



THE ALTON ANGELUS

PARISH NEWSLETTER

This is a monthly newsletter designed to keep parishioners up to date on Parish activities. Please send news items to Tom Wrausmann at thomaswrausmann66@gmail.com, or the Church Office at epialton@episcopalalton.org by the 20th of the month. Small Schedule and other email blasts will happen throughout the month in addition to our Angelus and can be sent in at any time.

From the Rector:

JUNE, 2020:

Where is God when the world seems to be falling apart?

If we were to ask around, we would likely get many different answers to that question. The most disturbing theory about the pandemic is that God has set this horrible virus loose among us to punish us for society's evils. If we believe this, then we have to think about the thousands of men, women, and children around the world who have suffered greatly with COVID-19, and the scores who have died from it, and wonder what they've done wrong so that God would punish them this way. If we don't think that God is punishing individuals for the sins they've committed, then we have to wonder why God would randomly inflict innocent children, women, and men along with the guilty. Then we think about the disruption to our lives this virus has caused for months on end, along with the realistic fear of becoming ill hovering around us. We consider the failure of so many small businesses, or about businesses forced to close during the pandemic, and the loss of income for workers who had been laid off and those who have permanently lost their jobs and perhaps even become hungry and homeless.

So where is God in this global pandemic?

God is Love, and it is inconsistent with his nature to inflict harm on humanity. Where is God during this pandemic? God is not unleashing this horrible virus on the world; the virus exists because we live in a fallen world. God is comforting the sick and the suffering, never leaving them. God is also with every one of us as we deal with the fear of becoming ill; with social isolation; and with those of us who

are hurting as we are unable to see children and grandchildren. God is holding all his hurting children in his arms, and loving us more than we could ever hope for.

There is much more to God's love! God will help us transform even the worst experience we might have into something that will bring us joy, peace, hope, and purpose. We are people of the Resurrection! This means resurrection into eternal life when our time on earth has ended, AND transformation of our lives now. God is already bringing families closer together, increasing our appreciation of face-to-face social interaction, and public worship as well. God is in the healing of the sick and in the relief of suffering and fear.

As if the pandemic weren't enough to cause uneasiness and fear, we have now been launched into another kind of epidemic, an epidemic of racial strife, prejudice, rioting, looting, and violence. Where is God? God is with those who stand up for the oppressed, and those who work for justice and peace. God is comforting the downtrodden and abused. God is not the source of violence, looting, or destruction of property. The Bible tells us that God alone has the right to vengeance. God is Love, and we are to pattern our lives after this love by loving all of God's children as God loves us. We are to live the Gospel and show the light of Christ to all we meet. God is also with those employing violence, hatred, and vengeance. God remains with them as well and showing them the error of their actions and pointing out new and better paths for them to take in every moment, and thereby offering them transformation of their lives as well.

Where is God? God is with you in every moment of every day, loving you more than you could ever imagine or hope for, and offering you resurrection of your life right now. God is holding you closely and pointing you toward peace, joy, and new purpose in his service. Thanks be to God, the God of Life and Love!

Here are some prayers from the *Book of Common Prayer* you might find helpful:

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and for ever. Amen. (Prayer for Peace, p. 815)

Almighty God our heavenly Father, guide the nations of the world into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness, that they may become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (Prayer for Peace Among the Nations, p. 816)

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Peace in Times of Conflict, p. 824)

Faithfully,

Mother Cindy+

Another Note:

Thank you to everyone for continuing to give to the Church during these times. All offerings are truly a blessing in helping to keep us afloat during the pandemic and beyond. We are trying to make things as convenient as possible, to allow for social distancing. You may make your payments online, by clicking the "My Offering" Button below, which will take you to our website to pay through Paypal, you may give your offering envelope to Cindy when receiving communion on Sundays, you may mail it to us, or you may drop it directly to the church by dropping off into our new, secure mailbox, located by the garden entrance. Again, thank you, and many blessings to everyone!



THE BISHOP VISITS AMIDST INDOOR COMMUNION AND OUTDOOR COFFEE HOUR

Although the liturgy at St. Paul's continues to be done on YouTube, parish members were able to take communion indoors in groups of seven or less, wearing masks and socially distancing, Sunday May 31.

The first coffee hour in a long time was also held in the beautifully manicured garden with proper Covid-19 precautions. The new system coincided with the visit of the Right Rev. Daniel Martins on the Day of Pentecost.

The bishop said, although not usually moved to tears, he was during the service and communion. He said he was so very glad to be back among the people of the diocese. "Tears were running into my mask," the

bishop said.

The indoor communion and the outdoor coffee hour will be the regular format until the governor lifts restrictions, allowing full services inside. People should arrive around 11 for communion, which follows the closed service inside beginning at 10 a.m. Iced tea, water and snacks are available at the coffee hour with everyone wearing masks and keeping their distance.

THE WORSHIP PLAN FOR THE EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ALTON

June 2020

This plan has been approved by Bishop +Daniel, and went into effect on the Day of Pentecost, May 31, 2020.

The Rector, Organist-Choirmaster, Roy Anderson, Byron Sever, and Diane Martin will continue to record the full service of Holy Eucharist weekly as they have been, with singing and chanting. Seminarian Tim McNutt will also join us sometimes. This service will continue to be livestreamed on Facebook and recorded on our YouTube channel. This service must be closed to the public due to the singing and chanting.

The elements will be blessed with every precaution taken to avoid contamination, including but not limited to the use of an extra corporal placed over the wafers before the service begins, and thorough hand-washing observed by the Rector and Eucharistic Minister.

Once this service is over, a Vestry member stationed at the door of the church will admit seven people, all wearing face masks covering the mouth and nose, to receive Holy Communion. Parishioners will **stand** at least 6 feet apart on the cross-shaped tape marks near the altar rail. The Rector will lead them through brief prayers before administering Communion. Holy Communion will be offered in one kind only. Communicants can rest assured that receiving in one kind only confers the full benefits of both the Body and Blood of Christ.

Parishioners are asked to watch the entire service on Facebook Live or YouTube before receiving Communion. Many have been streaming the service on their phones or tablets from their cars or the garden, while maintaining at least 6 feet distance from others. Masks must be worn out in the garden as well.

Those receiving Communion will wear their masks at all times, except when placing the host in the mouth. The Celebrant and Eucharistic Minister will also wear masks. Each parishioner wishing to receive should place the right hand over the left with the fingers straight (not a cupped hand). This will allow the priest to drop the wafer into the hand without contact.

When all in the group have received in this manner, the group will be dismissed, and another will be admitted. Everyone who wishes to receive Communion in this manner will be able to do so every Sunday.

Our Organist-Choirmaster, Gay Anderson, will play during this distribution of Holy Communion.

Drive-up distribution of Holy Communion was discontinued as of May 31, 2020. Trinity Chapel will remain closed for now (this is NOT a permanent situation), because it is too small to allow for proper social distancing.

Parishioners who are especially susceptible to contracting illnesses, or for whom contracting the COVID-19 virus is especially perilous, cannot be encouraged strongly enough to avoid coming to church with this plan. The Rector will gladly deliver Holy Communion to the door of anyone who does not feel comfortable receiving in this way. Mother Cindy is now making home visits on Sundays and on one weekday weekly.

Coffee hours has been working well out in the garden, featuring bottled water, iced-tea, and pre-packaged goodies. Those staying for coffee hour must wear masks (except when taking a bite or a sip) and maintain proper social distancing.

I look forward to seeing you on Sunday!

Faithfully,

Mother Cindy+



THE VESTRY AGAIN MEETS VIRTUALLY

The vestry held its May meeting via Zoom, which was the second meeting using the internet service. Members agreed the meeting went quite well. The vestry will continue to meet this way until the restrictions are lifted.

Vestry member Susan Lukasik, chair of the Liturgy and Music Commission, pointed out Mother Cindy's continued diligence and creativity holding Mass and Morning Prayer on line. The Rev. Tim McNutt, a postulant for the Episcopal priesthood, has been giving sermons on YouTube as well as leading Adult Education on Facebook. "There have been so many hidden gems in this crisis," Mother Cindy said.

Patti Wright, rector's warden, said she has continued to keep in touch with parishioners, via phone, who normally go to Trinity Chapel. Marti LoRusso, people's warden, said she has tried to keep in touch with many members as well.

The vestry also discussed getting a much needed new top for the altar possibly made of marble. Half the wooden surface is missing, but the rest of the altar is nice. The top would be paid for with memorial funds. The plan is to get estimates from various local providers.

SKILLS OF PARISHIONERS BEING ASSESSED TO ENHANCE THE CHURCH

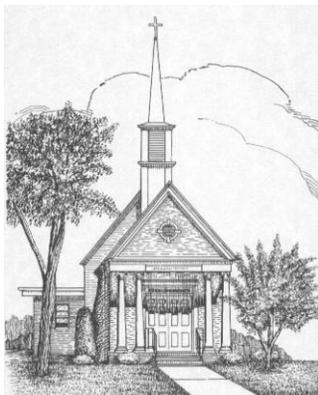
An e-mail form, created by Vestry member Jean Downey, has gone out so parishioners can let the Vestry and Mother Cindy know about skills that could be utilized to benefit the church. Just one example is information technology, which many people struggle with.

Hobbies and talents such as playing an instrument is another example. "Can you sing and wish to lend your voice to the choir, but only occasionally?" she asks. "Have you worked in finance? Do you have good organizational skills? What else can you think of?" The form includes places for your name contact phone numbers, e-mail address and a space for talent descriptions. The form can be e-mailed back, mailed or dropped off at the church office. If you have not received the email, please contact Jenn in the office and she will have one sent to you.

Providing a Secure Way to Drop Off Donations and Offerings

Donations are down due to the Covid-19 situation, but parishioners now have another way to make donations. A secure box has been purchased and installed for future pledge drop offs.

As shown in the picture, it is located on the rail near the Garden door entrance to the Parish Hall and Office.



TRINITY CHAPEL CELEBRATION TENTATIVELY BACKED UP

In May, the Vestry decided to tentatively postpone the 150th birthday celebration for Trinity Chapel until August. An open house would be held in the afternoon on a Sunday. Organizers said the day would include treats like cookies, sandwiches and tea. Historical information would also be available with posters and photographs. The actual birthday is June 7.

We still plan to have a creative and informative inter-generational Stations of the Cross event once social distancing has been lifted.

The posters we have colored have been hung in the sanctuary they at the correct station of the cross. We will announce the Sunday date, and after coffee hour, we will worship as we walk the stations.



BOOK CLUB HOLDING VIRTUAL MEETINGS

The book club met on May 28 for our first Zoom book discussion. We had a lively discussion with a small group to discuss our March book selection. Meeting through the Zoom format was a success although not as good as meeting in person.

Our next Zoom book club meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2020 at 10 a.m. For those who are interested, I will send out the meeting details a couple of days in advance. The group has chosen to read Lady Clementine by Marie Benedict. This is a fictional historical novel. A synopsis follows:

"In 1909, Clementine Churchill steps off a train with her new husband, Winston. An angry woman emerges from the crowd to attack, shoving him in the direction of an oncoming train. Just before he stumbles, Clementine grabs him by his suit jacket. This will not be the last time Clementine Churchill saves her husband.

Lady Clementine is the ferocious story of the brilliant and ambitious woman beside Winston Churchill, the story of a partner who did not flinch through the sweeping darkness of war, and who would not surrender either to expectations or to enemies."

Please join us. It is great to see your faces and hear your voices! For more information contact Jean Downey sat 466-2253.

UPCOMING CALENDAR

All upcoming Calendar events have been cancelled until further notice as we practice Social Distancing.

Morning and Evening Prayer videos as well as our Sunday services are being posted on our YouTube page, and can be accessed [here](#).

A PDF of our Sunday Bulletin can be accessed on the Home page of our website.
Please click [here](#).

If you have not seen it yet, please join our private Facebook Group to stay connected and share with the immediate members of our congregation.

June Birthdays

5 Don Lipe, Anna McLaughlin

6 Al Elkins

8 Luke Shields

10 Rob Simpson

12 Kelley Downey, Rebecca Eagleton

17 Mary Molloy

18 Hannah Hughes

20 Destiny Drennan

21 Maya Grassle

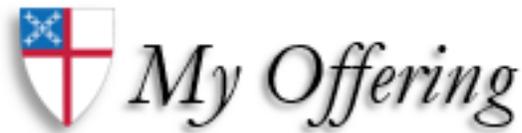
23 Jeremy Mills

24 April Drennan, Frank Swany

26 Valerie Wrausmann

29 Jane Flaherty, Aidan Hayes

30 Joseph Wuest



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STAY CONNECTED

