
Christ Church News Note

Christ Episcopal Church

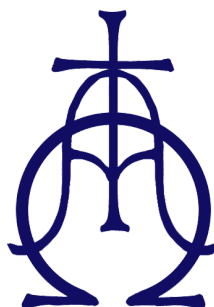
Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 11:03 AM

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH XENIA

NewsNote Vol. 2, No. 8

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Guest Preacher: Rev. Stephen Cuff



**Link for Sunday Worship streaming from Facebook:
Click button below**

FACEBOOK link

**Link for Sunday Worship on Zoom 9.30 am Sunday:
click button below**

ZOOM link

A message from Rev. Jennifer

It has been a tumultuous week for our hearts, minds, souls, our country,
and our shared life together as Americans.

One of the most challenging aspects of following Jesus is to be committed to bringing God's kingdom here, now, in this place, in this time--and at the same time to live into the knowledge that Jesus showed us through *his* life that God is always bigger than any people, place or nation, and always demands a higher allegiance than patriotism. If we are to follow Jesus, to do what Jesus did, we must use all resources granted us in this one precious life, including the social and political systems we are a part of--but in the end we must cast ALL crowns before his throne.

What to do, and in such a time?

There are a few touchstones that help me:

+Remembering that the Great Commandments are to love God with my whole heart, and soul, and mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself

+Remembering that in his walk and ministry, Jesus' main action was to step over every line that separated people, and to find community and commonality with "them," "those people," and "our enemies."

One practice that I am working on each morning, for just a few minutes, is this. As I read the morning news, I inevitably become angry at someone or some group. At that first flush of anger, I say a prayer for the health and welfare of that person, for those children of God. I am not good at this. I will confess to you that this isn't easy, doesn't fix the problem completely, and is very difficult, even a simple quick prayer. But I will also say that it is a beginning, and that beginnings can be built upon.

God bless you and those whom you care about--

Jennifer+

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Thanksgivings: Into the hole we go A Mini Sermon

I give thanks for the many inspirations for sharing God's word that I find as I prepare sermons. I was not able to record last week's sermon, and the written form will take a bit longer, so I wanted to share a wonderful story about baptism that meshes with the message last Sunday.

The core of the message was that baptism is our moment in which the time of our life, *kronos*, meets and connects to God's time, *kairos*. We are reminded that we, as creatures of dust, have a limited amount of time, energy, material to work with--that is our fate and our joy--and with what we have, we work to bring the Kingdom. Our lives are like the parable of the fish and loaves: we share what little we have, and whatever we offer becomes multiplied. Baptism is when we are brought into God's time, eternity, as we are sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism, and marked as Christ's own forever. God is with us in our earthly years; we are already with God in the river of eternity.

Rev. Dr. Timothy Boggess tells a story of that abiding of God with humanity that stems from a disturbing silence from the children, and the possibility of mishearing the words of the liturgy, especially something as strange as "the Holy Ghost." Here's the story he tells:

A mother was at home with her two young daughters one lazy afternoon. Everything seemed to be just fine until the mother realized something strange. The house was quiet. And as every parent knows, a quiet house in the daytime can only mean one thing: the kids are up to no good.

Quietly walking into each of the girls' rooms and not finding them there, she began to get worried. Then she heard it: the sound of whispering followed by the flushing of a toilet. Following the sound, she soon realized where it was coming from. It was coming from her bathroom. Whispers, flush. Whispers, flush. Whispers, flush. Poking her head into the room, she was able to see both of her daughters standing over the commode. Whispers, flush. One of them was holding a dripping Barbie doll by the ankles and the other one had her finger on the handle. Whispers, flush. Wanting to hear what her daughter was saying, she slipped quietly into the room. Whispers, flush. And this is what she heard: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and in the hole you go." Flush.

Rev. Boggess goes on to say that we know this story is true because we know what it is like to claim our love for God and Jesus--and then have our lives push us straight into the wilderness, down the hole, or up the creek.

That, I would say, is living out our lives as creatures of clay and of limited time, working to bring God's kingdom as baptized Christians. Life is messy; baptism is a promise of presence. Baptism sends us into the wilderness, or hole, or creek--but sends us with the knowledge and assurance that we are forever beloved of God and that our little chunk of life is just one blink in the river of eternity that has been promised by our loving God.

I give thanks for the promise of baptism--and for fellow travelers along the way like Rev. Boggess who help show the promise of God's abiding presence in the midst of the challenges of the journey.

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Prayers

A Prayer for the Human Family (bcp, 815)

Oh God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your son. Look now with compassion on the entire human family; and particularly this part of the family, in the United States, and those in our nation's capital; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Amen.

Outreach Follow-up Report: A Family in Need

Many parishioners reached out to help with money and time to buy essentials for the family in need who was mentioned here last week. We were able to step up to supply basic needs for mom and children who are now relocated in a shelter.

Your generosity made it possible for them to have socks, underwear, shoes, coats, a blanket, pillows, and car seats. This will make it possible for them to find the resources they need to get back on their feet.

This will be a hard winter for many. Bless you for all you do to help cloth, feed, shelter, and comfort those in need.

January 17, 2021 Epiphany 2 Third Sunday

Preacher: Rev. Stephen Cuff

Scripture Readings for January 17

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalm 139: 1-5; 12-17

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

*you can find copies of the scripture on our weekly devotional
at the bottom of this note*

Your Guide to Worship at Christ Episcopal and COVID-19

Due to high levels of COVID-19 in our county,
we are currently worshipping online

Here is a copy of the new **4 Dec Updated Worship Guidelines** (click on the bolded and underlined words) for worship during COVID. The bishops of Southern Ohio and Ohio have asked us to stay remote until the current rates of infection are lessened. With the terrible spike in cases and COVID-related deaths, we will be remote until further notice.

Click on the button below to check on Greene County's status

Stewardship and Pledges

We are behind in receiving 2020 pledges ***Please help us close the 2020 financial year with your remaining pledge,***

We also have only received about half of our pledges for 2021.

You are the church!

Please prayerfully consider what you can offer to in 2021 to keep Christ Episcopal Xenia going.

Call the church office for details.

Click on the [button below](#) if you'd like to give your pledge via the Diocese of Southern Ohio (this is set up especially for churches like ours). You can also mail or deliver your pledge to Becky at Nickell House.

Give pledge online

++Parish Prayer List++

Please contact church office to update or add names

Prayers for your daily devotions

Healing

For Larry K, Holly, Debbie, Samuel, Jeremy, Jim S, Brad, Olivea, Marilyn, Heather, David E, Cynda, David O, Beth, John G, Connie, Diana, Peter, Rev John T, and for all who suffer from COVID-19.

In God's Nearer Presence

Barbara Symonds

Mary Sheehan

Alice B.

Peter Lachmann

Lynn Rigsbee

For all victims of COVID-19

All the victims of racial unrest

We pray for comfort and healing for those who grieve.

On-going prayer

Amelia, Matt, Trisha, Reid, Trish, Carolyn, Shayna, Kathy, Steve, Dorothy, Marcia, Shirley, Terry, Arlene, Kim, Jill, Lynne, Cynthia, Tiffany, Heidi, Madysun, Ken, Lamar, Laura and Avis, John, Greg, Jess and Tim, Tom, Tawn, Autumn, and Marsha S.

Diocese of Southern Ohio

Please keep our diocese in your prayers, especially Bishop Ken, Bishop Nedi, and Bishop Wendell, and the Standing Committee who will be serving the diocese for the coming months as we discern the process for calling a new bishop.

++Previous Sermons++
No printed sermon this week

++Christian Formation++

Weekly Devotional

Our readings this week include exploration of hunger--spiritual and physical hunger. Suzanne Guthrie's weekly devotional is found at the button below. At the top left hand corner you will find the readings of the week.

Here is the link for the week's readings as well as the devotional **Edge of the Enclosure**

Weekly Devotional

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The Work of Christmas Begins

When the song of the angels is stilled
when the star in the sky is gone
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

--Howard Thurman

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