



# CHRIST AND THE EPIPHANY

VOLUME 24

APRIL 2020

## Upcoming Events

Palm Sunday, April 5

Good Friday, April 10

Easter Sunday, April 12

## COVID-19 Response

At this time all in-church services and events are cancelled until further notice. This is likely to be at least eight weeks. We will be holding Sunday worship via audio conference call. Our first call was held on Sunday March 22 and saw 23 people attend.

We have also started emailing a devotional reading from our parish family. Please send your submissions to Diane in the church office at [christandtheepiphany@gmail.com](mailto:christandtheepiphany@gmail.com)

The intercessory prayer list will also be emailed out each week.

As we continue to work on creative ideas for alternate ways to worship God as a community, watch your email regularly. Details will be emailed and posted on our Facebook page.

If you need *anything* please reach out to either Barbara Parsons (203-640-1368) or the church office (203-467-2310). If you are not receiving email do let us know so we can make sure we have the correct email address to reach you. It is important during these difficult times that we stay in touch with each other.

## Senior Warden Report

Barbara Parsons

Dear Church family,  
These are times that most of us have never experienced. Even with the ups and downs of life that we all go through, these times are extreme. I pray that we would all heed the precautions that we're asked to take. But as people of faith hopefully we can dig deep and find that peace that passes all understanding.

Let's try to spend as much time in that place of quiet as we do watching the news. When we find ourselves getting anxious, let's disconnect, and take a deep breath. Carol has offered to send out some devotional words. If anyone else wants to do so, I encourage you to send them to the office. That's how we stay connected.

We will get through this in time. Until then, love one another as God loves us. Wishing you many blessings.

## March Vestry Summary

Susan Shultz

**Next Meeting** - The next Vestry meeting will be Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. via conference call.

**Worship** - Carol will order a communion set with disposable cups to use instead of the common communion cup. We

have supply priests for most Sundays through October.

**Building & Grounds** - The Food Pantry will continue to operate as long as possible. They are currently handing out bags outside the building. Twelve step programs are meeting at their leadership's discretion and will be expected to help with post-virus cleaning. All other building use is cancelled. Someone will come in once a week and keep the altar candle lit. We will also do a thorough cleaning before resuming activities in the church.

**New Priest** - The Diocese has confirmed we are a "parish in good standing" so we can move to the next step in looking for a new priest-in-charge. More to come later this summer.

## Online Faith Resources

**Pray as you go** has both a website and mobile app. <https://pray-as-you-go.org> This daily prayer session helps you pray whenever you find time.

Get free **Daily devotionals** delivered to your email from [www.inspiration.org](http://www.inspiration.org).

The **CT Diocese** website has many resources including live streaming services in this time of COVID-19. <https://www.episcopalct.org/>.

Study the bible with free courses from **Our Daily Bread University** <https://christianuniversity.org>

Visit the **Episcopal Church** [www.episcopalchurch.org](http://www.episcopalchurch.org) for tons of information, articles, action activities, videos and other resources.

## **"A Singing Faith"**

**Barbara Coulombe**

"Singing does at least as much as preaching to impress the Word of God upon people's minds. Ever since God first called me, the importance of praise expressed in song has grown upon me." (D.L. Moody, 19<sup>th</sup> century)

Through the ages to our present time, the songs of Luther, Watts, Wesley, Newton, Crosby, etc., and numerous contemporary writers have fed the believers souls. Our Hymnal is a volume of a rich tradition of inspired works - the words of which give us great strength in times of need. Our hymns and spiritual songs give us comfort, teach us many aspects of our faith and contribute richly to our spiritual life with prayerful choruses and verses filled with meditational moments. The stories of the hymns share the personal experiences of the writer's lives.

On our first Sunday Conference Call service, we began with "My Faith Looks Up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary." It was written by Dr. Ray Palmer after he graduated from Yale in 1830. It was a spontaneous expression of his faith and of what Christ meant to him. When he had completed it he slipped the manuscript into his pocket-book, and there it remained until he met Dr. Lowell Mason in Boston, MA who composed the tune 'Olivet' to which it has been sung for the last 150 years!

At the end of the service, we sang the familiar "Amazing Grace". Over the years, the families of the many funerals I have played have requested this hymn. The man who wrote it - John Newton - by his own confession lived a godless and dissolute life before his conversion. He was an Atlantic Sea slave trader -the worst of wretches! But all that changed and he became a new man in Christ; and it was God's 'grace' that did it- his free, unmerited, unlimited love to sinners. He went on to answer his calling. He studied for the ministry and eventually served pastoring a village church near Cambridge, England. Whenever he preached, large crowds gathered to hear the "Old Converted Sea Captain." When he was an old man, he admitted that his memory had almost gone and his powers were failing, But, he said: "There are two things I can never forget, that I am a great sinner and that Jesus Christ is a great Savior!"

Let us all hold on to his message in our hearts during this difficult time and we too, will sing:  
"Through many a danger, toil, and snare, I have already come;  
Tis grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."



**Yale Divinity School**  
**Diane Villano**

Just as I was starting to miss our weekly Sunday Bible study with Wendy, I received this timely message:

## **A New Online Learning Opportunity**

Have you ever wondered what it's like to take a class at Yale Divinity School? Now you can, from the comfort of home! The Yale Divinity School introductory course to the Old Testament with Professor Robert Wilson is available through the Center for Continuing Education: <http://alturl.com/6og79>.

And you may also be interested in the following offerings:

## **Navigating Unusual Times**

We, and our brothers and sisters around the world, find ourselves in an unprecedented situation as we face and respond to COVID-19 pandemic. There is much anxiety about the unknown and we can find ourselves overwhelmed and at a loss for how to help ourselves, our children and others navigate the changes to our daily routines and the disruption to our lives as community. Now more than ever, our connection with God can be a comfort and a guide. What are the spiritual disciplines, practices, and traditions that help bring us closer to God? Rev. Michael Bird provides some suggestions: <http://alturl.com/dbpes>.

The Yale Youth Ministry Institute website also features videos that can be helpful for cultivating joy instead of anxiety: <http://alturl.com/5wrer>.

## **Summer Study at Yale Divinity School**

Registration is now open for Summer Study courses, June 1-5 and June 8-12. Classes are two and a half hours per day, run Monday through Friday, and are \$460. Offerings include Faith and Reason, Trauma and Forgiving in an Age of Egoism and Condemnation and The Book of Genesis: In the Beginning was the Story.

Lunch and coffee are included, as well as free off-street lot parking and access to university resources. Details and registration form are on-line at [www.summerstudy.yale.edu](http://www.summerstudy.yale.edu).

## Encouraging Words

Charlie Langlan

Hello all, I felt it necessary that with COVID-19, some encouraging words are needed. We are all strong and will get through this pandemic, not only with each other, but with God. He will provide and make us thrive. Believe and trust in the Lord.

### Blessings

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

### Trust

Jesus said "Trust in God; trust also in me." John 14:1

### Confidence

This is the confidence we have in approaching to his will, he hears us. 1 John 5:14



April 16 - Brady Reynolds  
April 28 - Kathy Dougherty



April 27 - Madeline & Leland Hubbard

## Intercessory Prayers

Andrew, Barbara R., Barbuschak Family, Carol Ude, Carol C., David, Devin K., Diane, Diane Link, Ed, Eileen F., Eleanor N., Faith and Family, Father Eddie, Frank P., Fred H., Gale, Geneva, Goodfellow Family, Greg T., Ian, J.D., Jack K., Dr. Jeremiah Martin, Jim C., John A., John M., John U., Joseph, Judy C., Judy DeFeo, Julia, June W., Karen Dattilo & Family, Katherine Burdick, Katrina R., Leah S., Lisa, Lisa H., Lois, Lucas Sundwall, Madeline, Mark Conti,

Marjorie Cowles, Marty, Matt, Melissa D., Patty R., Rachael, Ray C., Sallie Alexander, Shawne G., Turiano Family, Vivian S., Zach Schatz

To submit names for the Intercessory Prayers list please call or email the church office. Names will be kept on the list for three months unless longer time is requested. If a person you have placed on the list recovers in less than three months or passes away, please update the church office.

## Next issue

The deadline for the May 2020 issue is **April 22**. If you have contributions for the newsletter please email us at [newsletter.christandtheepiphany@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.christandtheepiphany@gmail.com).

For updates to the Birthday or Anniversary lists, please call the church office at 203-467-2310.

Charlie Langlan & Susan Shultz,  
Editors



## Episcopal Church in CT (ECCT)

A Pastoral Letter from the Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, March 13, 2020  
Following Jesus in the Midst of a Pandemic

"Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God." 1 Peter 1:21

The author of the First Letter of Peter is writing to followers of Jesus who are exiles, dispersed in the foreign lands of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. In uncertain and difficult times, the writer calls these early Christians to trust in the truth of the Resurrection, to put their faith and hope in God, and work to restore, support and strengthen those who are suffering. (1 Peter 5:9-10)

We who are living in the midst of the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic (as the World Health Organization now characterizes the coronavirus) are living in uncertain and difficult times, not unlike the experience of the early Christians. We have never been in the situation we now find ourselves. Our world is turned upside

down. Fear, insecurity, and anxiety concerning how COVID-19 will affect us, those we love, and our communities -including the church - consume us. Overwhelmed by a plethora of information coming at us on social media, television, radio and newspapers, we seem to be awash, confused, and paralyzed by not knowing what to do.

Yet our faith commends us to do otherwise, to not be consumed by fear, insecurity, and anxiety. As followers of Jesus, we put our trust in God who raised Jesus from the dead and who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, sends us to be about God's mission of restoration, reconciliation and wholeness in the face of brokenness, alienation, and illness. Now is the time for us to be the Church that God wants us and needs us to be.

As your bishops, we have been, and will continue to be, in regular communication with the clergy and lay leaders of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) regarding how best to respond to the realities of COVID-19. Over the last two weeks we have written three letters to the clergy and wardens-in-charge of parishes without clergy with specific advice and counsel in response to COVID-19. These letters, along with other important information and weblinks related to the coronavirus, can be found on the website of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut at [www.episcopalct.org](http://www.episcopalct.org). We commend these resources to you.

One of the most urgent questions before us at the moment is: should the Episcopal Church in Connecticut close our parishes and not hold regular worship services? Our primary advice and counsel are that we should do all in our power to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As bishops we do not have the individual authority to close the parishes of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Our canons (church laws), however, allow us to give pastoral direction related to the worship and spiritual life of parishes. Medical and health professionals, epidemiologists, and government officials all agree that the best way to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is to reduce human contact and practice "social distancing." To that end we strongly encourage the clergy and lay leadership of ECCT parishes to decide against holding public worship for at least the next two weeks in order to help mitigate the advance of the coronavirus. While ceasing public worship is prudent at this time, we encourage parishes to use available technology in order to offer some form of worship service, as possible, to the faithful. If you have difficulty making such provisions, we encourage you to connect to, and collaborate with, parishes in your Region, as well as utilize the resources on communications and worship that we are sharing on our COVID-19 update page on our website. In all cases of worship, the use of the common cup in the context of the Eucharist should not be provided.

Consistent with limiting public worship, we encourage clergy and lay leaders in ECCT to consider cancelling, postponing, or holding via video call or other form of digital communication all parish meetings and gatherings in the immediate future in order also to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Once again, limiting exposure and physical interaction is key here. Diocesan events and meetings will similarly be cancelled, postponed or held by zoom. Please consult the ECCT website for details of specific meetings.

As much as we are called to be wise in helping to stem the tide of the coronavirus, we must not use the circumstances of COVID-19 to turn away from our calling to be about God's mission in the world. Just the opposite! We must stand in the face of the forces of fear, insecurity and anxiety, and witness to the loving, liberating, life-giving reality of Jesus (as our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry so powerfully reminds us.) We urge the lay and ordained leaders in the parishes of ECCT to take counsel together to determine how best to continue to care for the poor, marginalized, and those who are housing and food insecure, while adhering to the COVID-19 guidelines offered by medical and governmental agencies and your local health officials. Once again, resources to help you with this discernment and participation in God's mission can be found on the ECCT website.

While "social distancing" might be the order of the day to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, spiritual and non-physical closeness in these times of isolation and quarantine is called for more than ever before. Prayer is a potent force in this. In prayer we are profoundly connected to God and one another in deep and meaningful ways that passes all understanding. In prayer we are never alone. In addition to continuing our deep, personal prayer practices, we invite you, with the assistance and direction of your clergy and lay

leaders, to develop specific ways to reach out and connect with one another, and neighbors near and far, using available technology. Intercessory prayer lists, telephone chains calling on the sick and shut-in and those in self-isolation because of the coronavirus, texting and emailing one another, are all important ways that we can stay connected to God and our neighbors. These holy spaces are spaces of listening and caring. In prayer, we connect to one another and to God as people of hope in this challenging time. We invite you to be creative and “try on” new ways to be united to God and each other in Christ. This is a time to learn to be Church, the Body of Christ, in new ways.

To that end we, your bishops, will host a zoom on-line conversation on Sunday, March 15th from 1:30-2:30 pm to discuss our life together in Christ and how we are called to be about God’s mission in this time of COVID-19. Our diocesan zoom account allows for up to 300 participants, so we invite as many of you as possible to join us in this new way of being together. Specifics on how to log on to the zoom conversation will be on the ECCT website. In addition, we plan to be available weekly to the clergy and wardens of ECCT parishes in a similar zoom call each Wednesday, from 8:30-9:30 am to discuss how God is calling us to be Christian leaders at this time.

Dear companions in Christ, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are reminded to put our faith, hope and trust in God who raised Jesus from the dead and gave him glory. We are indeed called to be the followers of Jesus sent in God’s mission that God wants us and needs us to be at this time.

In the prayer attributed to St. Francis, let us pray:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith, where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas, Bishop Diocesan

The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens, Bishop Suffragan

## Worship Schedule (10:00 a.m.)

*With in-church services suspended there is no worship schedule. Church leadership will be reaching out directly to determine readers for our audio conference services.*

## Treasurer Report

Susan Shultz

	FEB	(UNDER)/OVER BUDGET	YTD	(UNDER)/OVER YTD BUDGET
INCOME	\$8,382.41	\$1,619.91	\$17,225.69	\$919.42
EXPENSES	\$7,653.43	(\$2,738.69)	\$16,524.83	(\$3,949.41)
NET	\$728.98	\$4,358.60	\$700.86	\$6,155.10

Notes: Income was up due to some 2019 building use payments. Expenses continue to be under budget due to our lower utility costs with the warmer than usual winter.

**COVID-19 NOTE** - We have enough of a bank account to weather this brief break in income. The loss of revenue from building use during this time will be a hit but God will provide. The Vestry will revisit the budget when appropriate. In the meantime, I do encourage you to continue to set aside your pledge as usual and plan to contribute it when we return.

# **Christ and The Epiphany Church**

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## **Worship Schedule**

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Audio Worship

Conference Call Service

*(We will be having a conference call abridged service each  
Sunday until further notice. See your email for details.)*