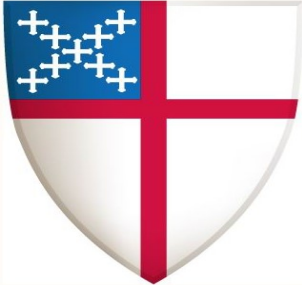


The Chapel Chimes



From the Rector's Desk...

You Don't Know What You've Got Till It's Gone

I was thinking back to when I was a sophomore in High School the other day. No, really, I can remember back that far. It was a time of awakening for some people as to the cost of unfettered progress across the country. Especially here in New Jersey, farms and woodlands were being leveled at a record pace, being replaced by Malls, shopping centers, amusement parks, suburban housing, (think Levittown) and the like. Thus, was born the music genre of folk protest music. One of my favorites artists was Joni Mitchell. Joni saw the consequences of our progressive actions and wrote a song called "Big Yellow Taxi" in 1970. It quickly became a hit, first in Canada (her home country) then Australia and the UK. Eventually it hit the charts here in the states. The popularity of this song came from many truths contained in the lyrics. My favorite lyric was:

*"Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
'Til it's gone
They paved paradise
Put up a parking lot..."*

We all seem to take things for granted until they're taken away from us, then suddenly we realize how critical those things were to our happiness, even our survival; and we wish they were back.

This is exactly what has occurred with our faith life because of the Coronavirus. Before the virus we took our community life as members of the body of Christ for granted. Of course, we could go to church and have Communion on Sunday and even on Thursday if we wanted to. No big deal missing a week, we could just go next week. And the Daily Office, that was just for the clergy. But now



we have had our buildings closed, gatherings forbidden, and visits restricted. Suddenly there is a thirst, even a vital need, to find a way to receive the body and blood of Jesus, to have a blessing by our priest, to meet and have table fellowship at coffee hour.

(Continue on page 4)

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Music Notes

We have so many thoughts swirling through our heads. There are many questions. There is so much that we cannot do, and there are so many places we cannot go. These thoughts go on and on. We have been dealing with so many valid questions for the past weeks and months... Hopefully, we are working out our new life that should never be quite the same again. I hope that there is never a “NEW NORMAL” in my life. I hope it is never the same again. I hope that on the other side of this pandemic, I am a better person. I hope that I am a more grateful person. I hope that I am a kinder person. I hope that I am a more creative person. After all, I have created a new garden. I have created lots of new recipes for dinner. I have found a new way to communicate as I Facetime my friends. We eat our lunches together, talk about our new lives, and about the things of our loving God.

For a lot of us, one of the sadder parts of this whole experience is the fact that we are not singing together. Churches in other states are slowly beginning to meet inside their buildings. The congregation is told, not only are you to sit 6 feet apart and wear a mask but the ONLY person permitted to sing is someone on the platform or altar that is at least 10 feet away from anyone else. How am I going to listen to someone sing and just sit there? How am I not going to raise my voice in praise and worship to the Almighty Lover of my Soul? How can I keep silent while the words ringing in my head are “Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound” or “He Lives” or “There’s a Sweet Sweet Spirit in this place” or ...? I hope, when it is all finally done, that I sing because I have used this time to allow my heart and mind to slow down and to find the quiet restful place that comes from knowing the One True God who is still in control of this world and our personal lives.

It is in this place that I can sit and talk with God face to face. I can enjoy our time together knowing that in the end of all of this, I am going to sing with more feeling and more joy.

A Quiet Place

There is a quiet place
Far from the rapid pace
Where God can soothe my troubled mind
Sheltered by tree and flow'r
There in my quiet hour with Him
My cares are left behind
Whether a garden small
Or on a mountain tall
New strength and courage there I find
Then from this quiet place
I go prepared to face

A new day with love for all mankind

CCLI Song # 14916 Ralph Carmichael
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What should I do now? Don't wait to sing with everyone – sing now! Sing out your love for what God has done. Open up your hymnals, turn on your radio, or use the internet and find the songs that lift your spirits and draw you closer to God.

I hope for you, my friends, my co-congregants, my choir mates, my St. Stephens Family, that you emerge from your homes with the same hopes to become better people and to be more prepared for the day that we are all waiting for with anticipation (however impatient we may be). We are waiting for the day that we can sit together in our pews and lift our voices and sing the praises of God together.

I miss you all and pray for you daily. May you find your quiet place with God and be “prepared to face a new day with love for all mankind.

Esther
Music Minister

The Chapel Chimes

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Articles are welcomed from all parish members.

Please submit signed and dated items in writing to
the Church Office or email us at
ssechurch@gmail.com.

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Office Volunteer *Stefanie Rotsaert*

HELP HOTLINE NUMBERS

As many of us face challenges with today's unstable economy, here are some helpful telephone numbers for assistance. Pass them along if you know someone who needs a little extra help getting through these tough times.

Heating & Weatherization

O.C.E.A.N., Inc. 732-244-5333 (heating)

732-244-5396 (weatherization)

www.oceaninc.org

NJ Shares 866-657-4273

www.njshares.org

Mortgage Assistance

Hope Hotline 888-995-HOPE

www.hopenow.com

Health Insurance, Food Stamps, Utilities

NJ Family Care 800-701-0710

www.njfamilycare.org

OC Board of Social Services 732-349-1500

Verizon NJ Communication Lifeline

888-337-3339

Ocean County Government Resource Center

732-370-8854

www.ocean.nj.us/socialservices

Ocean County Food Bank 732-918-2600

www.foodbankmoc.org

Angel Food Ministries 732-240-7543

Pick-up location Christ Episcopal Church

1415 Washington St., Toms River

www.angelfoodministries.com

Other Important Numbers

Social Security 800-772-1213

www.socialsecurity.gov

NJ Unemployment Insurance 732-761-2020

www.state.nj.us

Yes, we really don't know what we've got till it's gone! But, with the severity of the situation there comes a moment of Christian Hope.

First, we realize that we may have lost our communal services, but we have not lost the presence of Jesus in our lives. "I will never leave you nor forsake you;" and "I will be with you even to the end of the age;" are both promises that Jesus has made to us in his Gospels. Jesus is present to us through his Holy Spirit, through prayer, reading our bible, and even talking to our friends on the telephone (or texting, or e-mail, or Zoom, or...) Jesus, and by extension his body, the Church, cannot be separated from us.

Second, the temporary loss of our physical building and bodily proximity has caused us to find new ways to continue as Church. Many of us have learned to use Zoom and YouTube to meet for services and even a virtual coffee hour on Sunday mornings. We have been forced into new ways to contribute to the work of the church using digital payments from our banks and other means of meeting our pledges. Most importantly, though, we have learned the importance of Daily Community Prayer as we Episcopalians began using the Daily Office together for the first time in my memory. We meet every day at 7:00pm on our parish YouTube channel and read Evening Prayer Rite II. Five of those days I officiate, Fridays and Sunday evenings Susan Clarke officiates. We pray for our church family, victims of the virus, and all matters of importance to us, even for our pets! On Sunday mornings we worship on Zoom. To this point we have used Morning Prayer Rite II, but we are hoping to introduce the Holy Eucharist with spiritual reception from our Church sanctuary soon.

Finally, we know that this situation with the Coronavirus is only temporary, but our lessons, God willing, will not be! We will move forward from this difficult situation into a renewed effort to be the best Church that we can. We will bring forward what we have learned about technology and continue to use it to reach out to those unable to join us physically in our church building for worship. We will incorporate new methods of giving into our list of tools to help our Parish grow. We will continue to offer opportunities to pray the Daily Office, even when we are receiving the Eucharist once or twice a week at God's altar. We will come out the other side of this pandemic a better, stronger, more effective and experienced Church than when we entered it over two months ago.

To Join us for Evening Prayer: Go to "ststephenswhitingnj.org" on your browser. - scroll to the bottom of the page. - press the red button. - then click on the thumbnail picture that says "live". You can view any past services by clicking on their thumbnail. They all have dates.

To Join us for Sunday Morning Zoom Service: Download the Zoom App onto your computer or smart phone. - contact Fr. Paul and make sure he has your e-mail address. - Watch for your e-mail invitation 24-48 hours before the service. - in the invitation you will see a link that says "Join Zoom Meeting," Click on it at 9:45am Sunday morning and you will be taken to the service.

God Bless us all as we follow His lead through this difficult time,



Paul A. Van Sant, Sr., M. Div.; Th.M.

Rector





ECW News

By Stefanie Rotsaert



The Diocesan ECW Quiet Day and Annual Meeting have been cancelled and postponed, respectfully.

The English Tea #1 on April 16, and #2 on May 21 have been postponed. Depending on when the church is open again, it will either be in the future of 2020, or postponed until 2021,

The ECW Meeting may also be postponed from June 4. When details are known, you will be notified.

Due to the Covid 19 situation, we may have to rethink all of our ECW events in conjunction with the 6 foot space needed. Any ideas or suggestions are appreciated.

My days are filled with prayer, helping my neighbors, driving people to the doctor, calling and checking on people churchwise and otherwise, shopping for food and the paper/cleaning items that are in short supply. Of course eating and sleeping too! I am actually getting more sleep! All of my events have been cancelled or postponed whether at church, my village, the school, other groups. My garden club and trips have been cancelled too. No Meetings! Time for me! I do miss going to church nearly every day or seeing any or all of you.

Thank goodness for the telephone and now I have email! House of pink7@gmail.com. Keep in touch and let's care about each other.

Stefanie Rotsaert, President (732) 350-2904.

A note from the Treasurer:

This is a stressful time for all of us. I particularly am missing the "lift" I get from attending Sunday worship and Tuesday Bible Study. Hopefully, we'll be all together again soon.

I pray that all of you are taking care of yourselves and saying well.

While we all must remain compliant to New Jersey social distancing and curfew requirements, Saint Stephen's must still meet our financial obligations (salaries, utilities, insurance, etc.). (Anyone betting that "social distancing" will be added to Webster's list of new words/terms next year?)

We don't know how long our activities will be restricted, but we would greatly appreciate you maintaining the continuity of your financial contributions to the church. If you are unable to mail in your check, or cannot setup recurring payments via your bank, please leave a message at the church. I will go in at least once per week to check the mail and messages. If necessary, I can make arrangement to pick up your pledge donations.

Gerianne Murphy-Treasurer

732-350-2121 ext. 13

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

180 Route 539

Whiting, New Jersey 08759

Dear Fellow Parishioners,



Thomas Paine stated: "These are the times that try men's souls."

Each of us in our own way have learned to cope with the current COVID-19 situation. It is our hope that you are well and in good spirits.

Because our church is closed, we miss our services, fellowship, Bible Studies, and more. Just as your life continues on and your expenses do too, so does the church's life and expenses continue even though we are not physically here.

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted our fundraisers, group meetings, coffee hours, and programs along with our ability to worship together as Christians on Sundays and Thursdays. Loose plate, occasional giving, and rental income has ceased. The treasurer's office is grateful to everyone that continues to send in their pledges and special envelopes, such as for Easter and other holy days, as well as a little extra donation. Thank you for caring and sharing.

You probably are wondering how to continue to pledge to the church since it is closed. You can mail in your numbered envelope with your check enclosed. If you wish, you may include multiple weeks in one envelope and one check. The face of the envelope gives you spaces to tell us how to apply your check. You may also set up automatic payments via your bank. The "account number" the bank will ask for is your Envelope Number. Special gifts of any size are also welcome. Contact our treasurer's office with your queries at (732) 350-2121 or via email to ssechurch.treasurer@gmail.com.

Our current expenses include: building maintenance, electric, gas, monthly loan payments on our heating system and fire alarm, payroll, printer, office supplies, postage and permits, building insurance, and pledges to the Diocese. The building insurance is our biggest bill at \$2445, and is due on June 1st. There are also new expenses that the COVID-19 has directly impacted, such as software for online worship, and remote access to our church computer. In addition, there are future needs that will get moving when we return to worship. As you can see we have a lot of needs.

It has impacted our ministry and mission in Whiting. With your help, we will continue to provide a place to worship and more. If you need spiritual help, call Fr. Paul at: (609) 502- 8233. Join us on YouTube at 7PM every night for Evening Prayer, and on Zoom every Sunday at 10AM for Morning Prayer and "coffee hour". Other possibilities for services will be forthcoming. Go to the church's website www.ststephenswhitingnj.org and locate the red button at the bottom of the page to get on to evening prayer via YouTube. If you wish to join us on Sunday mornings at 10AM via ZOOM, please send your email to Fr. Paul at pvansant@gmail.com so he can send you the invitation.

If you have any comments, or suggestions, please contact us. We are looking forward to your help and to seeing you again.

Cordially yours, The Finance Committee--Carol Cavanaugh, Stefanie Rotsaert, Randy Walton, Jim Jados, Richard Smithson, Al Thompson, Sandy Gaskill, Gerianne Murphy, Fr. Paul

Order of Saint Luke

Do you need Prayers for Healing

Do You need prayers of healing? With the current Covid 19 situation, we are not at church to pray for you but we would still love to pray for you. Contact Stefanie at (732) 350-2904 or houseofpink7@gmail.com. I will share with the group.



PRAYER OF THE ORDER OF ST. LUKE THE PHYSICIAN

Almighty God, who inspired Your servant Luke the Physician to set forth in the Gospel the love and healing power of Your son: Graciously continue in Your Church the love and power to heal, to the praise and glory of Your Name, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.



Our OSL Healing Mission to be held on Saturday, May 16 at our church, has been temporarily postponed until we are able to meet at church again. As soon as details are available, we will do our best to notify everyone.

HAND WASHING PRAYER - Hand-washing Jesus, as I look at my hands, I see that they are the hands of a cook, a friend, the (grand) parent of a child, or a gardener--soiled by the work to which I am called and the feelings of those for whom I have cared. Wash my hands so that I will not carry anything harmful to the next person for whom I pray, care or minister.

Burden-bearing Jesus, I am carrying heavy feelings and burdens. They may decrease my capacity to be fully present and to allow Your healing love to flow into and through me. Help me to give those feelings and burdens to You. The feelings that I am struggling with today are comfort; strengthen and encourage me--and all who have similar feelings. The burdens, cares, and losses that are weighing me down today, I entrust them to You, Jesus. Help me to Use my sacrifices to bring life and health to Your people.

In the midst of uncertainty, social distancing, and grief, it is easy for us to “cough” our distress on each other. Forgive me, Father, Create a Clean heart within me. Thank you for every resident of a nursing home who is healthy, every parent who will live to see their child graduate, and every acutely ill patient who will receive excellent ICU care because we washed our hands for 20 seconds, skipped important social events, and stayed home when we wanted to be with friends, family, or colleagues. We praise You that You are And we thank You

Thank You, Father, for the gift of Sabbath rest, a time for being, rather than doing. Thanks for all the good that You are working in this situation. We love You, we trust You, and we put our hope in You. Amen. Come Lord Jesus! Coronavirus Prayer: Proactive. Preventive. Prayerful. Positive. Persistent.

HANDS-Our hands do so many things in an average day. They can serve every day for God and serve one another in this world. We can pray for others, especially prayers for healing, and by giving thanks and praise to our Heavenly Father, our Lord and Savior Jesus, and the Holy Spirit for healing and all of our many blessings. For my hands now, that is the best service of all.

APRIL

- 1st** Bud Hein
- 4th** Margaret Mason
- 5th** Mary Storey
- 9th** Sherri Bray
- 12th** Jennifer Farrar
- 16th** Priscilla Van Sant
- 19th** Geraldine Cook
- 23rd** Robert Rutkowski, Jr.
- 24th** Andrew Tominovich
- 25th** Sami Albrink
- 28th** Rowan Farrar
- 29th** Fred Spieth
- 30th** Laura Gural



MAY

- 1st** Jeremy Busch, III
- 10th** David DeLouise
- 11th** Stevie Ray Butler
- 12th** Charlotte Corino
- 13th** Ellie Walling
- 15th** Joanne Iacovelli-Lemmon
- 16th** Connie Bennette
- 18th** Esther Graham
- 19th** Conceicao Sutherland
- 21st** Jean Hanko
Marg Pomykala
- 22nd** Nicholas Castellano
- 28th** Gerald Brown
- 30th** Hilary Taliaferro
Ginny Bray

JUNE



- 2nd** William Kaster
- 4th** Judith O'Neil
- 6th** Patricia Russo
Randy Walton
- 7th** Barbara Lavinio
- 9th** Virginia Clarke
- 16th** Jurgen Busch
- 19th** Lillian Fink
- 20th** Valerie Thompson
- 22nd** William Bodine
- 23rd** Joan Kliemisch
- 26th** June Coles
Margaret Poper
- 28th** Florence Helger



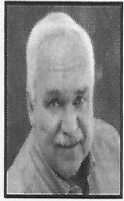
Laughing is Good for the Soul



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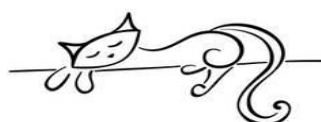
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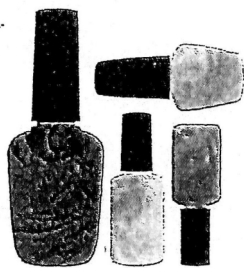
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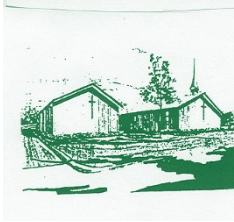
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