to help in setting up an Online Giving Account

Christ Church Stewardship 2020

This commitment may be revised or cancelled at any time at my request.

AMAZON SMILE

If you are planning on doing any shopping online, don't forget that Amazon donates money to our church. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Visit smile.amazon.com; select "Parish of Christ the Redeemer in Pelham, NY" as your charity of choice. You can also click the smile link on the Parish Notes.



Lost Bunny

Lockdown Diaries Entry#1

By Missy Kisob



The need to stay home to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus has not been a hardship for me. Fortunately, I have a job that allows me to work from home, but I recognize this is sadly not the case for many, so I truly appreciate this blessing. I am also fortunate that my children are adults, so no home-schooling drama either.

For my family, however, the immediate danger is not from the coronavirus--and I'm not in any way minimizing that danger. Instead, I feel more threatened by the fruit born of the widely and silently accepted culture of systemic racism in America. Among other things, in police departments across the nation, that racism has spawned the development of curated practices of racial discrimination, harassment and even murder. Staying home is supposed to keep all of us safe from the virus. But for families like mine, staying home also provides some respite from the worry we feel, but do not discuss, each time one of us ventures out--the worry that an encounter with police for even a minor traffic stop might turn deadly.

Our lockdown routine is probably similar to that of most other people: We stay home, we work, we read, we write, we surf the net, we watch the gut wrenchingly tragic news. And when we go out to the store, go for walks, or drives (inside the car is a PPE-free zone), we don the required face masks and sometimes a pair of nitrile/vinyl/ latex, whatever gloves, depending on what the official recommendations are that day.

Would that the PPE's could protect us from police bullets, truncheons, choke holds and knees.

We are all praying fervently for the day the coronavirus is corralled and effective treatments and vaccines have been developed. We're pretty certain this will happen because the best minds on the planet are working on it with the backing of countless governments and international organizations. If a fraction of that sort of concern and effort could be put towards eradicating the virus of racism, we might stand a chance of survival.

Rain does not fall on one roof alone.
African Proverb

“Truly, it is in the darkness that one finds the light, so when we are in sorrow, then this light is nearest of all to us.”

-Meister Eckhart



Spreading *The Good News* While Our Buildings are Closed



Do you have friends or family who are looking for a church home during this time?

- Direct them to the parish website which includes helpful links to online worship (both Sunday morning worship as well as morning prayer, sermon, and music options) (www.christchurchpelham.org)
- Share our Social Media platforms with your friends and family
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ChristChurchPelham/>
- YouTube https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=christ+church+pelham
- Instagram christchurchpelham
- What does a “like” do on YouTube?

Sunday worship is currently held online on our YouTube Channel. You can always get to our YouTube Channel from the parish website. If you haven't already done so, please subscribe to our YouTube Channel...

“Liking” videos on YouTube, rather than being something merely sentimental, means something practical. YouTube makes it clear that the number of likes -- or “thumbs-up” -- on a given video determines its ranking and whether or not YouTube pushes that video and channel to viewers of similar channels. So, do some easy evangelism and “like” our YouTube videos. Oh... and remember to subscribe to our channel!

What will Evangelism and the welcome of new parishioners look like going forward?

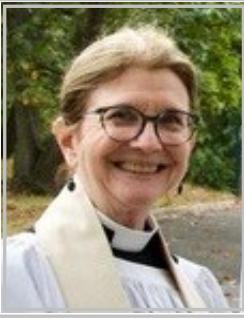
As with many other Covid-19 related questions, this is a difficult one, and it is a question we will need your help in answering. So, as we work our way through this difficult time, please keep this question in mind. If you have social media expertise and notice ways in which we can improve our online presence, please let Fr. Matt know.

If you would like to join the Evangelism Committee and be involved with finding ways in which we can share Christ Church with our neighbors in the Pelham community and beyond, we have a place for you. Please contact Kari Black (kblackn@aol.com).

And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation”.

-Mark 16:15

God is in the Stillness



It's an early May morning, a little after eight; I'm meditating. Or rather, trying to meditate. There's a sound in the hallway outside my apartment door, the clink of a metal handle falling onto a plastic pail: Will, the building super, is out there cleaning. The bucket is full of bleach and water; he's come to sanitize the buttons on the elevator, and the stair-rails. If he's feeling generous he'll come by to wipe down our doorknob before he leaves. It's an act of kindness that brings the sound closer.

The sound makes me smile: I can pretend, in here, that I'm on retreat in a monastery and a monk has come by with a mallet and block to wake me. Not a bell, but a block. It gives a spiritual shape to what we are doing with our time, with the quarantine, the virus, the staying-inside. Not all of which has been pleasant.

By the time you read this, I pray it will no longer be the case, but as I write, we are somewhat confined. We don't leave the apartment without our masks; we don't share the elevator; we take turns moving around in the laundry room and in the halls. These are the rules for staying-in-place. We have voluntarily renounced some of our freedom for the sake of our apartment community.

It's like a vow, really. Esther de Waal in her wonderful book *Seeking God* tells us that Benedictine monks make a vow of stability. It's a promise to seek God "in this place, and among these people." It's different from the Franciscans, who wander;

their is a life of poverty with physical movement. The Benedictines promise to stay wherever the community puts them. They accept the confinement of their circumstances. Both styles acknowledge, in their way, that God can be sought – and found – anywhere. A Franciscan might experience God's friendship and guidance on the road, the Benedictine in the study. Some while wandering, others while staying in place.

There's a parallel to this in yoga. A good instructor will sometimes encourage her students to accept the bodies they are in on that day. I accept the limitations and strengths of my body – not comparing myself to some other person's body; and I accept my body as I find it on that particular day. Not when it was only twenty-five. Some days I'm stronger than on other days. So the rule is: This day, this body. I hope the analogy is obvious: in prayer, it's the same. This prayer time, this soul of mine. Just as I am. Today. A wise director used to say to me, "Pray as you can, not as you can't!" We can only start from where we are.

So I love the sound of Will and his bucket outside my door. The sound wakes me up, reminds me that we are in this together; that my staying inside and his cleaning outside bind us, help us both. God is here – in this place. Among these people. I need look no farther than the hallway, wait no longer to realize that God is here.

-Canon Susan Harriss

"There is no need to look for God here or there. He is no farther away than the door of your own heart."

-Meister Eckhart

Congratulations to Canon Susan Harriss on her 40th Anniversary of Ordination!

June 9, 1980

Lockdown Diaries Entry #2

Reflections

By Michael Fawcett

This is precious time. Make it for the good. As never before, we have time to listen; time to reflect; time to be still; time to create. This is precious time.

I wrote the above as a Facebook post on March 23rd, three days into our confinement with the other Michael's mother. Her cozy house is a three hour drive north, and a few miles outside of "downtown" Middleburgh, NY – sort of Mayberry in the Catskills. It's a lovely and comparatively safer getaway, up a long, steep, gravel road, off a lightly traveled country road, in the woods, with a spectacular view of green mountain splendor.



How've I been doing with this precious time? I've spent considerable time being still. Too much in front of the TV, I'm afraid. More fearsome is how much of that TV time has been Hallmark movies, a house favorite; lots of Christmas, handsome princes, and artificial flowers. Okay, I do get sucked in, and might even reach for a Kleenex on occasion, but enough already! I do abandon my stillness to enjoy walks in the woods. Sadly, Riley cannot join me, as the terrain is too challenging in his old age.

I have been reflecting a lot too; on the meaning, the

value, the unpredictability, and the sweetness of life, even with its challenges. Friends have fallen ill. At least a couple have lost their battle. How and when will we return to some sort of routine, and how different will life be from here? There is much to ponder. Exercising positivity and hope seems essential.

Creating keeps me sane. I make most of our evening meals, though creativity in the kitchen is sometimes less than appropriately appreciated by our 91-year-old housemate. I spend hours creating vocal arrangements on my laptop and singing in the woods with new recording apps on my iPhone. Soon it will be warm enough here to garden.

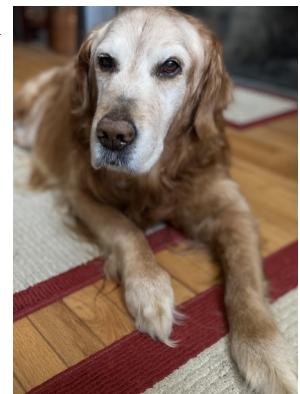
The listening part has been more challenging. There is so much to listen to on the news, and then one must decipher how much to believe and how much is useful and helpful. Then there's the housemate.

Does pretending to listen count? Constant note to self: love is patient; love is kind.

Despite the obvious challenges, I've actually enjoyed much of the experience. Slowing down to regenerate has been delightful. Zooming with family and friends has been a fun new thing. I do miss hugs

however, and the mystery and discovery of real coffee hour.

In closing, one of my favorite verses of scripture, and my mantra for this chapter of life, John 14:27b: "*Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*"



Deacon's Letter: *What Truly Matters*



I find it hard to believe that all of us have not been together for months now! I feel such a large void in my life.

There are many sad feelings too, like when I drive

through downtown Rye and see it empty of people. Similarly, it feels very strange when I drive to Pelham and come into the church to record the gospel in an otherwise empty building, except for Father Matt.

But through all this and more I have certainly come to understand what is important to me and what is not. It is the love I have for all of you and for people in general that matters. On the other hand, Covid makes me realize how I don't need to get my nails done or buy things that are really unnecessary. I could go on and on about the revelation of what's truly important and what's truly not! It has brought about a big shift in my view of things and that is not all bad – the shutdown, I mean.

I'm sure you all know someone who has gotten this virus and you've lost them. I have as well. It's painful to think about lives cut short. I'm sure we all have feelings of fear and uncertainty as the world

now begins to open up again. As we come out of lockdown, I think I will appreciate every day, every moment more than I ever did before.

Here is a prayer that I find helpful and I hope you will find it helpful too:

- *Deacon Katie*

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that You will make all things right
if I surrender to Your will;
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.



2019 Award: St. Mary's Mohegan Lake Outreach Episcopal Challenge Cup

We won the "Episcopal Cup" for 2019 at the annual Saint Mary's Mohegan Lake Charity Golf outing benefitting the Saint Mary's Food Pantry.

Our team: Fr. Matt, David Hoffer, Curtis Chase, and the Rev. Jennie Talley (from St. John's Church in Wilmot).

Lockdown Diaries Entry #3

By Courtney McGrory

As I sit down to write this, I'm reminded of a saying "May you live in interesting times," which I thought to be attributed to Chinese philosopher Confucius. Turns out that it's widely misquoted, and there is no known equivalent expression in Chinese.

So here I am continuing to learn about things I'd never really thought about before. It certainly is a time for exploration and learning about new situations. Our family has adapted in the moment, sometimes it goes well, other times, not so well. But we've reached an equilibrium after a rocky and improvised start with two working parents at home and three children trying to home school at various school stages—elementary, middle and high school. I miss the feelings of Fridays, the distinct marking that the week has ended. I miss the feeling that concrete plans have been made, and we have things to look forward to, including varied social interactions at church, school and elsewhere.

I've learned how much I value teachers and teaching – and that they've had to adjust to technology and methods they never saw coming. I've learned how much I value workers who support my daily routines – from grocery store employees to postal

employees. I've managed how to turn down the volume of worry and uncertainty when so many people are thinking and wondering the same things.

We have found other silver linings: family walks, less commuting time, the kids have learned to do more chores, our 8 year-old has new-found freedom biking around with friends. Plus, some funny

lines from our kids: "I have a long list of people and puppies I want to hug when this is over." It certainly hasn't been idyllic: tempers do indeed run hotter in close quarters, and I'm not sure we'll ever extricate our sons properly from Xbox and screens after this summer.

We are well and healthy at the moment—for which I'm absolutely grateful. Yet I'm wary of the deeper social and political scars this pandemic will leave and know that we still have a long road ahead.



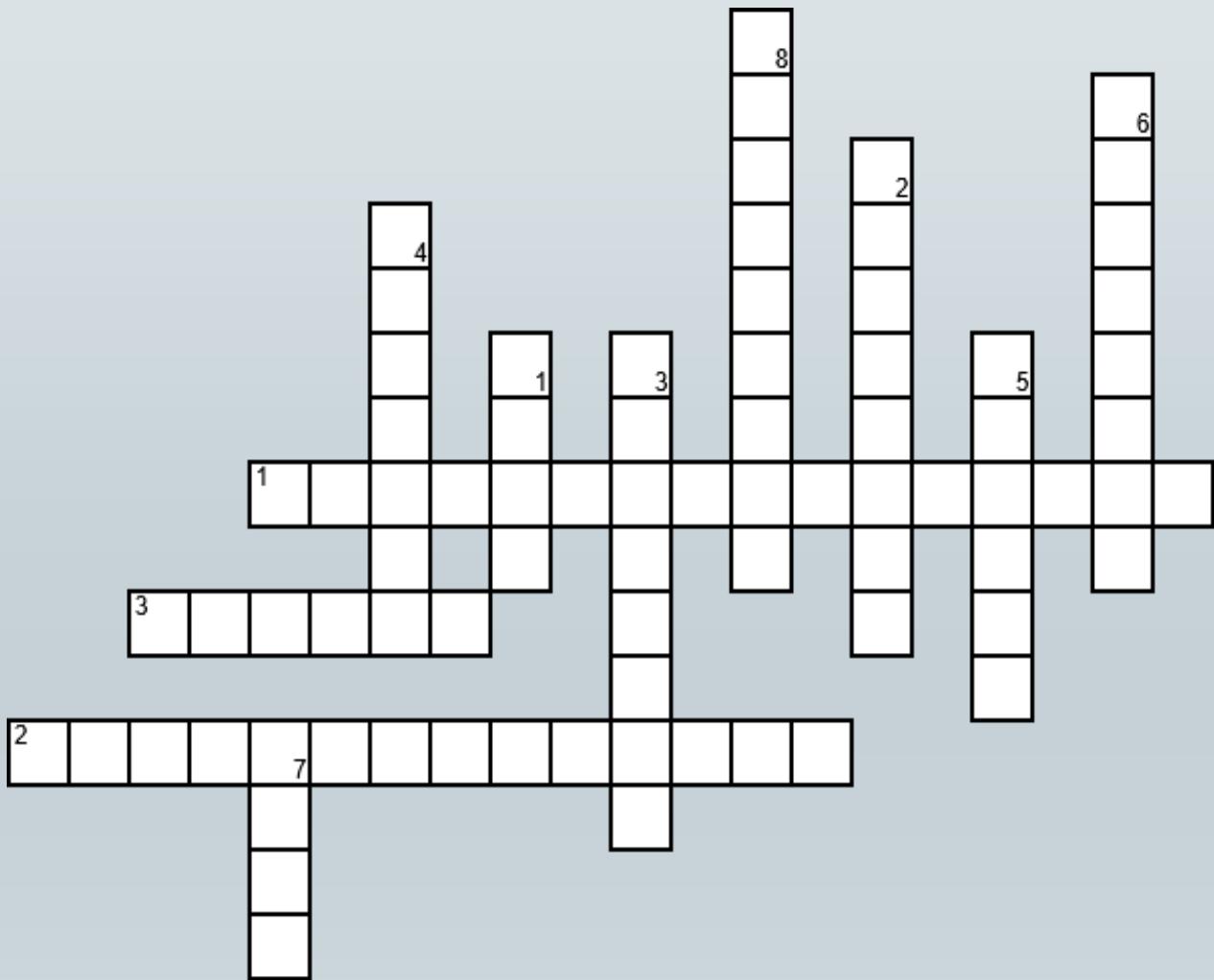
CALLIGRAPHER NEEDED

The Christ Church "Book of Remembrance" lists names of deceased members of our parish dating back to 1959. This has always been beautifully filled out in calligraphy by parishioners. Perhaps this is a lost art – or perhaps not. If you are a parishioner who practices the art of calligraphy, please contact Marie at marie@christchurchpelham.org We have about 20 names that need to be recorded.

Pandemic Vocabulary

By Etta Gumbs and Barbara Nelson

Test your knowledge of new and old words that have become all too familiar in the last two months



ACROSS

1. Maintaining a safe distance apart (*2 words*)
2. To bring the family together while doing a good deed (*2 words*)
3. Object, infection

DOWN

1. For deeper faith, do this frequently.
2. Daily activity to increase your fitness level, (*2 words*)

3. For de-stressing.

4. To improve your appearance, give yourself this.
5. For more culinary prowess, try a new one of these.
6. Casting off
7. Mountain top
8. First case documented

Lockdown Diaries Entry #4

By Alison Hinds Pearl

When you really stop to think about the magnitude of this global pandemic, the loss of life and livelihood, and the future consequences of this crisis that are yet to unfold, you might ask "Where is God?" Politics seems to conflict with public health. Schools have shifted to virtual learning and even HIS house, our refuge, must remain dark to in-person worship for now. In the face of these unfathomable and swift changes, it doesn't seem unreasonable to ask God for a sign – a sign that things will get better.

HE gave me a sign. When my now 95-year-old father, Ted Hinds, a resident in an assisted living facility, tested positive for Covid-19 on Good Friday, I thought the devastating sign was that we would lose him. And though our loss would have been God's gain, I was not ready to give up on my Dad, my living hero. My father fought the virus. My family and I prayed for healing. We were blessed with prayer warriors - our friends and church community. And after a hospitalization, caring caregivers,

scary bouts of hallucinations, he is recovering. His appetite and his strength are slowly returning. We got the sign. My father's recovery signaled to our family and friends that things will get better.

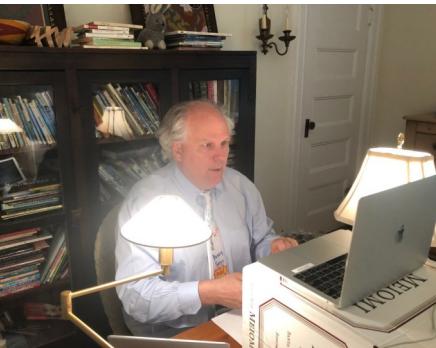
It was a miracle. We are all so very grateful. Our prayers continue not only for my Dad, but for my Mom who remains Covid-free in a different skilled nursing facility, and for all those who suffer as well as those who care for those who suffer. God is with us. HE's with us at home, helping us appreciate each other during this time alone – together, helping us recognize the value of what we may miss most – congregating in settings that help us thrive – school, work, church. Maybe HE wants us to realize the simplest, smallest things that we take for granted, matter most. Maybe there are new, better ways for us to learn, earn and worship – and maybe that too is a sign – a sign that things will be both different and better.

Psalm 46

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.
5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.
6 The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.
8 Come, behold the works of the Lord;
see what desolations he has brought on the earth.
9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
10 "Be still, and know that I am God!
I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the earth."
11 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Our New Normal



God is at home, it's we who have gone out for a walk.
-Meister Eckhart

New Vestry Trio Starts in the Deep End

On a chilly early February evening, days after their election to the church's vestry, our three new members attended their first meeting in the library. Who knew it would be their last such in-person gathering for many weeks. Today the vestry still only meets virtually, on Zoom.

That's one of many big changes that the trio has witnessed. To find out what that experience has been like, *Soundings* spoke with Claire Allen, Andrew Des Rault and Barbara Zambelli over the phone in mid-May. Here is their take on the vestry's abrupt entry into the pandemic era:

Claire Allen

She remembers her first meeting in February as "very enlightening". What came next in rapid succession, though, was a series of events she sums up as a "trial by fire". With the pandemic ballooning, Father Matt called an emergency Vestry meeting for Wednesday, March 18th at 8 a.m. via online meeting site Zoom.

"We discussed what was going on in the diocese, the state and in our church," she says of the first gathering. The church would have to close its doors for an undetermined span of time. Services would have to go online while the staff still had to be paid and the

church's facilities maintained. It would be up to the vestry to help figure out how to spend its money and map its new path, determining what it could still afford to do and what it could not.

In April, the church applied for and was granted an emergency cash infusion from the federal government's vast Payroll Protection Plan. Meanwhile, the vestry had to work with the church's finance committee and its advisors to make sure that amid all the turmoil in the markets, the endowment remained safe and sound.

"It was crazy to go from monthly vestry meetings in the library to weekly meetings online," she recalls. But there was so much to do. Meanwhile, without Sunday services and the passing of the collection plate, finding alternative means of funding became a priority. As a fund raiser for the non-profit Pelham Picture House, Claire had experience with different on-line fund-raising firms.

Now she began asking around. A friend at Pelham's Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church suggested Parish Giving, which we looked into and began using in April. Since then it has brought in thousands of dollars.

"We feel strong and solvent, and we are doing all we can to keep

the church a viable part of the community even in our present PAUSE mode," she says.

Andrew Des Rault

At his first vestry meeting Father Matt asked Andrew to head up the church's Men's Group. "I was really excited," he recalls. But days later, instead of moving forward with plans for new fellowship events as he'd hoped, Andrew found himself working with others on the vestry to bring services of a church in lockdown mode to all via the web. With Easter looming, that made their task all the more urgent.

Originally the church live-streamed services via Facebook, later switching to pre-recorded segments, of readings, hymn singing, and sermons pieced together on YouTube. With all the Easter week services now behind us, the vestry meetings have focused more on financial matters.

By early April, with the pandemic plateauing in New York, the vestry cut its meetings to every other week. But as the lockdown goes on, Andrew is concerned about many older parishioners, some without web-access. He also worries that in the absence of physical contact and the comradery fostered by services and special



events alike, parishioners could drift away from each other and the church. "We need to find ways to keep folks from falling out of the fold," he says.

Among other things, he says the church's music program, a favorite of many parishioners, must be brought back, but how? Choristers singing in a close-knit group remains far too hazardous. Similar problems lurk for the annual tag sale, which not only brings in cash, but also generates comradery.

In the early days of the pandemic, such questions came as a shock as the vestry had to help sort out not just what needed to be done... but where to begin. "Now we've moved beyond stop gaps and temporary solutions to eventually getting everybody back together," says Andrew.

Barbara Zambelli

As a member of Christ Church for nearly three decades, Barbara has seen the church weather all sorts of challenges. Among other things, she served on the search committee to find someone to replace our longest-serving rector, Father Hoag. But she's seen nothing quite like Covid-19. "Today we are working with a different set of issues than we normally would," she says. "We have to work through all this, keeping abreast of the economy and other things, but the vestry is on top of this." Among other signs of that, she points to the church's swift success in securing federal funds. Meanwhile, Barbara too stresses the need to address pastoral issues and reach out to parishioners in need in these hard times.

There, she says, the church is lucky to have dedicated people serving on the vestry who are both "compassionate and committed".

As the new chair of the church's Women's Connection, she's had lots of suggestions about possible events. But without access to the church, options are limited. What's more, she notes: "Life is very different right now. People are worried about losing their jobs and their benefits. Meanwhile, who knows when we will be able to reopen."

But that day will, in stages perhaps, come and with the vestry's help it will be done in ways that maximize fellowship and minimize risk.

- by Erik Ipsen

The Plane Tree from Aesop's Fables

Two Travelers, walking in the noonday sun, sought the shade of a wide spreading tree to rest. As they lay looking up among the pleasant leaves, they saw that it was a Plane Tree.

"How useless is the Plane!" said one of them. "It bears no fruit whatever, and only serves to litter the ground with leaves."

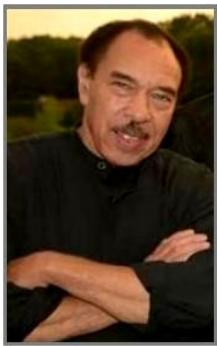
"Ungrateful creatures!" said a voice from the Plane Tree. "You lie here in my cooling shade, and yet you say I am useless! Thus ungratefully, O Jupiter, do men receive their blessings!"

Moral: *Our best blessings are often the least appreciated.*



Source: <http://www.read.gov/aesop/001.html>

The Verger's Corner: *Filling the Gaps*



So what is going on with me as the Verger? Most people haven't set foot in a church in months. With no services at Christ Church, as the official keeper of the gate, I admit I'm liturgically bored. During Holy Week and Easter--normally the busiest days of the year for me—my days were pretty empty. There was no draping of crosses, much less changing of hangings, frontals, pew candles, votive candles, and putting together the Rota of readers and servers.

But, together or separated, we are still the body of Christ...

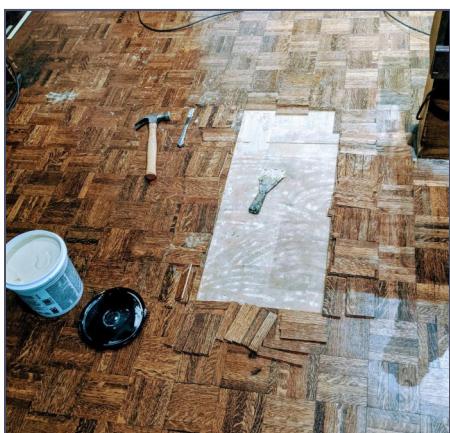
As part-time Sexton, my days are still full. I do my best to help Father Matt and Jeffery Hoffman, our music director, who have taken on the full weight of this new virtual worship. Along with others, I still ring the church bell at 7p.m. every evening as per a request from the Town of Pelham. It started with Matt and me doing the ringing, and has expanded. Recently, I added youth acolytes to our bell corps.

I have also used the extra time to work on some projects that most people would probably never even notice, like regluing the parquet flooring in

the sanctuary that gets loosened whenever we move the Altar. I've also been polishing the church's brass and assisting Ed Blue with renovations of the upstairs apartment in the Old Parish House so it can be rented. Those things all come on top of normal maintenance work which must continue; we want to keep things ready for the day "live" worship returns. All of this keeps me happily occupied. I feel blessed this situation has not affected me too adversely. But having been furloughed from my job, and with less to do at church liturgically, I've used some of the downtime to catch up on my reading. Similarly, while my career as a part-time electric bassist in clubs around the area might not resume for a few more months, that gives me more time to practice--especially the more challenging tunes.

I also have more time to pray. Part of the blessing of my ministry is that I have access to church 24/7/365. We can all pray anywhere, but it is especially nice to be able to walk into the Lord's House, kneel down and quietly pray. My hope is to come out of this all the better for the experience.

*-Walter Roberts
Serving our Lord together*



Lockdown Diaries Entry #5

By Colette Phipps



When the Covid-19 virus leaped before us, I felt it took a bite out of my life. Because I am in the business of aging, I learned years ago flexibility is the key to sustainability. But at first this Covid beast was more than I thought I could bear.

To begin with, I am a work fanatic. I enjoy working with my staff and colleagues on ways to improve the quality of life for older persons. The problem was that I believed my work was better when my body was in my office miles from home. When they told us that all our work had to be done remotely, I wondered how I could be as effective.

It took a couple of weeks (and many calls to our tech staff) for my work life to move into some kind of normalcy. And then, without warning, it became pleasant. I started to appreciate some of the things I have at home. While I sit at my desk, I can look outside and enjoy the beauty of the day. The art and photos on my walls are especially pleasing, because of the memories they conjure. Most of all I now have the time to talk to my husband. Some-

times the conversations are long, other times short, but it's all communications and that's good.

The other side of the penny isn't so shiny. The pandemic sucks the life out of people who were already near the end of life. It takes the dignity out of death and attacks comfort care in ways we've not seen before. Since most of my work deals with the issues of getting older, the virus's cataclysmic impact on nursing homes and assisted living facilities feels like an attack on me. I also must remember that my husband and I are closer to the other side of life than we once were. That means taking care of ourselves is no longer a casual thing; it is purposeful.

Meanwhile, the pandemic has increased my faith. Online church services are different, but in some ways I find them more personal. Listening to the reading of the gospel or sermon, I feel like the message is just for me. Yes, I miss the congregation and the conversations. The other day we drove over to see the church and walk through the Garden of the Resurrection. It felt nice. During this time, I've felt anger, confusion, and even a dare-devil attitude. In the end, the virus has made me determined to pray harder, to be and do better.

A Note from the Parish Office

Essential Pastoral Care Needs Requests

For pastoral emergencies call or text one of the clergy. My cell (Fr. Matt) is: 914-471-0260. Canon Susan's cell is: 914-815-4911. Deacon Katie's is: 914-589-1628. We cannot visit you or meet with you in person, but we can talk or Zoom. I ask that each of you also reach out to others in our parish and check on them, particularly seniors. For non-urgent matters email is best. It has become quite clear that email is being used far more regularly by many, many people. I am regularly checking my email, but my responses may be delayed a few days.

Cops and Christians

By Michael Moynihan

It might be good to begin with a reminder that cops are “coppers” because of the buttons that are part of their dress uniform. The copper may have tarnished in recent years for some, and it’s time to clean it up!

I grew up with uncles who were NYPD officers and detectives. I had great love and respect for them. But it is good to remember that I grew up at a time when we were taught that if you ever got lost anywhere just look for a police officer. I still have strong and positive feelings for many in law enforcement. Each day they put their lives on the line. As scripture says: “Greater love has no one than to lay down their life for another.”

Today, we as Christians find ourselves in a position to acknowledge these good officers and pray for them, and at the same time to encourage the weeding out of bad officers and those not trained properly. It would be un-American and un-Christian to fail to do so. True accountability and change are overdue.

The excessive use of force, the racism and prejudices that plague some police forces is unacceptable. As Christians we must have our feet solidly planted on

the ground with our eyes fixed on Jesus. This is not about politics but justice. What so many black men, young and old experience at the hands and knees of some police officers is totally unacceptable and criminal.

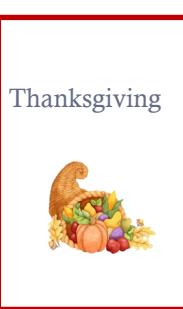
It seems that the recent pandemic has allowed many of us more time to think and pray and change our patterns of life. We must open our eyes and remember we are all made in the image and likeness of God... we all are images of the Divine God who made us... all, not just some! Jesus was disgusted in his time by the people who were lukewarm...

Calling for change in how the police carry out their responsibilities is not disrespectful. It is a positive contribution to our society. Despite the bad cops-- and they do exist--I still roll down my window when stopped at a light and thank the officers who may be in the car next to me. Simply saying thank you can change their day sometimes and maybe some attitudes. The good ones deserve and need our respect and encouragement.

*A new commandment I give unto you:
that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.
By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples:
if ye have love one for another."*

John 13:34-35

Around the Parish in Photographs



The Story of Creation



Halloween 2019



Photos by Lily Solmssen Moureaux © 2020

Returning 'Newcomers' Scott and Julie Shenkman

Scott and Julie Shenkman moved to Pelham from the Bronx. Scott was born and raised in the Bronx. Julie was born in Scarsdale and grew up mostly in Cold Springs. They met in their very first class of their freshman year at Binghamton University, where she studied management and he studied management as well as history. Scott has one son, Andrew, who is 25 and currently lives with them.

Scott first heard about Christ Church in 1996, when he went looking for an Easter Vigil. After attending that year, he returned many times over the next two decades. He finally joined the church two years ago. Amid the pandemic, with the church closed, he has attended services virtually, on YouTube. As much as he likes them, he still misses in-person worship. "I look forward to celebrating the Eucharist and

seeing everyone," he says.

Scott is a licensed Lay Eucharistic Minister, who served for several years at Saint Stephens Episcopal Church in the Woodlawn section of the Bronx. Currently he is a caretaker for his mother who lives in the Bronx. Over the years Scott has worked as an Account Executive for a language company, a travel agent, and a mental-health case worker. Julie has worked in the areas of customer service and collections.

Both Shenkmans enjoy reading. Julie particularly likes early American history of the revolutionary period, while Scott prefers English history of the Tudor and Stuart periods. These days Scott keeps up with the world via television and Facebook.

Welcome!



2020 Confirmandi

"Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop. It is required of those to be confirmed that they have been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord."

-Book of Common Prayer, Catechism, page 860

This year, the rite of confirmation has been put on hold due to the pandemic. However, the seven confirmands, have completed their classes and will be ready to be confirmed as soon as it is safe for us to gather once more in fellowship. On that day, Bishop Dietsche will be in church with us to perform the confirmations.

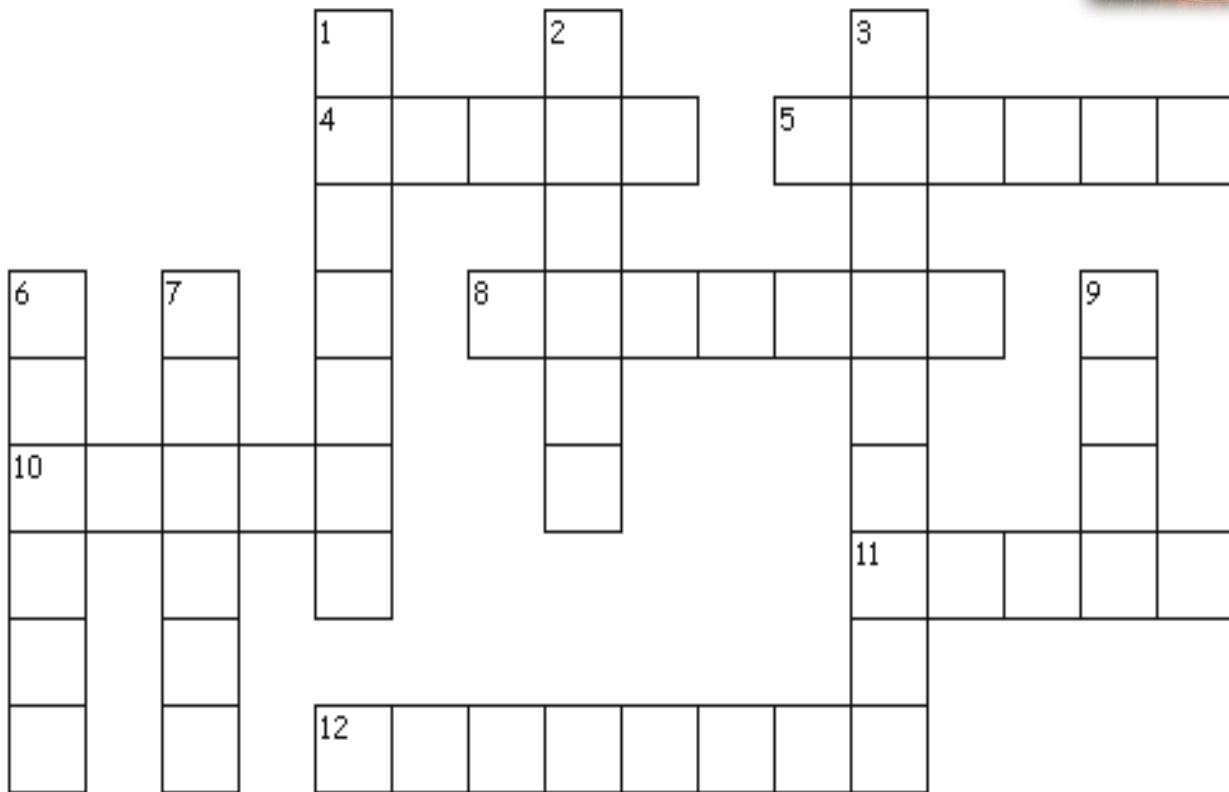
Ladies and gentlemen, the 2020 confirmation class!

Daniel Vincent Avolio, William Bates Bland, Lane Agar Cooper, Lucy Field Dolan, Nathaniel Gabriel Hooper, Liam DeCoursy Mead, and Luke Maxwell Reische.



People of the Bible

By Etta Gumbs and Barbara Nelson



ACROSS

4. He was one of the 12 minor prophets,
a contemporary of Isaiah, Amos and Hosea.
5. He led an army of 35 to defeat an army of
135,000
8. King Nebuchadnezzar ruled over this city.
10. She answered Peter's knock
11. Brother of Aaron
12. Mark's cousin, fellow missionary

DOWN

1. He was the prophet Jonah's father.
2. This pagan prophet's donkey was smarter than the prophet.
3. He was a Pharisee who visited Jesus after dark to discuss Jesus's teachings
6. Singer of Song, Prophetess
7. A sister, a deacon sent to Rome
9. Physician, writer



Making Music Online

Soundings. Since we've been in confinement these last 2 months, how have you handled your practice time?



Jeffrey. With the church closed to the public by order of the bishop, it's been a pretty safe place for the staff members to work. We practice social distancing in and between the offices, and for the most part, we don't overlap our physical presence in the same

room or even the same buildings. This has given me ample time to spend in the church at the organ console, continuing to get acquainted with our new pipe organ. That being said, the challenges of moving our worship services to a pre-recorded online format have meant I have needed to acquire new skills in audio and video recording and editing and that has consumed the vast majority of my working time (and quite a bit more than my regularly scheduled work days). It usually takes between fifteen minutes and an hour to record a piece of music to my satisfaction. It then takes many hours to edit the recording from what are inevitably multiple takes and to incorporate the video and audio from our choral section leaders, who are working from home. We're also using a massive amount of internet bandwidth to upload and download audio and video files to share among our staff musicians and then to upload the final product that gets plugged into the Sunday morning worship on YouTube. We've had to turn the church into a makeshift recording and television studio using the available equipment on hand (everything from iPhones and Go-Pro cameras to my powerful but aging Toshiba laptop computer, our old Zoom H4 digital recorder,



and some repurposed Røde choir microphones that hadn't been used in years because they were picking up a radio station over the cable connection to the church's sound system – new made-for-recording microphone cables purchased just before everything was shut down solved that problem). Rendering gigabytes worth of videos from multiple cameras into a single file format we can upload to YouTube takes a massive amount of time and computing power to accomplish.

Soundings. We've noticed the section leaders are singing from different places – their homes I presume, could you tell us a little about the process you've used to blend their voices?



Jeffrey. We were able to get in a live recording session with our professional staff singers on Sunday morning, March 15, from which I was able to work for the first month of the shutdown, but yes, with the building closed to the public, we've had to be more creative and adaptive about incorporating our staff musicians into our online liturgies. I'm grateful that all four of them, Laurelyn, Jann, Michael, and Simon, have stepped up to the plate to face the challenge with aplomb.

I've been an Adobe Creative Cloud subscriber for years, which gives me access to the entire Adobe software suite. By necessity these past three months, I've had to learn how to use Adobe Audi-

tion to make and edit audio recordings and Adobe Premiere Pro to combine the many different video sources into a complete, hopefully professional product for our public YouTube worship.

It's a very tedious process to edit together the audio from home video recordings done on our various devices. For example, in the television and recording studio environment, every camera, microphone, computer, and audio recording device is synced to all the others using a master clock that generates time code which keeps everything locked together down to the millisecond. Fast forward one device to a specific point of time in the recording, and all the others can follow it instantly.

Conversely, I have to do all of that syncing by hand using video recordings in multiple formats .

The Adobe software is pretty powerful; powerful enough to seamlessly integrate disparate formats into one project without too much intervention from me... but syncing everything together is a painstaking process. I do it, by hand, looking at the visual representation of individual samples on my computer screen. Because the singers can only hear my initial organ recording and not each other, the little nuances that we employ to blend our voices and phrasing in live performances are gone. Sometimes I have to try to line up individual words in the singers' performances by moving parts of the audio recording around. If the audio and the video don't always appear to be synchronized, this is why. I have to edit the audio and video separately for part of the process. As far as I'm concerned, it's more important for things to sound synced than to look synced. Someday, I'll share an example of what audio that isn't synced by even a very small amount sounds like to demonstrate why I have that perspective.

Once I've got all the singers' performances as closely aligned with my organ recording as I can and every-

thing is balanced – did I mention that this takes many hours? – I use Adobe's built in convolution reverb and some other software tricks to make it seem as though the singers and the organ are all in the same acoustical environment... but the challenges of recording in New York City apartments during this pandemic shutdown mean that I can't always get rid of the street noise on a singer's recording, so if you listen closely, you might hear a truck going by or a siren. Of course, the best time to record in the empty church is late at night because there's far less street noise on Pelhamdale Avenue, so I've done quite a lot of that as well. If you happen to see that the choir window by the organ is dark in my recordings, that's why.

Soundings. When one singer appears in 2 different boxes, are they singing 2 parts?

Jeffrey. The benefit of pre-recording is that, yes, singers can sing more than one part or sing the same part twice and make a separate recording of each performance that I can then incorporate. We've experimented with 8-part and 9-part harmonies that way, and also double-tracking their 4-part harmonies, and it wouldn't be worship at Christ Church if we didn't have a descant for some of the hymns, so Laurelyn records those separately, too. So, yes, if you see more than one window with a singer's face in it on the recording, then there are multiple recordings of them happening.

Soundings. Going forward, will you be able to organize a 'virtual choir' if we cannot go back to singing in a group the traditional way?

Jeffrey. The guidance professional choral directors are getting from our professional organizations – there are ongoing studies being undertaken for more definitive answers – is that it may be unsafe to participate in group singing activities until there is a readily available vaccine for the novel coronavirus. This is going to necessitate a lot of creativity on the part of choral artists as we move forward in the im-



mediate future. "Virtual choirs" are not choirs. Nothing can replace the experience and the joy of being in a group of people that works together to make great music together in person. But we are going to do our best to keep singing alive for God's people at Christ Church in Pelham, and for our wonderful, tight-knit parish choir. And that means all kinds of experimentation may happen. Stay tuned!

Soundings. Will you be accepting hymn requests? **Jeffrey.** Fr. Matt and I are always interested in hearing hymn requests from parishioners. That's not a new thing. We generally do our best to incorporate your requests into our hymn schedule when they are appropriate to the liturgy and the propers for a given service. That hasn't changed with Covid-19, but do bear in mind that the time constraints of producing these videos for online worship means that we aren't going to be able to do nearly as many hymns as we'd like, and that we probably won't get to everyone's hymn requests right away. Also, beginning in June, we'll be focusing primarily on building up a storehouse of content over the summertime so that we will have a richer library of online materials available to use in September.

I can't emphasize enough how much extra and very time-consuming work this has become for both Fr. Matt and for me. We're both going to need some time to recharge our batteries over the summer, as well. That being said, I invite people with hymn requests to email me anytime at jeffrey@christchurchpelham.org. Unless the hymn you request isn't approved for use in the Episcopal Church (if a hymn is approved it's going to be in one of our Episcopal Church hymnals – 1940, 1982, *Lift Every Voice and Sing, or Wonder, Love, and Praise*; resources from other denominations may be approved or not, depending on a variety of factors beyond my control: those decisions are made in our church at the denominational level, just like prayer book revisions and other liturgical formularies), it will be considered at an appropriate time for incorporation into our worship, as always.

Stay safe and well, and thank you for joining us for online worship on the YouTube channel.

Jeffrey

Baptisms



*There is one Body and one Spirit;
There is one hope in God's call to us;
One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
One God and Father of all.*

Luke Alessandro Mazza
Parents: Brian Mazza & Chloe Melas
Baptized: November 17, 2019

Family Baptism: Andrew Markham Powe Cole,
Thomas Kerrigan Cole, and Lucy Olney Cole
Baptized: January 25, 2020



Lockdown Diaries Entry# 6

By Achidi Kisob

Restless Free Time

Being in lockdown has provided me with a break from the rush and expectations of society. By no means do I wish to make light of this outbreak, but on a personal note I've managed to make the most out of this situation.

Having had my job close down in February prior to the lockdown, for reasons unrelated to the virus, I've been unemployed and trying to find something in its place. But as the lockdown came into effect and jobs became scarce, I found other things to keep myself busy. Since I was no longer driving around 60 miles a day to work, I used less gas and haven't needed to fill up my car as often. I've had more time to sleep, caught up with schoolmates I haven't heard from in a while, and started taking online courses.

At this point in most stories about living under lockdown, people start talking about binge watching shows on streaming services or those of my generation usually mention playing more video games in their free time. I certainly keep myself busy with

those, but on a more personal note I've had more time to draw and I've actually taken advantage of it. I've felt my skills slipping in the past few years, so taking the time to try to improve them has been nice.

One small disturbance in my life during this lockdown was the recent problem I had with my laptop. It's an older machine that's in the last years of its "life". Trying to find a new affordable laptop isn't easy, nor is earning back the money spent on one while unemployed. Thankfully I've managed to make it work again, but the vulnerability I felt when I thought I had lost many important files was not something you want to experience when all of the computer experts you'd normally go to are unavailable.

I can only speak of my own experience. Following some advice I was given, I try to give myself an assignment every week or every day to keep myself busy. So long as I do that, this lockdown remains manageable for me.

Crossword Puzzle Answers

PANDEMIC VOCABULARY

Across	
1. Social distancing	3. Meditate
2. Animal adoption	4. Haircut
3. Fomite	5. Recipe
Down	
1. Pray	6. Shedding
2. Long walk	7. Apex
	8. Index case

PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE

Across	Down
4. Micah	1. Amittai
5. Gideon	2. Balaam
8. Babylon	3. Nicodemus
10. Rhoda	6. Miriam
11. Moses	7. Phoebe
12. Barnabas	9. Luke

*If there is among you anyone in need,
a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that
the Lord your God is giving you,
do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor.
You should rather open your hand,
willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.*
- Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Outreach: Trinity St. Paul Brown Bag Lunch Program

The Brown Bag Lunch Program continues and, understandably as unemployment increases, there has been an increase in the number of participants coming each day for lunch. At the moment they are blessed with boy scout troops helping to prepare the brown bags every day. It's an amazing act of generosity and a way for the troops to contribute when it's really needed. As a parish, Christ Church redirected it's giving to weekly donations of bread for participants to take home as a weekend supplement to the bag lunches.



The Brown Bag organizers let us know that their normal source of bread donations from Stop and Shop is back to normal and they are no longer in need of our assistance. **Our last contribution of bread will be June 25.** Our normal monthly participation in brown-bag will resume in the fall.

The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed or donated bread these past weeks. The need was urgent and sudden but you responded immediately. Your generosity fed many families when they needed it most. We would also like to thank the volunteers who delivered the bread weekly.

A special shout out to two organizations who stepped in to support this effort. First, our own local DeCicco's market who donated bread, rolls and other foods weekly. Also, the Seventh Baptist Church in Brooklyn, which through parishioner Jessica Abrahams, heard of our need and delivered bags of bread each week. So many examples of grace in action.

Thank you for supporting the Outreach Ministries of our church, and this program in particular.

Blessings and stay safe,

Marie and Ed

Annual Meeting 2020



Christmas Pageant 2019



Photos by Lily Solmssen Moureaux © 2020

Lockdown Diaries Entry #7

Distance Learning

By John Hastings

At first I thought it was going to be a breeze--a couple of weeks without having to go to school, just send out a few worksheets in the morning and in the afternoon cut the grass and read a book.

I couldn't have been more wrong. Teaching fourth grade remotely has been exhausting and emotionally draining. I work at the New Canaan Country School in Connecticut. Being a private school in a well-to-do area means we have plenty of resources, but parents have high expectations.

Once the fourth-grade team realized we would likely be away from school for the rest of the school year, the enormity of the task became apparent. Do we use Seesaw or Google Classroom? Do we email assignments to parents or deliver them directly to the kids? There were hundreds of questions every day.

The biggest problem is that distance learning, especially for younger children, is unexplored territory. Even five years ago the technology didn't exist. We had no experience with much of the technology. Normally, when we introduced a new app on their iPads, the school's technology person would come to help walk the kids through it step by step. This spring we introduced several platforms remotely, and all at once. Over the first two weeks, I spent nearly three-quarters of my time chasing down tech issues, and that's with a superb tech department to help. But they had 550 students to get up and running, using different technology in different grades. It was a nightmare. My average day for the first five weeks ran from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Over time we found our rhythm, and the 9 p.m. texts turned into 6 p.m. texts. We sorted out an

efficient division of labor among the



team and figured out the best ways to collaborate on writing projects with the children. We even came up with a digital format for the traditional one-hour performance of *The Iliad* to mark the end of our study of ancient Greece. We did it over Zoom.

In the end things have worked out. Along the way we have experienced some new highs, especially the joy that flows from solving new problems—lots of them each day. We teachers have been stretched by this experience. The level of collaboration necessary to make distance learning a success has helped us move beyond the natural barriers that comity imposes. I believe we will be better teachers for this experience.

Still, no matter how much sweat and brainpower the teachers commit to the process, distance learning will always remain a pale cousin to "real" school. Teaching is intensely personal. Studies show students learn best when they are emotionally in sync with their teachers and achieve a kind of group flow that cannot be replicated from a distance.

One positive from this experience has been that it has given parents the ability to see their children in action, up close, daily. I believe that has given parents new respect for teachers and their observations going forward.

As for me, I have missed the privilege of spending my days with a funny, astonishing and delightful class of fourth graders. I hope we will be together again under a single roof soon.

In Memoriam



Mildred Johnson

We don't necessarily know everybody at church, even if they have been there for years...or decades for that matter. Maybe they attend another service on Sunday.

Maybe you are in the choir, teaching Sunday School, or in the Men's Group and they are not. But they are there nevertheless, working quietly to maintain some of the best parts of church life. Mildred Johnson was one of those people.

Mildred was born and grew up on El Paso, Texas, daughter of James Yee Garbern and Edna Grace Toy Garbern. Her mother named her "Mildred" after her obstetrician. Mildred loved spicy food, Chinese and Tex-Mex included. She loved to cook as she did to great, good effect for many an 8 o'clock coffee hour in the library over the years.

The Garberns were Baptists. They sent Mildred to a Baptist College, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, where among many other things, she learned to tithe. I have never met a more generous person than Mildred Johnson. She gave open-handedly to

the church, to animal charities (she loved dachshunds), and to charities supporting veterans. Mildred married a veteran, Rev. William Alfred Johnson, in 1969, which was also the year of her Confirmation in the Cathedral for Holy Cross Church in the Diocese of Texas. The couple moved to Port Chester, NY in 1977, when Rev. Al began to work for the Episcopal Diocese of NY. One of Al's friends from seminary, our long-serving rector Father Hoag, brought them into Christ Church. Al died in 1979, but Mildred remained in their house until her death on March 19, 2020.

Mildred was an artist and an AP art teacher at Harrison High School. She loved her students and kept in touch with many of them over the years. She was energized by their accomplishments. Her own accomplishments were many, including a stint on the church's vestry (its first non-white member she pointed out), but she was humble about them. She also had a deep knowledge of Scripture.

If you only knew her at the end of her life, you really missed something. Mildred was one of a kind even when she wasn't wearing her red cowboy boots.

- *A remembrance by her friend Janet Kornfeld*



Rufus Scroggins

April 2, 2020





Jean Gray, a long-time resident of Pelham, passed away, a victim of the coronavirus on April 4, 2020 at Willow Towers in New Rochelle. She was married to George Donald Campbell who died in 1961.

They had two children, Jeanne and Donald. The family became members of Christ Church in the late 1950s. Jean taught Sunday school, was active with the altar guild and served as the Church's financial secretary for over a decade.

Born in 1923, Jean graduated from Sewanhaka High School in Floral Park, NY and the Katherine Gibbs School in New York City. She worked at Standard Oil of New Jersey, ultimately for its chairman, before leaving to marry George Campbell. For years the family lived on Pelham's Highbrook Avenue. In addition to being a loving wife, mother and volunteer, Jean was an avid golfer, gardener and bridge player. She served as President of the Manor Club and as a board member of the International Garden Club and of Sound Shore Hospital's "Accents on Antiques".

Many years after George's demise, Jean married Pelham native, Duncan Campbell Gray. He passed away in 1994, but the couple has now been reunited in the Garden of the Resurrection behind the church. She is survived by her stepson, Duncan C. Gray, Jr. and his wife Corinne Heyliger Gray of South Carolina; her daughter Jeanne A. Campbell and Jeanne's husband Richard P. Kearney of New Rochelle; and her son, G. Donald Campbell of Vermont.

Her daughter recalls her as a tough old girl, one affectionately referred to as "General Jean", a moniker she cherished. Jean's quiet courage frequently came through as she dealt with the death of family and other close friends and the way she dealt with aging, which she despised. It helps to remember her strength as coronavirus victims die without the presence and support of family and friends. Jean lived her life with zest, joy and confidence. She would wish for a thought or small toast when you have your next cocktail and she would be especially pleased if it was Dewar's. The family had a small private service for Jean in Christ Church's Garden of the Resurrection.



Kimberly Ann Remppel, loving daughter, sister, girlfriend and friend passed away on Friday, April 17th, 2020 at the age of 50. Kim is survived by her parents Richard & Paulette (our former deacon), her brother Kurt, and

sister in-law Tammy, as well as her boyfriend and partner of many years Frank Lore IV and his daughter Daniella-- and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and countless friends.

Kim worked for many years in accounting with her mother at Lette Accounting Service before discovering a true passion for her four-legged friends. She started Kim's K9s and built a very successful dog walking, boarding and training business of which she was very proud.

Family and friends were always most important to Kim. She had many lifelong friendships that she cherished. She was kind, generous and loyal and she loved with her whole heart. She loved to cook as

well as garden, and to take beach vacations with her boyfriend and weekend trips with the girls.

Kim's memory will be in our hearts forever. Family & friends will hold a celebration of life for Kimberly

at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to Town & Country K9 Rescue.



Christopher Purvis

Christopher "Kiffy" Purvis was born and grew up primarily in New York. Because of a close relationship with an uncle and aunt in New Mexico, early on he spent a considerable amount of time with them there, where he became fascinated by the Navajo culture and stories of the Hopi and Anasazi cultures as well. He married his childhood sweetheart and had two young children whom he loved very much.

Christopher lived for a time in Guatemala, learning Spanish and working with coffee plantation workers. Later, he lived in Kenya, working with school children and farmers and learning Swahili. For most of his 20s he taught high school chemistry, biology and physics. He also coached basketball for five years at schools in Pennsylvania and California, relishing the opportunity to teach others. He loved and

empathized with his students. Eventually deciding to settle down and build a family, he moved to San Francisco and took a job at Google, working most recently in their education division.

Christopher was endlessly curious and always exploring the world. He loved birds, science, learning in all its forms, and obsessing over sports. He made and cherished distinct friendships from each stage of his life that he maintained as living parts of his adult life. Particularly attuned to the levels of unfairness and unhappiness in the world, he spent a considerable amount of his life trying to help level some of those inequities and to make others aware of them. He will be missed by his family, including parents Linda and Michael--- as well as friends and colleagues, who would like his memory to serve as a gift for others.



Christopher Brendan MacMahon

May 9, 2020



*The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.*





Justice is the Name of the Road that Leads to Peace

Trinity Sunday Sermon – June 7, 2020

Father Matthew Mead

"Brothers and sisters... Put things in order, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

It should not be so hard to hear such comforting words from Saint Paul. We are in very challenging times and Peace seems far off. The world seems now to be a raging sea created by many treacherous rivers.

- A once in a hundred years' pandemic.
- Centuries of evolving yet unrelenting racism and injustice directed at black and brown people.
- Too many in leadership roles who are willing, ready, and able to abuse the power entrusted to them and exert control through division, strife, and the unjust use of force.
- Economic disparity between those who are financially well off and secure and those who are living anywhere from paycheck to paycheck too unsure of where their next meal or rent is going to come from.
- Mass unemployment – over 40 million Americans are now unemployed.
- Fractured and toxic political divisions which run so deep that many of you [*reading*] this sermon have already made up your minds about [*what*]

I'm going to say next, and some have already pressed stop.

These crooked and difficult waterways have become a raging confluence of unrest, fear, chaos, and violence.

I learned to sail as a little boy, and I love being on the water, but I feel today like I am lost at sea, with a broken rudder, during a storm. As much as I am comforted by Saint Paul's words to "put things in order, agree with one another, and live in peace," – and I am comforted and grateful for the words of the Apostle – I still feel like I need to wipe the water from my eyes, find my compass, and fix my rudder, so that if nothing else, I can point myself in the right direction and find that promise of Peace that Paul proclaims.

Peace, yes, we all want peace. My God do I want Peace. I think deep down we all want to put things in order, agree with one another, and live in peace, but we need real peace without unjust order or false or forced unity. We need the Peace of God which passes all understanding, not the false peace of men. The prophet Jeremiah warned us about pursuing false peace through false means:

They have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

So, let's start by rejecting false peace and by rejecting evil means that are so often used to force people into a submission of "Peace".

It may feel like we are lost at sea in a storm, but in reality, we are lost in the wilderness of sin and enveloped in a darkness of hatred.

What road leads from the wilderness to the promised land?

What road does my compass point me down if I want to reach the Peace of God which passes all understanding?

The Road to the Promised Land of Peace is paved with Justice and lit by the love of God for all people.

If you think Peace can come before Justice, you must never have been to church on Christmas Eve. Now, I know you have been to church on Christmas Eve, because every Christian has been to church on Christmas Eve, and so I know you have heard the words of the prophet Isaiah that are read every year on Christmas Eve:

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."*

His name is Emmanuel, God with us, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Our Lord Jesus Christ establishes Peace through Justice and righteousness. He does not clear the way with tear-gas or tasers, neither does he set fires,

incite violence, or sow destruction and dismay. The images at Saint John's Episcopal Church in Washington DC on Sunday night and again on Monday night managed to show us two similar roads to false peace. We cannot get there by setting fires – that is not the fire of the Holy Spirit – nor can we get there by forcefully and fearfully removing peaceful protesters – including the Episcopal clergy who were at Saint John's handing out water. At last they came for me, teargassing me away from my church.

'Twas Isaiah the prophet that foretold this: "The way of peace they do not know, and there is no justice in their paths. Their roads they have made crooked; no one who walks in them knows peace."

But we are called by God to "*make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*"

If we are Christians, we must start with Christ who began his ministry of reconciliation between God and all people by holding up the sign of Justice used by the prophets. A sign announcing that Justice is the name of the road that leads to Peace.

"Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to Nazareth, he stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

*"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,*

*the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.”*

This may feel like the end of times, but it is not. We are in a desert, and there are several paths that lay before us. The path to Peace is called Justice. Those other paths are crooked, and they will only lead you further into the wilderness.

Focus on striving for justice for those who are oppressed. Walk the way that has no signs of racial or economic injustice. Walk with those who are building up and repairing fractured relationships between human beings. “Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”

And when we finally do that, brothers and sisters, we will fare well. It is through love, mercy, and justice that we can begin to put things in order, and begin to agree with one another, and begin to live in peace; and then the God of love and peace will be with us. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of us, now and forever. Amen.

Is it Too Soon to Talk About Hope?

Homily: June 14, 2020

Canon Susan Harriss

So, is it too soon to talk about hope? I'll come back to that.

But first: this week I celebrated an important anniversary: On June 9, 1980, I was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church. So on Tuesday I celebrated, at home, with dinner, cupcakes, a variety of beverages, flowers and cards from the people of Christ Church, Pelham. Thank you so much! I have a lot to be grateful for.

But hey, that was forty years ago. Let that sink in! Forty years ago. I'm old. I am not as old as Sarah was when she made her appearance in today's story from the book of Genesis, but I can sympathize about feeling old, and just a little bit tired. And I have some sympathy with Sarah as she appears in this story from Genesis, chapter eighteen. A chapter back in Genesis we're told that Sarah, the wife of Abraham, is ninety years old. Ninety! And

that he is ninety-nine. Abraham has met with God on more than one occasion and has been promised a son, with Sarah. And descendants – lots of them. Sarah was to be the mother, the grandmother, to them all. That son was to be the beginning of a nation; but the son never came. Abraham and his beautiful wife Sarah were an infertile couple. She had not borne him a single child. He had even gone so far as to provide himself with a son through a concubine, a slave named Hagar; that son's name was Ishmael. Also an important story, but for a different day.

So when God comes to visit Abraham at the oaks of Mamre, and Abraham makes a feast, Sarah is skeptical. She has heard all of this before. Still she helps prepare the feast that Abraham will serve. She makes bread – and, by the way, a lot of it. Three measures of flour would have been some forty, fifty pounds! And she overhears the talk. God asks where she is, and then God announces, in her hearing, that she will have a son – and she laughs. She says something a little off color to make it clear that

she is past the time to have babies. "Shall I have pleasure, now that I am old?" She has long since given up hope on this: God must be mistaken. She calls this out to Abraham from inside the tent, and she laughs as she says it.

And God answers her back! Directly! Why did you laugh? God asks. Is anything too difficult for the Lord? And Sarah talks back: I did not laugh! Oh, but you did, says God. And when I come back about a year from now you will have your son. You will have a son. Sarah laughed.

If you know your Bible you know that she does, in fact, have that son. About that time the next year, she does have a son of her own. She has that son, and she names him Isaac which means, "laughter" or even, "she laughs". And when she has the child she says, "Now everyone will laugh with me."

So, okay. Let me ask you: in what respect are you ninety years old today. Is there some personal desire, some cause, some issue, about which you have given up hope? What in your life, have you called impossible? Because that's the important thing that God said. He said, is anything impossible for the Lord? Too difficult?

You know all of us tend to cut our losses as life goes on. And there may be some things, yes in these last few weeks, that we have decided are simply impossible.

If you are a person of color you may have decided that police brutality, especially toward black people, will never end. It's just impossible.

If you are a person of color you may be thinking that a criminal justice system which is fair to everyone, especially people of color, is just impossible.

A criminal justice system that is fair to everyone, even to people of color. Impossible.

You may have decided, as a black man, that it is no longer safe to be on the streets after dark, that no encounter with the police can end safely for you.

Your mother may have decided with you that there will be no more night time outings. It's just too risky. It's impossible.

Sigh. We have reason to be discouraged. There is so much racism in the culture! All those years of slavery, and then Jim Crow, and now this....it's like a virus. We think we've fixed it! We think we've changed things but then like a virus it mutates and comes back. We may have come to believe that we might as well give up because it's impossible. Then we close the door to our hearts. We might as well give up because it's impossible. I can't change or they won't change.

We close the door to our hearts because it's just impossible. But what if that door is not ours to close? God made Sarah laugh after all those years. And the thing that she believed was impossible became possible.

So here's the proposition: the door to hope, to confidence in the future – it opens into God's hand, and it's not yours to close.

You who are tired, you who are angry, you who are sorrowing, you who are grieving....We who are tired, we who are sorrowing, we who are grieving: we are not going to stop trying as if there is some magic there, but can we leave some room for God to act, even if it's only in the spaces of our own hearts.

Author of the world's joy,
Bearer of the world's pain:
In the heart of all our distress
Let unconquerable gladness dwell.

Change is going to come.

Amen.



Hope...



All are welcome at the Lord's table

Christ Church

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