

The Rock

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

February 2022

From the Priest's Desk

Dear People of God,

As we move through Epiphany and look toward Lent (which begins on March 2), I wanted to share with you an invitation (not an assignment!) to do a little “homework,” and look ahead towards our Lenten adult formation offering.

First, I invite you to go to the website <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/tolooklikejesus/> to hear, if you haven't already, our Presiding Bishop's, the Most Reverend Michael Curry's, Epiphany sermon. It's brilliant preaching, as always for Bishop Curry, and his fundamental point is that we as Christians and as a Church need to reclaim and proclaim Epiphany—to really be and share the Light of Christ, who is the Light of the World. As Bishop Curry puts it, in wonderfully blunt terms, “We must claim our Christianity, grounded in Jesus, who said, building on the work of Moses, “You shall love the Lord, your God, and your neighbor as yourself.... That Jesus is our God. That Jesus is our teacher. That Jesus is our Lord, and if [a church] doesn't look like Him—if it doesn't look like love—I don't care how holy and sanctimonious it sounds ... it's not about God and cannot call itself Christian.”



A Church that looks like Jesus, that looks like love, is one that understands Jesus didn't start a church, he started a *movement*. The Church came later, to embody the one who started it—we are, after all, the Body of Christ. But throughout history and up to the present day, the Church has too often inhibited the movement, even actively worked against it. It's time for that to change; indeed, God is calling us and empowering us to change, to grow, to become, in Bishop Curry's words, “a Church that looks and acts like Jesus—the Episcopal branch of the *Jesus Movement*.”

How do we do that? Well, now I invite you to go to this website and see the handout you'll find there: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-that-looks-and-acts-like-jesus/> If you don't have the time or ability to access it, don't worry, because us and empowering us to change, to grow, to become, in Bishop Curry's words, “a Church that looks and acts like Jesus—the Episcopal branch of the *Jesus Movement*.”

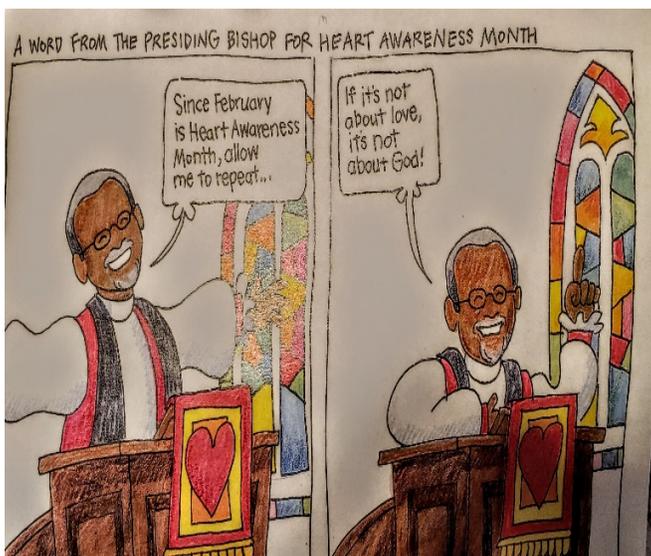
How do we do that? Well, now I invite you to go to this website and see the handout you'll find there: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-that-looks-and-acts-like-jesus/> If you don't have the time or ability to access it, don't worry, because later this month everyone will have a copy. You'll see that it provides a template of sorts for what this kind of “re-formed” Church

looks like, five “touchstones,” if you will, each of which merits prayerful discernment, thoughtful discussion, and, ultimately, action.

Accordingly, the clergy leaders of St. Peter’s—myself, Deacon Tom, and Deacon Diana—will be leading a five-week Lenten program based on this template, and what each facet of it might mean for us: centering on Jesus Christ; practicing the selfless, self-giving way of the cross; uniting around the practice of a rule of life; reclaiming our Christian identity as a Spirit-driven, countercultural movement; living and bearing witness to Jesus’s vision and values. Does it sound like “Christianity 101”? Maybe so. But it’s always good for all of us to have a refresher course.

Many thanks to Deacon Tom for this program idea. There’ll be more information on this Lenten program, which will begin on Wednesday evening, March 9. In the meantime, again, I invited you to watch the video, read, pray, and above all be joyful as we live in the Spirit of the living God, who loves you more than you can even imagine!

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Dan+



Deacon’s Corner

In my recent readings, I have come across some quotations that apply to our living out the Gospel, in community, the best we can. I’d like to share them with you:

“There is nothing more tragic than to sleep through a revolution.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

“Those who are cowards will ask, “Is it safe?” Those who are political will ask, “Is it expedient?” Those who are vain will ask, “Is it popular?” But those who have a conscience will ask, “Is it right?”

Paul Washington

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.....and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

John Donne

“Discipleship is an invitation to follow Jesus into a new community.”

David Swanson

Peace and Blessings,
Deacon Tom



Diakonia Musings

It is so good to be home! You have no idea how my heart is warmed (even in this bitter cold weather) by the knowledge that

I will be seeing all of you on a regular basis. St. Peter's is such a special place that just oozes with love for God, for each other, and the whole of creation, and I feel blessed to be able to serve among you once again. I came to you years ago as a broken, hurting woman and you accepted me, loved me and lifted me up. Now it's my turn to give back to you.

I am thrilled to spend two Sundays a month at St. Peter's while I continue to serve in Batavia during their transition to a part time minister and the calling of a new priest. That means I will be at St. James twice a month too. Both churches are involved with sustaining blessing boxes, supporting prison ministry, and working with Journey's End and refugee/evacuee resettlement assistance, so I will be able to continue to support these ministries in both parishes, as needed. I will also be assisting with pastoral care as well as anything else Father Dan or Deacon Tom need me to do.

As the Arch Deacon for the diocese of WNY, I find that my role is evolving. I am needed to support the deacons in their ministries and care for their pastoral needs, as we continue to become a unified group that listens to the Holy Spirit's direction towards a clearer understanding of the role of the deacon and our mission in the Episcopal Church and Partnership, after the pandemic. On occasion, I will be visiting other churches to extend that support. My role in the ordination process is very exciting as people discern a call from God to serve in a more intentional way through ordination. If anyone wants to know more about the process, please come talk to me.

Like I said in my bio. on the website, I am now a true blooded "crazy chicken lady" with a small backyard flock. I get so much pleasure from my girls and one rooster. In my wildest imagination, I never thought I'd have pet chickens! For those that don't know me, I am

allergic to eggs, so raising chickens is quite funny. This batch of hens are laying eggs with green shells which is such a hoot. Green eggs and ham come to mind!! My little dog brings more joy than I thought possible too. Add a snuggly cat to the mix and nine grandchildren who I see all the time, (and of course I think are they are the best grandchildren anyone could ever have), and I can honestly say I am blessed beyond measure. God is surely good, all the time.

Deacon Diana Leiker

Refugee Update

Volunteers from Journey's End picked up our collective donations for Afghan refugees on Thursday, Jan. 27. There were 15 boxes or bins, plus a few extra bags and a TV. I'd like to thank all of my "room coordinators" for supervising collections in the five designated room areas, and to all those who donated money or items to help the cause. Kudos to Carolyn Bongi, Linda Pike, Elizabeth Ann Schascheck, Merrie Hill & Katia Sanchez, and my wife, Lois, for their leadership roles.

This particular refugee effort (the Afghani one), is stressing the 5 local agencies in one area--- housing. They have managed to take in many donations similar to what St. Peter's did, but there is a dire shortage of apartments. Many of the families already here are in motels or vacant college dorms.

As a result, the new call going out is for anyone who owns affordable apartments, or knows someone who does, to get in contact with an agency such as Journey's End to remedy the situation. Please put the word out.

Peace and blessings,
Deacon Tom



From the Senior Warden

Putting the cold aside for a few moments the bright sunshine reminds me that the outlook for St. Peter's, and the parishioners, is as bright as the snow on the ground.

The pandemic is still here but it hasn't dimmed our outlook or our ministries. In fact it seems to have renewed our resolve as we keep right on doing whatever we have been allowed to do.

The things we cannot do yet will eventually return to us and we will pick up right where we left off

I would ask every parishioner that can, please continue to support our Blessing Box with donations of food, personal care items and pet supplies so we can better serve our local community. I would like to thank our outgoing Warden and former Parish Nurse, Lois Tripp and welcome her to her new position of Parish Administrator. I would also like to thank our outgoing Administrator, Merrie Hill, for her many years of service in that position. Thanks also to Mike Taube and Linda Pike for their years of service on Vestry.

Welcome to Elizabeth Ann Schascheck as Warden. I also need to welcome our two new additions to the Vestry MJ (Mary Jane) Campas and Katie Hilleke. Welcome back, Deacon Diana Leiker to St. Peter's and hope to have your presence for a significant length of time

I look forward to working with everyone this year and hope we all have a blessed and prosperous year ahead of us.

Peace and Blessings,
Lee R. McElhinny, Sr. Warden

From the Jr. Warden

I appreciate the opportunity to serve as Junior Warden. It has only been two weeks, and I am so excited by the hope and possibilities and the numerous gifts that are shared at St. Peter's. Thank you to Alfred Price for sharing his insights and experiences in a very moving, thought-provoking sermon! To Deacon Diana, welcome and thank you for coming back to St. Peter's.

Elizabeth Ann Schascheck

St. Peter's Friendship Participation

We have begun to make some progress on revamping the Bazaar located in the Parish Hall. We have painted the back wall a rich berry color reminiscent of the open-air markets of the East. Now that Deacon Diana is with us, I am hoping that she will have time to use her artistic talents to make some cardboard architectural embellishments. You would be surprised at how real a cardboard Moorish window looks after her design and construction. You might consider us too optimistic that we will be able to resume activities there any time soon. And, you might be right. But, we have heard that some folks have seen the redecorating in progress and told us that it has buoyed their spirits. This alone makes our efforts worthwhile.

We are now selling Valentine cards, gift items and candy-filled containers. Information on

purchasing our wares was included in an email sent out to the congregation on January 31st. This email also included a photo of our handmade offerings. We will also have available bowl covers from the new Creation Station within the Bazaar using repurposed and recycled materials (the Minion – better known to you as Marcia Scime – is out right now encouraging local bees to donate wax!

Your Bazaar Merchants Joanne and Marcia ably assisted by Carolyn



Membership

St. Peter's has a corporate individual membership at BJ's. If you are interest in renewing your current membership or getting a new membership, please let me know. You can make out a check to St. Peter's for **\$30 per by February 20th** for each individual member.

Your membership will be effective as of March 1st. Payments can be sent to St. Peter's, make checks payable to "St.Peter's".

Merrie Hill

Linen Pantry Update

In January the Linen Pantry assisted 7 families from 4 different agencies. Despite the cold weather, we continued to find donations on the front porch of the Mission House.

Thank you for all the Dash's Market receipts you turned in. We are currently waiting for our check for \$175.00 from them. The Linen Pantry as a charity is not a line item in the parish's budget. The line item is only for the utilities and up-keep of the building. The items we give away are strictly from donations.

Items we always need are all sizes of bedding particularly twin and queen sizes, pots and pans, towels, wash cloths, dishes, cups, glasses, silverware, toasters, microwaves, coffee pots, etc. Basically, anything to set up an apartment except furniture.

Carma Miccoli

Prayers for February

May your health improve.

May your worries go away.

May you feel loved and appreciated.

May God bless you today.

COVID-19 Home Test Kits

Each residential households in the United States can order one free set of four at-home Covid Tests from the U.S. Postal System ([USPS.com](https://www.usps.com)). The tests will consist of 4 at-home tests and will be shipped free to your home address.

On-Going Needs

The Blessing Box especially items that can't be purchased with food stamps such as toilet paper, soap, etc. We also need pet food, toys, bedding etc.

Building Fund – Bring in returnable pop and beer bottles and cans. They go in a bin near the kitchen.

The Threads of Hope Linen Pantry needs the following items: twin & queen sheets, blankets, bath towels, pots & pans, dish sets, silverware, kitchen utensils and small appliances. Hats, mittens, scarves and winter coats. Dash's Supermarket receipts.

Lent is the Time for Pilgrimage

How about a pilgrimage to Jerusalem this year!? As we've done in years past, we're inviting everyone at St. Peter's to "take a walk" 😊 Just a mere 438 miles, which will get you to Logan Airport in Boston, where you could board a plane and head for the Holy Land!

Of course, you won't be going there literally, or even virtually, but prayerfully—and no less in reality for that. Starting on March 2nd, Ash Wednesday, begin keeping track of your own activity—walking, housework, cooking, stretching, exercising, whatever definitions of "activity" best works for you. (Snoring doesn't count 😊) 15 minutes of activity = 1 mile, so if you do some quick math, you'll find that's about 2.7 hours a day each of the 40 days of Lent to get you to 438 "miles." (That's not counting Sundays, but if you want to add those in, feel free!)

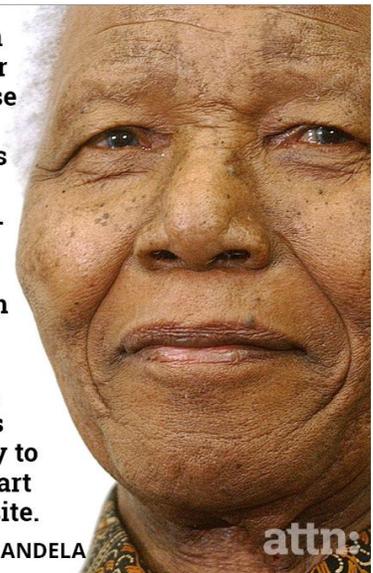
We're on the honor system, so keep tabs yourself. More importantly, do so *mindfully*. Remember as you engage in your activities, God is present with you, on the way with you, sustaining you, loving you, hour after hour, "mile after mile."

Special rewards are planned for all those who complete the pilgrimage! You'll get a reminder as we get closer to Lent, but if you have any

No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

NELSON MANDELA

attn:



questions, feel free to reach out to Damon Piatov at nomad91350@gmail.com Enjoy the journey!



Updating a Classic

Remember this song from your youth?

"Jesus loves me this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong,
We are weak but He is strong.....
Yes, Jesus loves me....
The Bible tells me so."

"Here is a Senior version of Jesus Loves Me":

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

(CHORUS)

"Jesus loves me this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong,
We are weak but He is strong.....
Yes, Jesus loves me....
The Bible tells me so."

.Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go

On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

(verse 2)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song..
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

(Verse 3)

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

(CHORUS)

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.

If you think this is neat, please pass it on to your friends. If you do not pass it on, nothing bad will happen, but you will have missed an opportunity to "reach out and touch" a friend or a loved one.!

Prayers of the People

Long Term: Becky P, Jim G , Marty D and Gary, Kristie P, Ann Marie, Ron B, Suzanne and family, Gino L, Alfred, Bob R , Sue and Don, Joann, Lucy, Lee & Jessica M, Judy E, Florence K, Ellen, Amy P, Ray B, Dave L, Tim M, Wayne J, Joanne U, Cathy, Paula, Rick and Kristen, Tom and Joyce, Sharon H, Marilyn and Bob S, Jim M, Dan T, Brady, Trevor, Renee B, Joe P, Bob M, Alyssa and family, Beth, Frank B,

Dillon, Joe M, Jenny R, Bob S, Dorothy G, Dori, Sue & Dave S, Beth, Olivia and Amy D

Short Term: Monika S, Lisa S, Don N, Sherie & Dale, Jenna, Mary, Sarah M, Monica and Jane, Sister Mary Judith, Kelly and her unborn baby, Andrea W, Gary K, Dennis M, Mary, Vicki, MM, Isabelle, Alison, Willow, Louie G, Tina S, Megan M, Mark B and Diane, Josh & Scott, Lynda C, Father Jerre, Lynn F and family

Military: Ben H, Ben M, Adian and Brandon G

Home Bound: Sue W and Betty J

Departures: Franklin, Anne M

Thanksgiving: Jeff

God Bless
Sue Gunn



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY

02/03 Megan Smith
02/04 Steve Frake
02/04 Suzi Coury Ferreire
02/05 Jane Cushman
02/13 Michael Kankiewicz
02/23 Ed Hill III
02/25 Mary Jane Campos
02/29 Karen Szczepanski

Happy Anniversary

02/14 Maria Sanchez-Clarke & Conroy Clarke