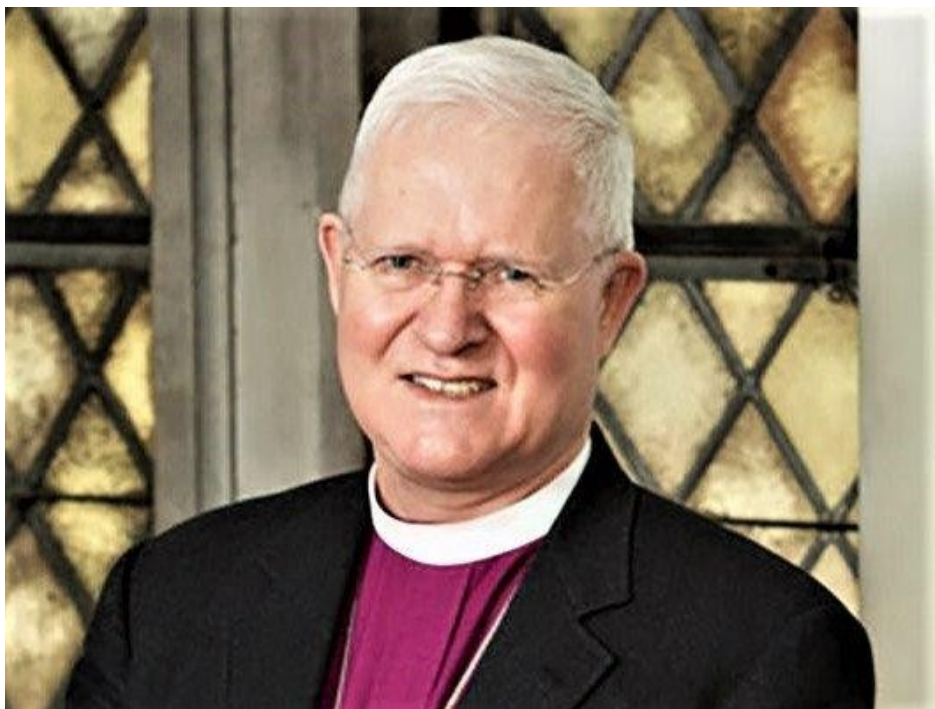


Cluster Chronicle

"A community of Episcopal congregations sharing the love and power of the Risen Christ in our communities through worship, evangelization and apostolic service."



Rev. Smith to be provisional bishop

The Diocese of Southern Ohio isn't in a suitable state to call a new bishop. So says the Standing Committee in a June 8 letter to the diocese. The Committee's judgment is based on data and perspective gleaned from recent diocesan surveys. "We're not ready," they wrote, "to begin the search for the next bishop." What then?

The Committee opted for the leadership of a provisional bishop. It has nominated the Right Reverend Wayne Smith to serve for a stated time in that role while the diocese works to achieve the benchmarks (soon to be published) it believes will indicate our readiness for a new bishop. The letter seeks to clarify the authority of a provisional bishop by noting that a diocesan bishop is like a rector of a parish, while a provisional bishop serves more in the role of a priest-in-charge. The provisional post bears the same authority as the diocesan bishop, but

the tenure is limited.

A special session of the 145th Diocesan Convention has been called for July 17 to approve Rev. Smith as the temporary ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese of Southern Ohio. The diocese will host a get-acquainted occasion for Bishop Smith and congregants at the Procter Center July 10, details to come. The event will also be available online. Pending action by the convention, Bishop Smith will move to our diocese and begin his duties August 15. The Smith household also includes Dora, an aging cat, and Molly, a Kerry Blue Terrier.

Bishop Smith, considered a "superb leader," is a native of rural Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University, Natosha House and received his Doctor of Divinity from Sewanee.

He was ordained deacon and priest in the diocese of Northwest Texas. Since then, he has served parishes and the wider church throughout the Midwest.

He and his wife of forty-four years, Debra Morris Smith, have three adult children, all married, and three grandchildren. The Smith household also includes Dora, an

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From Father Charles

Dear Friends,

I write this on my last day with you, right before the noonday service and bible discussion. My things are packed up at Epiphany, with Our Saviour next.


Before I go, or, as I go, it is important to be sure to thank you for your lovely gifts I received at the picnic. All were appreciated for they came from you in personal ways: the local honey, the parishioner's syrup, favorite chocolate and boffo potato chips (I texted Amy Boeck the next day to say I never knew someone could 'potato chip headache').

It has been fun and good to have spent the last few months with you. I admire and respect your love of your churches and work of the Cluster. I urge you again to take what you love and seek to share it and invite your neighbors (known and unknown) into your common life. Who knows what you and they could learn and do in the future? I believe, a lot!

Thank you also for your kind words and support over this time and as I got back in the routine of Sunday liturgies, sharing the word and participating in, as the BCP says, "the holy mysteries".

I offer my peace to you and the promise of you remaining in my prayers. I ask you for the same as we all move on into what's next.

Be good, because you are. And G-d bless you, too.
In thanksgiving and with affection,



Con't. from page 1

Provisional bishop

aging cat, and Molly, a Kerry Blue Terrier. They live in St. Louis where for the past 18 years, Rev. Smith has been Bishop of Missouri.

Bishops Gibbs, Price and Rivera will assist Bishop Smith by making visitations, celebrating confirmations and providing pastoral care. The Standing Committee letter continues: "We are thrilled with this outcome. Our diocese is at an exciting moment as we build on our strengths and address our opportunities for learning and growth... Once the necessary benchmarks are completed, a search committee will begin the process leading to the election and ordination of our next diocesan bishop. For now, our diocese will be in excellent hands of Bishop Smith. Do not hesitate to email questions or comments to us at standingcommittee@diosohio.org.

The missive concludes with a prayer for God's wisdom and understanding; sound counsel for the renewal and mission of the Church, the ability to know what is right, the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it.

Blessings to you, we are yours faithfully,
The Standing committee:

Mr. Larry Hayes, president
The Rev. Philip DeVaul, vice president
Dr. James Allsop

The Rev. Dr. Ellen Cook
Mr. Barry Feist
The Rev. Canon Scott Gunn

New Diocesan guidelines

The Diocese of Southern Ohio rejoices with us that Covid-19 cases continue to decline and has published new guidelines for parishes following the suggestions of its medical consultants and the recommendations of the CDC and Governor Mike DeWine. Clergy and congregational leadership are permitted to make decisions about whether to offer in-person gatherings, always considering the health and safety of congregants and guests. The diocese continues to monitor the presence of Covid variants and if the situation warrants, current guidelines will be revised.

Masks

Fully vaccinated persons are not required to wear masks. Masks are required to be worn by the unvaccinated or in the presence of persons unable to be vaccinated, such as children and the immunocompromised. If the vaccination rate of a group is unknown, vaccinated persons may be asked to wear masks. Generally, those who are not fully vaccinated do not need to mask outdoors, unless as a pastoral matter or personal preference, masks may be worn.

Communion

Full communion is now permitted with common cup and intinction (dipping bread in wine) by the celebrant only is preferred. If clergy allows intinction by the communicant, a separate, shallow cup or bowl should be used rather than the chalice.

Capacity, choral singing, books

Churches may return to full capacity. Choral singing without masks is permitted and hymnals and prayer books can be returned to the pews. The collection plate can be passed. Regular sanitation practices should continue.

Coffee hours, receptions

Coffee hours and receptions may be resumed but if food is served, items should be individually wrapped or provide a server at the buffet.

Youth Camps

No masks are required for day or overnight camps if everyone is fully vaccinated. If participants are not vaccinated, masks are required. Persons may choose to wear a mask for their own safety or out of concern for others who may be unvaccinated.

Welcome back good friends



The Cluster welcomed Fr. Don Duford one Sunday in June, filling in for Fr. Charles whose daughter graduated from high school that day. We had a grand catching up on news of his family and ours. He and Kay have moved to a condo in Marysville, downsizing home responsibility as health continues to be priority.

And, long-time Cluster friend Rev. Melody Williams celebrated the Fourth of July worship services at Our Saviour and Epiphany and will continue to serve both parishes during July. We are grateful.

Fr. Don greets John Spencer and Laura Milton at Epiphany.



Reverend Charles Wilson completed his tenure as Cluster Priest-in-Charge June 30, and though we bid him farewell, we will be hereafter connected by a bond of gratitude and affection. The Cluster family now includes the Wilson family, Charles, Julie, Olivia and Owen, in Christian kinship, enlarging our reserves of strength, hope and love. May the Lord watch between we and thee, while we are absent one from another.

Cluster bids farewell to Father Charles

The annual outdoor service and picnic at Goshen Memorial Park June 27 was akin to a family reunion, being the first combined gathering of the two parishes since the onset of the pandemic. It was also the last Sunday of Fr. Charles' interim tenure as Cluster Priest-in-Charge.

Tributes were offered as was a gift bag of products originating in Champaign County: Maple syrup from Stadler's Valley View Woodlands farm, Mechanicsburg honey, coffee from Hemisphere Coffee Roasters, Marie's Candies and Mumford's Potato Chips.

It was a typical June day with a welcome breeze stirring in the cathedral-style shelter house, the traditional site for the Cluster's outdoor worship.

Fr. Charles led the service, lessons were read by Todd Boeck and guitarist Larry Rammel provided music and hymn accompaniment. Acolyte Drew Hanson and Shary Stadler assisted with the full communion.

After the service, guests were invited to the buffet featuring a chicken entrée and accompaniments from the kitchens of parishioners. "A bountiful spread," Amy said, "including Fr. Charles' favorite carrot cake and Pad-dy Barr's famous scones." Side dishes, salads, breads and plenty of sweets, pies, homemade brownies, cookies and fruit.

Appetites satisfied, guests circulated, greeting friends that some had not seen for as long as a year. The idea of a group photo found favor and congregants formed up in the shade of a nearby tree. We are indebted to photographers Drew Hansen and Amy Boeck for starting a new tradition.

Amy not only took all the pictures on these pages but also reported much news.







Bill Miller

Menu by Miller

Bill Miller was again the man of the hour for Our Saviour's June Community Meal. You will remember that Bill and his wife, Kay, are volunteers for the Oasis Food Pantry in Mechanicsburg which has served as liaison between Costco and other firms who contribute to area food banks, pantries and programs such as Our Saviour's Community Meals.

Bill knows his way around the kitchen. His tender roasted and pulled pork was the highlight of Our Saviour's June meal. He also made a vat of his special recipe of potato salad which was served with baked beans, fruit, pie, cookies and Kay Keller's signature chocolate brownies, a traditional Community Meal treat.

Program regulars Greg Kimball, Dusty Hurst, Sarah Bradford, Todd and Amy Boeck boxed and gave out 70 meals to guests for whom the pleasant June evening was made even more pleasant. Program coordinator Amy Boeck noted that after cleanup, the committee pondered the desirability of returning to sit-down suppers in the church dining room.

It seemed like a good idea until the increasing risk of Covid variants was considered. They spread rapidly and appear more transmissible than Covid 19. Since only 33% of Champaign County's population is fully vaccinated, they felt it would be irresponsible to offer sit-down service, especially since participants include children and older adults who are more vulnerable. The group finally tabled the matter, agreeing that Community Meals were begun as an act of love and nothing should jeopardize that.

Volunteers honored



Shary Stadler

Shary Stadler of Epiphany was one of about thirty members of a Medical Reserve Corps who recently received certificates in recognition of their volunteer work in the county's Covid-19 clinic vaccination clinics.

They were the honored guests at a luncheon June 17 hosted by the Champaign County Health District at the Community Center. Health Commissioner Gabe Jones had high praise for those whose help was at first a luxury but, as vaccines became more available, soon became a necessity.

Shary assisted with registering those who came to be vaccinated, explaining the system and shepherding them through the process. Commissioner Jones credited this help with speeding up vaccinations. "On one day, we did 250 in an hour, all thanks to the volunteers," he said. He admitted it was stressful but seeing how many people came and how grateful they were to get the vaccine, was rewarding

and a constant motivation.

County Commissioners Steve Hess and Bob Corbett spoke their gratitude: "We heard nothing but good things about you," Corbett said to the volunteers, "we do appreciate you very much."

The Cluster Family adds its thanks to Shary and this cadre of dedicated volunteers. They hold dear the life of every American and urge the unvaccinated to get protection soon. We're not in the clear yet. Covid variants are spreading; vaccination is the right thing to do.

Café Paradiso partners with Epiphany

Guests of Epiphany's June Community Meal dined sumptuously on pulled pork with spicy sauce, baked beans, cheesy potatoes and a dinner roll prepared by chefs at Café Paradiso on the square in Urbana. A sweet finish was provided by cookies from the church.

Boxed dinners were hand delivered to folks in their cars stopped at the church's Kenton Street entrance between five and six o'clock the third Wednesday of June.



Drive-up service by Laura.

There to greet and serve were Sharon Applegate, Laura Milton, Julia Robertson and Carol Wappelhorst who have volunteered for Community Meal duty since the program began at Epiphany in April 2013.



Epiphany servers, from left, Laura Milton, Carol Wappelhorst, Sharon Applegate Julia Robertson.

Epiphany had followed the lead of the Mechanicsburg Church of Our Saviour where the free monthly meals were initiated in 2011. Epiphany put a hold on the program during the pandemic, but last spring resumed, offering boxed meals on a drive up basis. Also, the food is now purchased ready to eat from participating local restaurants: Life Recovery Catering in March, The Farmer's Daughter, April, Amy Forrest's Good Taste Catering in May and Café Paradiso, June. We're grateful for the food, but have been especially gratified to partner with these unquenchable local business men and women. They didn't abandon ship but made untold sacrifices to weather the pandemic and continue to serve the communities they call home.

Keep history in mind

No Fourth of July should pass without acknowledging our colossal debt to those who endured crushing defeats and achieved large and small victories in the unending struggle for liberty and justice. In his book, *The Soul of America*, historian Jon Meacham looks back at critical times in America when hope overcame division and fear. He shows how what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature" prevailed in the most desperate times.

His narrative includes an anecdote from the summer of 1864. The battleweary 166th Ohio Regiment called at the White House before they began their trip home. President Lincoln, a tall, tired president, his lined face revealing the inconceivable burdens, thanked them and shared his vision for America.

"It is," Lincoln said, "in order that each one of you may have, through this free government...an open field, and a fair chance for your industry enterprise, intelligence, that you may all have equal privileges in the race of life with all its desirable human aspirations---it is for this that the struggle should be maintained that we may not lose our birthrights. The nation is worth fighting for, to secure such an inestimable jewel."

The struggle continues. May our better angels, be they ignored, insulted, demeaned and persecuted, rise up and justify centuries of toil, sweat and tears and hundreds of thousands of lives willingly, heroically given so that every American might claim his birthright---a fair chance.



May this grand portrait of Cluster members at the 2021 outdoor worship and picnic be the first of a new tradition. Attending were: from left, back row, Larry Rammel, Todd Boeck, Marc Stadler, Shary Stadler, Fr. Charles Wilson, Mary Neal Miller, John and Amelia Wing, Bill Westfall, Gloria Westfall, Jim Westfall; front row: Vicki Rammel, Amy Boeck, Heather Angus, Ruth Vance, Paddy Barr, Carol Wappelhorst, Sharon Applegate, Sam Zook, Susie Westfall, Kay Keller and Tom Keller. God bless them, every one!

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*We hold these truths to be self-evident,
that all men are created equal,
endowed by their creator
with certain unalienable rights,
Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.*