



## Late November 2020 Newsletter

### *FROM THE RECTOR*

On November 15, after church on Sunday I was dragging our little outdoor grill to be closer towards the rectory front door when a bunch of cars drove up and around the circular garden blowing their horns. Then the members of the vestry poured out carrying signs thanking me and expressing their appreciation. I was then given a big thank you card and balloon. Needless to say I was blown away. Later on, when I read what different people had written on the card, it moved me to tears.

This pandemic has been a strain on all of us, and I don't think it has been any harder for me than it has been for you. We have all been learning as Dot Johnson is so fondly known for saying, "Take it one day at a time!" We've been learning to be flexible, to maintain hope, to draw strength from God, and to treasure our relationships. Although learning some of the technology and wrestling with decisions about how to best carry on our ministry while still being safe has at times been difficult, you all have made it so much easier through your willingness to try new things, your grace, and your support.

I've told everyone I meet that St. David's is a great church with wonderful people. What can I say except THANK YOU!

Peace and all good,  
Carolyn

### *WORSHIP*

#### **Agape meal**

We all have missed the Eucharist. But now Bishop Rob has authorized parishes to celebrate on zoom what is called an Agape Meal. Although it is not Holy Communion, it nevertheless will help meet our longing to share together a sacred meal celebrating our connection in Jesus' love. It is based on the Jewish Sabbath meal where bread is blessed and shared, which has nourished the souls of Jews through centuries. And like the Jewish meal, no clergy is required,

so you can even do it at home and incorporate it into your family meals. The plan is to try this out for the season of Advent starting Sunday November 29 during our zoom service. You'll want some bread and wine or juice. I'll remind you all when the zoom invite goes out that week.

As a fun project, you can even make your own bread. This is a recipe that the Society of St. John the Evangelist uses for its communion bread. It is simple and tastes good! But you'll have to radically reduce the amounts since it makes something like 24 four to five in hosts! (They can be frozen.)

Sift together into a large bowl:

8 cups whole wheat flour

8 teaspoons baking powder

4 teaspoons salt

Mix together:

1 cup milk

1 cup oil (vegetable, canola, or other light oil)

1 cup water

16 oz. honey (1 small jar)

Pour liquid into dry ingredients and mix till thoroughly blended; dough should be stiff and moist, but not sticky. Turn out onto lightly floured board and knead briefly, using additional flour as necessary. For ease of handling, divide into two portions and work one at a time. Roll out on lightly floured board about 3/8" thick. Cut into rounds of appropriate size (no larger than 6 1/2" diameter). Stamp firmly with floured mold or incise with cross, using sharp, thin knife dipped in cool water. Place on a heavy, light-colored, oiled (or use vegetable spray) cookie sheet and bake at 400° F for 12 to 14 minutes, depending on your oven's temperature.

### **Advent Wreathes**

One of the traditional ways of marking the season of Advent is an advent wreath. You can either make or buy an advent wreath ring, or as we did with the youth group last year, simply drill four holes in a twelve inch 2x4 piece of wood so that it holds 4 blue or purple candles. The rings or blocks can be decorated with greenery. Since it really won't work to use the large wreath hung from the ceiling at St. David's, we will also be using a small one for our zoom service. If you can, I invite you to light your own advent candle at home each Sunday as the one in the church is lit.

## ***CHRISTIAN EDUCATION***

### **Sacred Ground**

Nineteen people participated in the Be The Bridge class that laid some groundwork for beginning to better understand ourselves and the dynamics of racism. We had some great discussions and people expressed an interest in continuing to learn. So the next course we're going to offer is one provided by The Episcopal Church. It is called Sacred Ground. It is a film

based course (along with readings) and what drew our interest is that it includes some of the history and experiences of not only black Americans, but Latinx, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. If you are interested, let Carolyn know.

## ***OUTREACH***

### **Dave Hall Fund**

Thank you for your donations this November to the Dave Hall Fund which provided \$1000 (\$50 worth of gift cards) for needy foster families to purchase Christmas gifts for the children under their care. The birthday gifts program for the foster children in a group home continues. The group home we have been supporting has 40-60 kids (from 8 to 20 years old) who go through it each year. The director said that most of children got into the system because their families disintegrated from death, addiction, homelessness, and incarceration. The state provides \$140 clothing allowance per year, not per child, but *per the 19 beds capacity*. The children do get a \$15 a month allowance. He said that for some of the kids our gift enables their first birthday celebration ever. For others it is the first without their family. After thanking me for the latest round of gifts, Lou wrote "This is a blessing for us and is gratefully appreciated. It is wonderful to know that goodness carries on despite some of the negativity in our lives. Thanks again and all my best to you and the good folks of St. David's Church."

### **Hike for Hope**

Lazarus House was blown away by our generosity. In a thank you note for our gift of \$1,745.00, the Executive Director wrote on the bottom of the form letter: "Carolyn and St. David's: Wow! This is awesome! Thank you for this blessing. Jeff"

## ***FUN AND FUND RAISING***

### **Ham and Bean Supper**

The "Bob and Bob" team, Maria Posey, spouses and volunteers pulled off a Take Out Ham and Bean Supper in October. This not only provided meals for those who had purchased tickets for the original date in March, but for quite a few additional people. All the food and supplies were donated, so the church made a little over \$600. Some meals were not picked up and were donated to Lazarus House. Good work and thank you volunteers!

### **2021 Craft Fair**

With the wonderful news that vaccines for Covid should be coming out and distributed in 2021, we are hoping that St. David's will be able to put on a craft fair in September. Lana Younker and Joanne Theriault have done an amazing job for many years now coordinating the fair. But Lana will be away till early June and it is important to rotate any position in the church to prevent burn out and to give other people a chance to do something new. This upcoming year would be a perfect time to have some members who have not done this before, work with Lana and Joanne to learn the ropes and enable a smooth transition. Please contact either one of them for more information and what all is involved.

## *CHURCH FINANCES*

### **Finance and Stewardship Reports**

Deb Ogin, reported at the November vestry meeting that the church's finances are still in the black despite the lost revenue from building use and fund raisers. Again this is due to the small business grant from the government and some generous donations. Forty-two pledges have come in. Six people were new pledgers and five pledges were lost. \$89,600 was pledged for 2020. So far, \$87,340 has been pledged for 2021. Thank you again for keeping up your pledges as best you can and for pledging to continue to support the life and ministry of this church!

## *DIOCESAN CONVENTION*

The diocese pulled off its first "zoom" convention in November. Three resolutions were passed: 1) the 2020 budget, 2) the formation of a new parish "Emanuel Episcopal Church" from the two former parishes in Plymouth and Ashland, and 3) a commitment by our parishes to engage in the national church's program Becoming Beloved Community where we seek racial healing, reconciliation, and justice.

## *CHURCH ADMINISTRATION*

**Parish Directories** – A shout out to Barbara Sager for updating new parish directories! Like any new directory, we found a number of corrections to be made. Both the directories and corrections are available at the church.

**Pay Pal on our website** – our website now has additional security and we are working to have on it a donation option via Pay Pal. Younger people often don't have checkbooks and older members hesitate to mail a check or cannot drop one off to the church. And there may be people who go on to our site and just want to donate to support the church and its work. Pal Pal will be a secure way people can donate.

**Updating the Parish Register** – The Parish Register is the book(s) that record baptisms, weddings, funerals, and membership. The membership section has not kept up to date. Diane Soucy has graciously offered to go through the register to see who all needs to be listed and what information we need. Ideally that includes baptismal information. So we may be looking for that from you! This work is required by the canons of the Episcopal Church.

**Parish By-Laws** – At one of our more recent reviews by diocesan staff, it was suggested that the parish update its by-laws. The diocese now has a full template they recommend parishes to use to make sure everything is covered. The vestry has been working on this for several months and will present it for feedback sometime in December and for a vote at our annual meeting in January.

As we await a vaccine, we continue to express faith, hope, and love, knowing that we are in the hands of a good God who passionately loves us. So as we await the time when we can freely gather and serve, consider these words from Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky:

*Every hand that we don't shake must become a phone call that we place. Every embrace that we avoid must become a verbal expression of warmth and concern. Every inch and every foot that we physically place between ourselves and another, must become a thought as to how we might be of help to that other, should the need arise.*

