

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."

Wise counsel, times two

In July, *Connections* included an excerpt from *Soul Feast* by Marjorie Thompson.* It mirrors the words of an article by Epiphany's Cindy Heffner, formerly of Holy Trinity, in the November 2012 Chronicle.

In *Soul Feast*, Marjorie Thompson wrote: "We delude ourselves if we imagine we can live the spiritual life in total isolation from Christian community, for it is impossible to be Christian in solitary splendor. Life in the church teaches us that we are made for communion not only with God but with one another in Christ."

Seven years ago, Cindy, preparing for her weekly bible study based on *John for Everyone* by Bishop N. T. Wright, read the familiar story of the vine and the branches and the Bishop's commentary on that passage. He wrote: "I am the true vine, said Jesus, and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't bear fruit; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit so that it can bear more fruit...Remain in me and I will remain in you! The branch can't bear fruit by itself, but only if it remains in the vine. The urgent question then is this. How do we remain in Him? We must remain in the community that knows and loves Him and celebrates Him as Lord. There is no such thing as a solitary Christian."

For Cindy, pondering Cluster concerns about low Sunday attendance, Bishop Wright's unequivocal

statements fairly leaped from the page. "The words rang absolutely true with everything we had been discussing," she said. "We cannot be Christians without the warmth and love that comes from worshipping together. Our resolve to live our lives in accordance with the Gospels is strengthened by sharing our faith. Simply put, to be closer to Jesus and the Father, we have to stay close together. Sunday worship is a huge part of that.

"The loss of Holy Trinity was made bearable by those in the Cluster who shared our pain. We were warmly welcomed and made to feel at home. And, in spite of the Cluster's uncertainty about the future, everyone pulled together; there were services every Sunday, community outreach remained strong and innovative, formation and spiritual education continued.

"Let us continue to worship and serve---together---to fortify the vine

of our faith. We are truly blessed to have houses of worship where there are no solitary beings, but families of faith which need and want us." *The truth of the Lord endureth forever (Psalm 117).*

*Marjorie Thompson, an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church USA, was educated at Swarthmore College and McCormick Theological Seminary. When she was a research fellow at Yale Divinity School, she studied Christian Spirituality with Henri Nouwen.



Cindy Heffner

Share the good things

Cluster congregants hoping for an encouraging word from Canon Jason Leo when he served as guest celebrant September 1 were not disappointed. His homily, based on a real-life episode, featured a divided congregation, a mouse-infested church and a mean-spirited cat. The plot lurched from hilarious to home truths which reveal our personal relationship to God.

After services, Canon Leo reported on his efforts to secure candidates for a spiritual leader for the Cluster following Fr. Duford's retirement in August. He said he continues his strategy of "exploring every angle," and that two "possibilities" will be interviewed in the coming week. His pool of potential includes, but is not confined to, future seminary graduates and recently retired clergy. The concept of inviting a third church into the Cluster is still viable, but that the church in London has no interest at this time.

Meanwhile, he urged us to share the good things---the Cluster's *joie de vivre* and welcoming spirit---with those among us who may be lonely and discouraged; those who need comfort, hope, friendship, a place to belong. "They will be blessed to be part of your faith communities," Rev. Leo said.

Concluding his discussion at Epiphany, Canon Leo spotted Paddy Barr's English scones, one of his wife's favorites he confided, and added them to the many good things encountered in the Episcopal parishes of Champaign County! We thank Rev. Leo for spending some time with us. His hearty good humor, easy friendship and devout faith reinforce our dedication to the discernment of God's will in this place.

Carrying the candle

The diocesan website declares that "Christ is calling us into meaningful connections with each other, transcending boundaries of race, color, politics, economic status or sexual orientation. By these connections we are made whole."

Pray our common prayer. Proclaim our common faith. Drink the common cup. Serve the common good. Know the common story.

And, when we are cruelly fragmented by darkness in the human heart and soul and mind, we mourn and pray and sing---and continue to walk, leaning into the wind, toward light and love.

I know that I have life only insofar as I have love.

I have no love except it come from Thee.

Help me, please, to carry this candle against the wind.

from Sabbaths

by Wendell Berry



Above: Canon Leo addresses parishioners; below: the Canon and Paddy.



News notes

Ethan Headlee, Urbana golfer and grandson of Epiphany's Dorothy Headlee, was named medalist (low scorer in a qualifying round) in a recent match between Urbana, West Liberty and Northeastern.

Mechanicsburg freshman **Will Boeck** of Our Saviour is a member of the cross-country team which took part in the Buckeye Valley Baron Invitational August 24.

The **Cluster Council** generously picked up **the tab** for the bus which transported baseball fans from Our Saviour and Epiphany to Fifth Third Field to see the Dayton Dragons play the Michigan Whitecaps.

Epiphany aids refugees

At its August 25 meeting, the Epiphany Vestry voted to donate \$1000 to St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church in El Paso, Texas, which delivers services directly to migrants detained in shelters waiting for American court dates, some as distant as spring of 2020.

The proposal, made by Heather Angus at an earlier Vestry meeting, was approved by the Vestry as follows: “In addition to the financial outreach we have provided to local activities, Epiphany will donate \$1000 to an outreach program for the immediate needs, including immunizations, of children of migrant families at the U.S.-Mexican border.” Statements from Bishop Breidenthal and Bishop Curry supported the effort.

Earlier in August, Heather volunteered to look for a suitable entity to receive this donation. She found that neither the Diocese of Southern Ohio nor the Diocese of New York City has an active presence in El Paso. It was recommended that she contact the Diocese of the Rio Grande whose website sent her to St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church in El Paso. Led by Rev. Justin Gibson, it is actively engaged in aiding asylum seekers, supplying basic needs directly to women and children in shelters there.

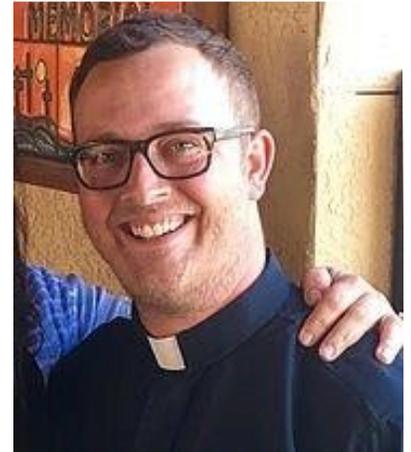
Heather spoke for some time with Rev. Gibson who told her that since our government has mandated that all migrants formerly housed in El Paso be sent back Mexico, St. Francis is now concentrating its efforts on asylum seekers in a Juarez shelter, just across the Rio Grande River from El Paso.

Fr. Gibson said that Epiphany is not the first church to offer financial help and that a Presbyterian minister in El Paso and an Anglican minister in Juarez have also become part of the relief team. He assured Heather that, “if Epiphany sends money, it will be distributed as your church wishes.” He added that St. Francis has raised \$2000, and he is thinking of using it toward air conditioning to relieve the excessive heat in the Juarez shelter.

Rev. Gibson is a graduate of Candler School of Theology at Emory University. He and his wife, Kristan, have three children: Devine, Draegon and Madeline. On its website, St. Francis thanks all who contribute: “We welcome your gift and are grateful you wish to assist us in carrying Christ’s message to the world and in serving the Lord and our community.”

The website also includes a note from May activities announcing that “Meals for refugees will be prepared in the kitchen attached to Myrick Hall. We will be feeding about 200 immigrants temporarily housed in leased hotels.” St. Francis congregants truly carry Christ’s message to the world.

St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church, El Paso,



*Rev. Justin Gibson, Vicar,
St. Francis on the Hill*



Let us welcome the newly baptized



Presented by her parents, John and Elizabeth Risen Wing, and godparents Bill Westfall and Gloria Westfall, Amelia Anne Wing was admitted into the household of God August 25 at the Church of Our Saviour. The Sacrament of Baptism was celebrated by Rev. Timothy West during morning worship. An alert Amelia remained placid and interested throughout the ceremony.

Todd Boeck served as lay reader and eucharistic minister for the memorable service; Emily Rozmus was also a lay reader and Leo Compton performed the duties of acolyte. Organist Sam Zook played the service. The communion hymn, *Come Thou Font of Every Blessing*, was accompanied on guitar by Larry Rammel.

Amelia Anne is the fifth generation of the Wing family to worship at Our Saviour. The first was Joseph Elwyn Wing who became a member and lay reader in the 1890s when he married Florence Staley, a founding member of the church. Their son, David Grant Wing, married Martha Burnham whose family were also members of Our Saviour. The third generation is represented by the late John Clive Wing and his wife, Marcia Ann Bosecker Wing. Their son, John Adam Wing, is the fourth generation and daughter, Amelia Ann, is the fifth.

Following the service, John and Elizabeth hosted a brunch for those in attendance including her parents and her sister's family. Enhanced by pink and white flowers, pink cloth and white table service, an elegant buffet of savory casseroles, fresh fruit, coffee cake, cupcakes and cookies, coffee and pink punch happily concluded this sacramental day for Amelia and the Wing Family.



Above: Baptismal party, l to r: Godparents Bill Westfall and Gloria Westfall; parents Elizabeth and John Wing and celebrant Tim West; Left: Amelia poses with Father Tim and Aunt Sarah; right: a family portrait.



Protectors of life and liberty



Urbana Police Department demonstrated its broad view of public service as Chief Matt Lingrell deftly dished up spaghetti from a roaster of the succulent pasta made by Mary Kay, wife of Sergeant Chris Snyder. Sgt. Snyder was also there as were his parents. Sarah and David Sapp, longtime friends of the Snyders also came to help serve the hearty meal: spaghetti marinara, tossed green salad, buttered dinner



rolls, cookies---sugar, chocolate and Paddy Barr's oatmeal-raisin---and old-fashioned tapioca pudding.

Mary Kay and Chris enjoyed a visit with their daughter Courtney's family; Grandson Oliver, now an adorable age two, was just a three-month-old infant in Courtney's arms when Urbana law enforcement first partnered with Epiphany's Community Meal program in 2017.

Many thanks to Epiphany's regulars, Mary Neal Miller who offered the table blessing and Heather Angus, Paddy Barr, Sharon Applegate and Julia Robertson. They set up, helped serve, greeted guests and left the kitchen and dining room spotless. They also enjoyed the spaghetti supper and remind congregants that they are all invited to each month's Community Meal, recreating the time when families gathered together each evening to eat and exchange experiences and ideas.

Finally, we can never be grateful enough for the men and women of law enforcement who willingly risk their lives to ensure our safety and peace of mind and who, just as willingly, assist in this Christian ministry of connection.

Top left: Mary Kay Snyder made the spaghetti; top right: Heather offers salad and Sarah butters dinner rolls; below left: Chief Lingrell fills a plate with spaghetti; right: Sgt. Chris Snyder chats with his parents.



Service is never out of season

It's several months until basketball becomes the sport du jour, but a congenial contingent of hoopsters from Mechanicsburg junior and senior high schools rehearsed their teamwork by staffing the buffet for Our Saviour's August Community Meal. Coach Michael Cantrell was there, too, positioning his players to advantage.

Our Saviour's Emily Rozmus welcomed the Village "Family" gathered for the evening meal and asked a blessing for the food and those who partake of it. She introduced Coach Cantrell and his athletes. It's so heartening to know that Mechanicsburg Schools balance the academics, athletics, civic and social responsibility.

Well conditioned, Kale Herdman, Alex Miller, Jake Edwards and Blake Sadowski needed no subs, with skillful passing, plates were filled with hot bratwurst sandwiches, baked beans, Cole slaw and fruit. Brownies and apple pie were sweet dessert choices.

We hope the basketball season will be fun and fruitful for Coach Cantrell and his playmakers. And, Village Family, please come and share September's bountiful harvest.



Coach Cantrell and l to r: Blake, Jake, Alex and Kale. Left: Kale serves Kay Miller one of Kay Keller's brownies.



Left, Blake constructs a bratwurst sandwich for Sam Zook; right: Emily Rozmus welcomes guests.



Academe: a community of instruction

As the seasons change, some of our Cluster youth will be first-time residents or returnees to college campuses---communities of formal learning---while others will gain knowledge, training and mastery in the workplace. Author Joseph Conrad maintained that “All ambitions are lawful except those which climb upward on the miseries of mankind.” We are confident that our beloved young people, regardless of mode of training or role in life, will reach for the best of which they are capable and will use that best in the service of humanity.

Beginning or continuing studies on these campuses this fall are: Sophie Boeck, American University; Evan Callicot, Ohio State; Andrew Fansler, Ohio State; CJ Dingey, Columbus State; Shannon Dingey, Capital University; McKenzie McGill, Capital University; Tabby McCall Moel, Ohio University; Grace Rozmus, Clark State; J.P. Rozmus, Hocking Technical College and Caleb Westfall, Findlay College.

The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed

So says Psalm 9 of Holy Scripture. Vicar Justin Gibson and St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church are representatives of the Lord in El Paso Texas. Rev. Gibson responded with joy to Epiphany’s offer of \$1000 for “the immediate needs of children, especially immunizations,” held in shelters formerly in El Paso, but now in Juarez, Mexico.

According to free-lance journalist Lorne Matalon reporting for National Public Radio, migrants are not only from Central America, but fleeing from violence and persecution in Africa and Cameroon. They are waiting for a “credible fear” interview with border agents. Florent, he gives no last name for fear of retribution against his family still in Cameroon, says, “As soon as they hear my story, they will believe me...I have a lot of faith.”

His story is one of beatings and persecution. Journalist Matalon explains that human rights abuses because of race, religion, nationality, political opinions or social group are credible reasons for asylum. But all must wait to tell their story until their number comes due at some indeterminate future time. But, Florent has faith.

Matalon quotes Pedro Tamayo, waiting in Juarez: “Honest people don’t slip in the back yard or the window, they go legally through the front door. But some heard the border would be closed and in fear and desperation they crossed illegally.” Pedro has been there several months already but recently got a number, 12,631. At least two or more months to wait. *And Jesus said, all things are possible to one who believes.* (Mark 9)

Cluster baseball fans



A contingent from the Cluster traveled to Fifth Third Field August 31 to cheer on the Dayton Dragons.

Mark your calendars for September

- Sept. 1 Regular service schedule, Rev. Canon Jason Leo presiding
Sept. 2 Labor Day
Sept. 8 Regular service schedule, Rev. Melody Williams presiding
Vestry Meeting, Our Saviour, following the service
Sept. 15 Regular service schedule, Rev. Melody Williams presiding
Sept. 18 Community Meal, Epiphany, 5-6 p.m.
Sept. 22 Regular service schedule, Melody Williams presiding
Vestry Meeting, Epiphany, following the service
Sept. 25 Community Meal, Our Saviour, 6 p.m.
Sept. 29 Regular service schedule, Sister Carin Delfs presiding
Sept. 30 Cluster Council meeting, Epiphany, 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 6 Regular service schedule
Oct. 13 Regular service schedule, Rev. Canon Jason Leo presiding

Sunday Worship Services: Our Saviour, 9:15 a.m., Epiphany, 11 a.m.

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*The newly baptized:
Amelia Anne Wing*