



The Eagle's Voice

The Newsletter of St. John's Church, Cohoes, NY

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December 2020

Merry Christmas

Dear Friends in Christ,

As a general rule, when we light our Advent wreath, sing *O come Emmanuel* and listen to the words of the prophets calling us to prepare, I feel a real disconnect between what we do in our church buildings and what is taking place all around us. In our worship the mood is quiet and reflective, the prayers and readings call us to prepare and wait, and HOPE is the dominant theme. Meanwhile, all around us, the mood is festive and busy, the media encourages us to decorate and buy gifts for ourselves and others, and PARTY is the dominant theme. Most years I feel like I am living in two different realities at the same time. This year things are different.

Whatever our feelings are about the COVID-19 pandemic, all of us must admit that it has impacted our life. It began with

rumors of a new virus, late February and early March many of us thought it would last a few weeks, in May we were already beginning to speak about a "second wave." Today over 60 million people throughout the world have been infected and 1.41 million have died. 2020 has been a dark year. We are not without hope, though.

Just as our readings during Advent call us to wait and to prepare for our Lord's second coming, so too we now wait and prepare for a vaccine that will bring an end to this pandemic. Our hope is not just wishful thinking, but it is based on promising results from clinical trials. Similarly, our Christian hope is not wishful thinking, but is grounded in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and countless lives of the saints

through the ages. *Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* (Hebrews 11:1)

This Advent may we be strengthened and encouraged by HOPE – hope in the promise of a vaccine and hope in God's Salvation. May we be attentive to the needs of those around us and attentive to God's presence in our daily lives. In the midst of darkness may we find light and never forget that *the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.* John 1:5

**Yours in Christ,
Bill+**



Annual Giving

The church relies on your generosity to continue with our operations. To make that giving easier we provide weekly giving envelopes. We also ask each of you to fill out a pledge sheet to help our Vestry plan on how much funds we may have when completing our budget. Giving envelopes for 2021 will be found in the Narthex in a few weeks. If you need them please see Linda Tremblay and she will assign you a number.

At year end we will provide you with an IRS form that will tell you how much you donated during the year. We also are always looking for volunteers to help around the property. If you cannot help financially we would appreciate your time and talents.

Clothing Shed

We have been advised that the company that operates the clothing shed is slowly being able to reopen the sheds for use. We will let you know when our shed is available for use again. It is a great project, and a profitable resource for the parish.

Christmas Memorials

Please remember that you can honor a loved one or memorialize a relative with a donation to the Christmas Flowers Memorial. Please send your memorial envelope back by December 20th to be included in the Christmas list of flower memorials.

Please give us a list of the individuals that you want memorialized. Also remember that your donation will be added to your annual giving statements.

Christmas flowers will be on the altar at the Christmas Eve service.

Community Giving

The Parish supports many community groups that provide for others. During this year we have supported the Alzheimer's Association, LifePath Cohoes (Senior Center), Youth for Christ and St. Eustis Dominican Retreat. We also make an Annual donation to Heifer International.



*Our Savior
is Born*

We encourage all Parishioner's to individually support these and other community groups like the Food Pantry at Holy Trinity.

Giving envelopes for these organizations can be found in the rear of church for your convenience. If you make your donation payable to St. John's, we will forward it to the organization you intended to support and your donation will be included in your annual giving statement.

Hello from the

Senior Warden

A special thank you to everyone that has helped us to get through this pandemic. It will be a while before we get back to something near normal. But with the Grace of God we have tried to meet the spiritual needs of our Parish Family. Please let Fr. Bill or myself know if you need any assistance.

ANNUAL MEETING 2020

2020 has been a different year: Zoom meetings, virtual worship, no coffee hour, wearing masks, no touching. The list goes on. It should not come as a surprise, then, that our Annual Parish Meeting this year will be different as well.

Instead of gathering in the parish hall for a festive luncheon and our business meeting, we will simply have a short meeting in the church sanctuary right after Mass. We will elect new Vestry members and present brief reports.

Our goal will be to have written reports distributed ahead of time. While we will not be able to gather for a meal, we will distribute a boxed lunch. Please take these home and enjoy them as you pray for the members of our congregation and God's blessing in the year to come.

For those who are unable to join us in person, we will broadcast the meeting via Facebook.

Love is the Way

If you are looking for something to read over the Holidays be sure to pick up Bishop Michael Curry's book *Love is the Way*. Included are insights into how our Presiding Bishop has formed his ideas for how the Episcopal Church should be moving forward by the love of God.

"Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, has led a life of the challenges familiar to so many non-White members of our society. Those experiences are both of a personal nature and referential nature from the legacy of generations of his family and members of the non-White communities within which he lived and served as a spiritual leader of the Episcopal Church. He always chose to remain within non-White communities even when opportunities arose for service in less complicated environments.

His brilliance and leadership capabilities are revealed in his accomplishments that are evident throughout the

book. And he credits each of these achievements to the love of God for him and made available through him. And yet his personal intellect, courage, listening skills and innate magnetism, wrapped in an envelope of love, propelled him through one achievement after another. This is a must-read book for any who are open to a more meaningful life."



December Schedule

Annual Meeting

December 6, 2020
Immediately after mass

Hanging of the Greens

December 20, 2020
Immediately after mass

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020
7:00 PM - Candlelight Service
Available on FB

Merry Christmas!