

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."

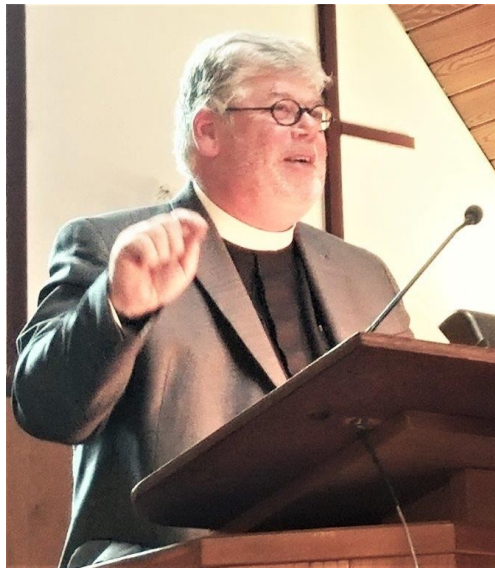
Well supplied

Canon Jason Leo is tapping Diocesan reserves of clergy---committed Christians, well trained, experienced, reverent and congenial, to bless, strengthen and encourage those who worship at Our Saviour and Epiphany during a transition unlike anything yet known.

We are indebted to Rev. Melody Williams, Rev. Jason Oden and Rev. Margaret Zeller for leading Sunday worship during the summer months; Rev. Margaret going to another assignment at the end of August.

We are so grateful for their insightful ministry and welcome Rev. Charles E. Wilson, Jr., who will serve as a long-term supply for the Cluster until the end of the year.

By the time this issue is published, you may already have met Rev. Wilson, his wife, Julie, and teenaged children, Olivia and Owen. He began his ministry in Champaign County September 6 at the usual service times: 9:15 at Our Saviour and 11 a.m. at Epiphany. All the precautions established by our



Reverend Charles E. Wilson, Jr.

churches to slow the spread of Covid 19 including the wearing of face coverings and social distancing inside and out will be observed.

Rev. Wilson is a native of Holyoke, Massachusetts. While he was working for a printing firm in Boston, he "discovered the Episcopal Church". He also met Julie, a native of Hudson, Ohio, in Boston, and they married in 1996.

A couple of years later, the Wilsons moved to Columbus where Charles was employed by the Ohio Department of Aging. His special interest was supporting grandparents who

were raising their grandchildren.

After earning an undergraduate degree in Business Administration/Organizational Leadership from Franklin University, he was ordained in 2005 by Bishop Thompson. His first assignment was as Priest-in-Charge of St. Mary's, Hillsboro.

The Wilsons later moved to Delaware where Rev. Wilson was rector of St. Peter Episcopal Church for eight years. Then he was called to be rector of St. Philip Church in Columbus where they served until 2019.

Rev. Wilson's resume notes that his interests and instincts have drawn him to public ministry. He has been active in Diocesan Committees, Faith in Life and Clergy Wellness, and as a board member of the Episcopal Community Services Foundation.

He has been First Vice President of the Diocesan Council for several terms. In each community he served, he was engaged as a member of local boards and organizations.

Rev. Wilson says he often
(Continued on Page 2)

Well supplied...



ponders the future of the Church, exploring possibilities and engaging opportunities. He notes that he is an avid reader, writer and Doctor Who fan. He likes to cook and cycle and

is a member of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. Julie Wilson, in addition to home and family, works on behalf of development for The Ohio State University's Wexner Medical Center.

The Wilson's daughter, Olivia, is a senior at Columbus School for Girls and son, Owen, is a student in the eighth grade at the Wellington School.

The family also includes beloved canines, Franklin, a Black Lab, and PJ, a Rhodesian Ridgeback and "a cat somewhere in the house." The family makes its home in Columbus' Olde Towne East.

We welcome the Wilsons with continuing hope and faith

that have sustained our churches for parts of three centuries and pledge every effort to make our time together mutually fulfilling.

The Wilson family pictured on a recent Fourth of July. From left, daughter Olivia, son Owen, Rev. Charles and Mrs. Julia Wilson.



We have music



Sharon

During the Pandemic, Sunday morning worship services are Morning Prayer with no singing of hymns. But we still have fine music.

Larry Rammel has enriched Our Saviour's outdoor worship with vocal and instrumental selections. Organist Sam Zook



Larry



Sam

played original music and arrangements of the classics when weather sent services inside.

Epiphany has worshipped in the church since services began again with Sharon McCall at the organ. One Sunday, Sharon played a classic---*Little Fugue in G minor*---one of Johann Sebastian Bach's best-known works. The best is timeless. That *Little Fugue* it is one of Sharon's favorites was obvious, as she merged hands and heart and Bach's genius to advantage. We are so grateful for the faith of our talented musicians. Their music overflows into spaces that the control of Covid 19 has created in the worship service.



Angela leaves no corner unswept

Epiphany endures

Weekly worship continues at Epiphany with the new normal becoming less new. Clergy and congregants conscientiously add the facemask of choice to Sunday attire. A few shifts in seating to comply with social distancing give each a slightly new perspective.

Cheery waves replace handshakes and hugs. After-service chats mostly take place outside and scripture, liturgy and prayers spoken in unison are comforting. Just being together is reason to rejoice.

Angela Murray's thorough weekly cleaning is very evident. Pews gleam. Bottles of hand sanitizer and boxes of tissues are available. How quickly we adapt. And how petty to complain if our efforts can shorten the spread of the virus and the loss of life by one day, one hour, one minute. Give thanks for the many blessings of this life, the Pandemic and all the grief it has caused, notwithstanding.

Paddy Barr, left, chats with Sharon Applegate



Heather Angus greets Rev. Margaret



The sound of silence

In a lesson from one of last month's services Elijah takes shelter in a cave at Horeb in hopes of speaking with the Lord. He heard the Word tell him to stand outside as "the Lord was about to pass by." What passed by were powerful forces of nature---wind, earthquake, fire. But the Lord was not in any of them. Then, in the sheer silence. Elijah heard the voice of the Lord with instructions for his future and that of Israel.

Sheer silence, a depth of quiet that can only be imagined. Silence is rare. We live with sound, manmade and natural, loud and murmuring, close and distant, dulcet and harsh. For the past six months, the sound of Coronavirus has been overwhelming; we hear it in our hearts and minds and souls. A force of nature that is taking more lives than hurricanes, earthquakes and wildfires. But the Lord was not in those destructive forces; he was with Elijah until all was quiet. That channel is still open, pure and life-giving. The Lord is with us in the storm and his voice will be clear in the silence thereafter. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.'" Isaiah 30.

Our Saviour feeds 75 on an August evening

Local families are grateful for the continuing free monthly meals offered by Our Saviour. In August, 75 suppers provided a bit of relief for area folks struggling with the strain of unemployment, the ever-present risk of Coronavirus, the unknowns of the workplace and the return of children to day care, schools and universities.

The ready-to-eat meal of hamburgers accompanied by macaroni and cheese, broccoli, fruit and cookies was so welcome on a humid August evening, a brief respite of responsibility and an opportunity to make contact with those who understand their situation and are doing what they can to help.

Todd and Amy Boeck are at the forefront of the Community Meal program at Our Saviour with tireless team members Emily Rozmus, Sarah Bradford, Dusty Hurst, Greg Kimball and others collaborating to prepare and distribute boxed meals the fourth Wednesday of each month.

We can never be grateful enough for these faithful hands and hearts and for the generosity of Kay and Bill Miller who share meat and other comestibles from the Oasis Food Pantry in Mechanicsburg. In practical terms, the hope regularly dispersed with these modest meals can never be measured. But, as the words of Jesus traveled far beyond those within his hearing, this loving gesture will influence the health and well-being of many who sorely need physical, emotional and spiritual encouragement.



Todd Boeck, right, bags meals for Larry Rammel to take to his family. Larry and Todd observe mandated Covid 19 precautions as do all who participate in Our Saviour's Community Meal program.



Our Saviour Community Meal team members, l to r, Sarah Bradford, Emily Rozmus and Dusty Hurst.

How love can change history

Historian and author Thomas Cahill believes that most of us look on history as “one catastrophe after another, war followed by war, outrage by outrage...as if history were nothing more than all the narratives of human pain.” Anyone who has reached the age of 70 or 80 has lived several such cycles of despair and can be excused for seeing the past in that way.

But Mr. Cahill’s *Hinges of History* series retells the story of the Western world. “History is also the narratives of grace, the recounting of those blessed and inexplicable moments when someone did something for someone else, saved a life, bestowed a gift, gave something beyond what was required by circumstance.

“History is also the story of the great gift-givers, those who entrusted to our keeping one or another of the singular treasures that make up the patrimony of the West...the evolution of Western sensibility, a narration of how we became the people that we are and why we think and feel the way we do.”

And, Cahill believes it is important to hear again “of those essential moments when everything was at stake, when the mighty stream that became Western history was in ultimate danger and might have divided into a hundred useless tributaries or frozen in death or evaporated altogether.”

Have we not at low moments in these past six months felt that these United States of America and perhaps other developed countries stood in such peril? “But the great gift-givers, arriving in the moment of crisis, provided for transition, for transformation, and even for transfiguration, leaving us a world more varied and complex, more awesome and delightful more beautiful and strong than the one they had found.”

In this moment of world crises when so much is at stake, will we be the Gift-Givers whose courage, compassion, generosity and unconditional love provide the trust, the integrity, the equality, the possibility, the humility and the hope that can save the people and the planet? Can we, with mercy and grace, transform a culture shamefully blighted by racial division, fear and pain to genuine brotherhood, “indivisible, under God, with liberty and justice for all”?

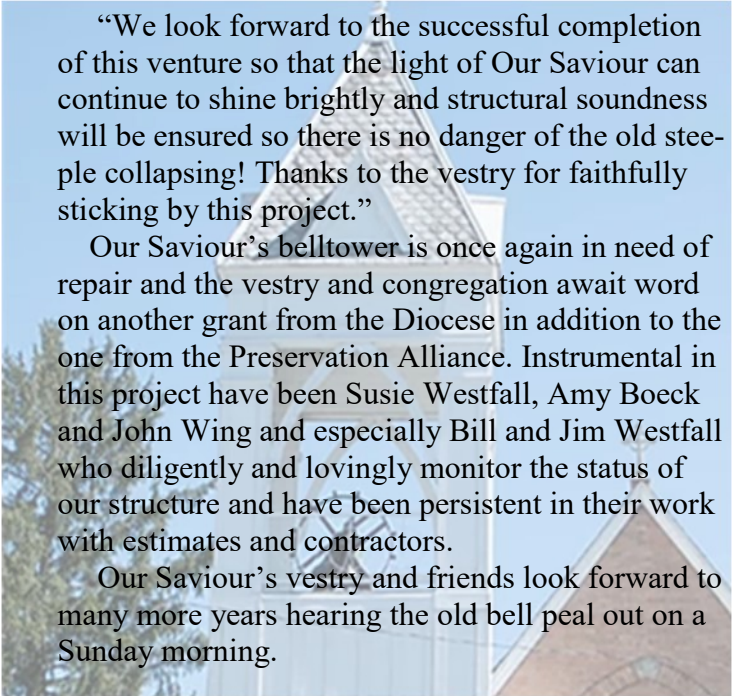
A grant for Our Saviour

Amy Boeck reports that the sum of \$3000 has been granted by the Champaign County Preservation Alliance for use in the repair and restoration of Our Saviour’s bell tower.

The wooden structure has been strengthened and repaired a number of times and a more permanent solution is planned for which the grant will be used.

Ironically, in the September, 2011, issue of the Cluster Chronicle, an article titled Reconstruction Junction, written by a member of the church, details just such a project then underway.

“The bell tower at Our Saviour, leaning, a la Tower of Pisa for these many years, is finally under reconstruction. It was necessary to begin efforts to straighten and stabilize this important element of our beloved church building. It now looks as if the project will be completed in August.



“We look forward to the successful completion of this venture so that the light of Our Saviour can continue to shine brightly and structural soundness will be ensured so there is no danger of the old steeple collapsing! Thanks to the vestry for faithfully sticking by this project.”

Our Saviour’s belltower is once again in need of repair and the vestry and congregation await word on another grant from the Diocese in addition to the one from the Preservation Alliance. Instrumental in this project have been Susie Westfall, Amy Boeck and John Wing and especially Bill and Jim Westfall who diligently and lovingly monitor the status of our structure and have been persistent in their work with estimates and contractors.

Our Saviour’s vestry and friends look forward to many more years hearing the old bell peal out on a Sunday morning.

Reasons to hope

While Christians always have reason to hope, we are experiencing the continuing spread of Covid19 and its attendant discouragement and despair. However, John Helliwell, of the Vancouver School of Economics at the University of British Columbia, sees glimpses of things that are renewing hope and bringing happiness to many Americans. He believes that some of the good things have occurred because of the virus.

He reminds of life a century ago that was mostly lived at home, outside the formal economy. But, as most goods and services began to be produced commercially, as men and women worked away from home, children at daycare, school or after-school facilities, more and more of our lives were lived outside the home at increased financial as well as emotional cost.

But, says Prof. Helliwell, the keys to health and happiness aren't solely dependent on wealth and resources. Many factories and retail businesses slowed or closed in recent months, and "people are rediscovering the skills and joys of working and playing at home."

Simple pleasures such as gardening, cooking and baking, making music, writing letters, engaging in family friendly board and other games, and just doing home chores together have not only replaced goods and services not currently available or accessible, but have reshaped parents and children into true families, supporting and appreciating one another as never before. Prof. Helliwell is quick to add that for the homeless and unemployed, such hopeful efforts may still be beyond reach.

But, he continues, "We are reaching out to friends, family and beyond, to make contact, provide assurance, offer help and share reminiscences and laughter." Social distance is shortened by technologies rarely imagined a century ago. And the U.S. Postal service, true to its creed that nothing will "stay their couriers from their appointed rounds," faithfully delivers words of love, cheer and hope to those whom we cannot now safely embrace.

Let us trust scientific and medical experts, avoid placing blame, observe safety guidelines and use our talents and skills to live hopefully and happily. Your gifts and abilities can create and spread sustaining love, confidence and hope. It will take those fundamentals and a lot of courage to overcome Covid 19, redress deeply rooted human inequalities and avert climate and environmental disaster. Prof. Helliwell believes the Pandemic has produced that courage.



Social Distancing...

... is anything but social. But we are told that when we speak, minute droplets from our mouths, possibly bearing Covid 19 or other viruses, can travel as far as twenty feet. More when we sing.

So, we are protecting ourselves and others from contagion by keeping our distance and wearing a facemask.

Space is vital in another context which may also affect our health and well-being. Poet Judy Brown has expressed it this way:

*what makes a fire burn
is space between the logs,
a breathing space.
too many logs
packed in too tight
can douse the flames
almost as surely
as a pail of water*

Fear for our safety and our country's future can extinguish the Holy Spirit within us. Stay kindled and calm in that breathing space.

Food for thought

Food is a not just necessary for good health, but for human survival. In the wake of the over-weening Pandemic, food supply in this country has reached a crisis in many communities. Amy Boeck, a longtime volunteer at the Oasis of Mercy Food Pantry in Mechanicsburg, reports that the Pandemic has brought an increase in food available to people in the Mechanicsburg area and changes in the distribution process.

“All workers wear masks,” she said, “and the National Guard now dispenses food from the Second Harvest Mobile Pantry that comes to the Village from Springfield. Guardsmen take the food from the Pantry right out to people in the cars that line up along the streets and in area parking lots.

“The Mobile Pantry normally serves about 80 families once a month; now it is closer to 120. Oasis of Mercy provides food and supplies for 20 to 50 families twice a month. They have also devised a ‘low contact’ pickup system for that, too.

“I love knowing that the care and love in both our congregations still goes on behind the scenes, and, when necessary, serves the community and the congregation itself.

And the folks in both parishes who help with Community Meals are truly devoted to bringing food and fellowship to their communities and wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Thoughts on food

Some of our deepest thinkers have expressed themselves regarding the necessities of life. Food stands high on such a list.

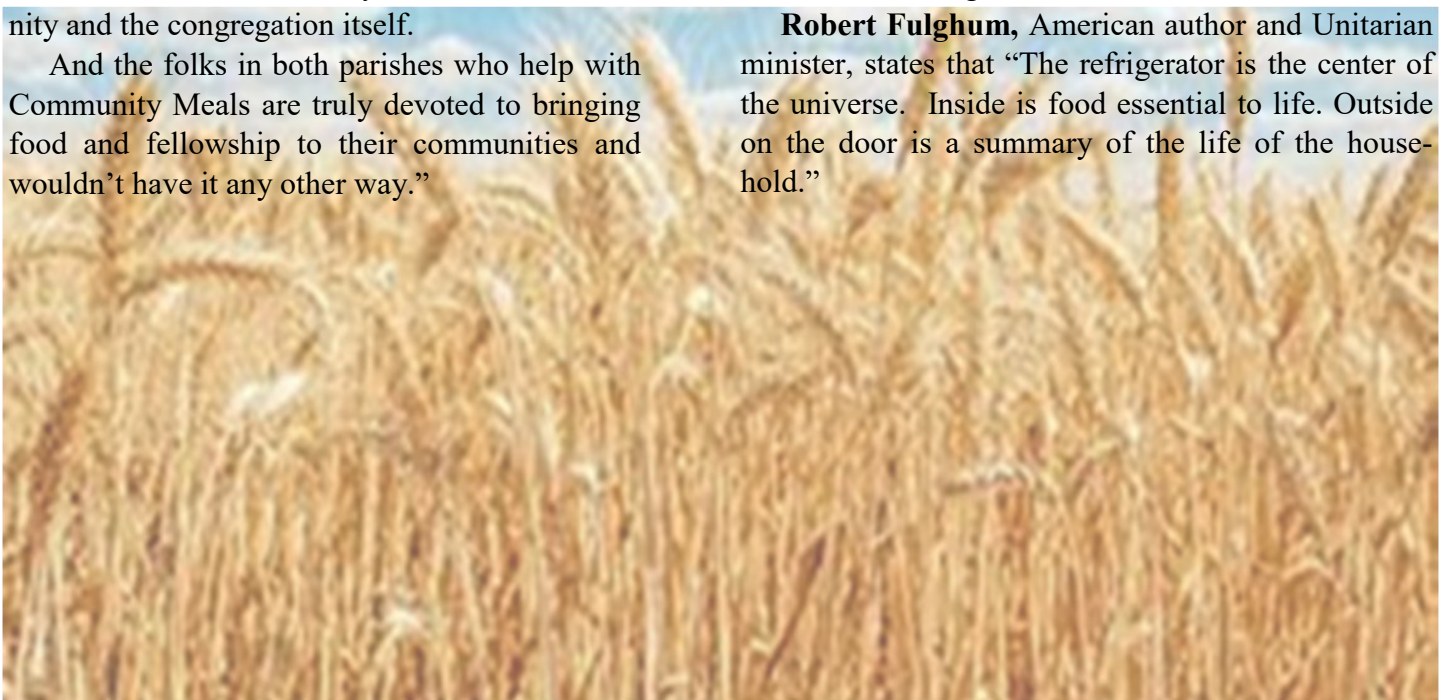
Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States, writer, printer, political philosopher, Freemason, postmaster, scientist, inventor, humorist, statesman and diplomat, enjoyed good meals and the good minds of the friends who were often invited to eat with him. He said, “A house is not a home unless it contains food and fire for mind and body.”

John Ruskin, the leading British art critic, watercolorist, philosopher and social thinker of the Victorian era, believed that “The first duty of government is to see that people have food, fuel and clothes. The second, that they have the means of a moral and intellectual education.”

Wendell Berry, American novelist, poet, essayist, environmental activist, cultural critic and farmer claims that “To be interested in food but not in food production is clearly absurd.”

Louise Fresco, Dutch scientist and writer known for her work on globally sustainable food production, writes, “Food is a tradition, not of nutrients and calories, but of sharing.”

Robert Fulghum, American author and Unitarian minister, states that “The refrigerator is the center of the universe. Inside is food essential to life. Outside on the door is a summary of the life of the household.”



A hymn story

The same Sunday service lesson that told of Elijah in the cave calling on the Lord for help, included the dramatic episode from the gospel of Matthew when Jesus saves the disciples from a storm at sea. That imagery inspired Presbyterian minister Edward Hopper to write the text for “*Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me.*” A native of New York and a graduate of Union Theological Seminary, Reverend Hopper served several large churches in New York City, but felt his most satisfying assignment was that of ministering to sea-faring men in a small sailor’s mission in the harbor area. The text was printed as a poem in *The Sailor’s Magazine* in 1871. Hopper wrote anonymously and no one knew that the sailor’s pastor was the author of their favorite hymn.

In 1880 a special anniversary celebration for the Seamen’s Friend Society was held in New York. Hopper was asked to write a new hymn for that occasion. Instead he brought back “*Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me.*” It had been set to music by John Gould, a music store owner, had been included in a number of hymnals and become widely known. Thus, the secret of Hopper’s authorship of the beloved hymn was revealed. Originally Hopper’s text included six stanzas, but most hymnals today use only the first, fifth and sixth. One of the omitted verses, however, retells the gospel story:

*When the Apostles fragile bark
struggled with the billows dark,
on the stormy Galilee,
Thou didst walk upon the sea.
beheld Thy form,
safe they glided through the storm.*

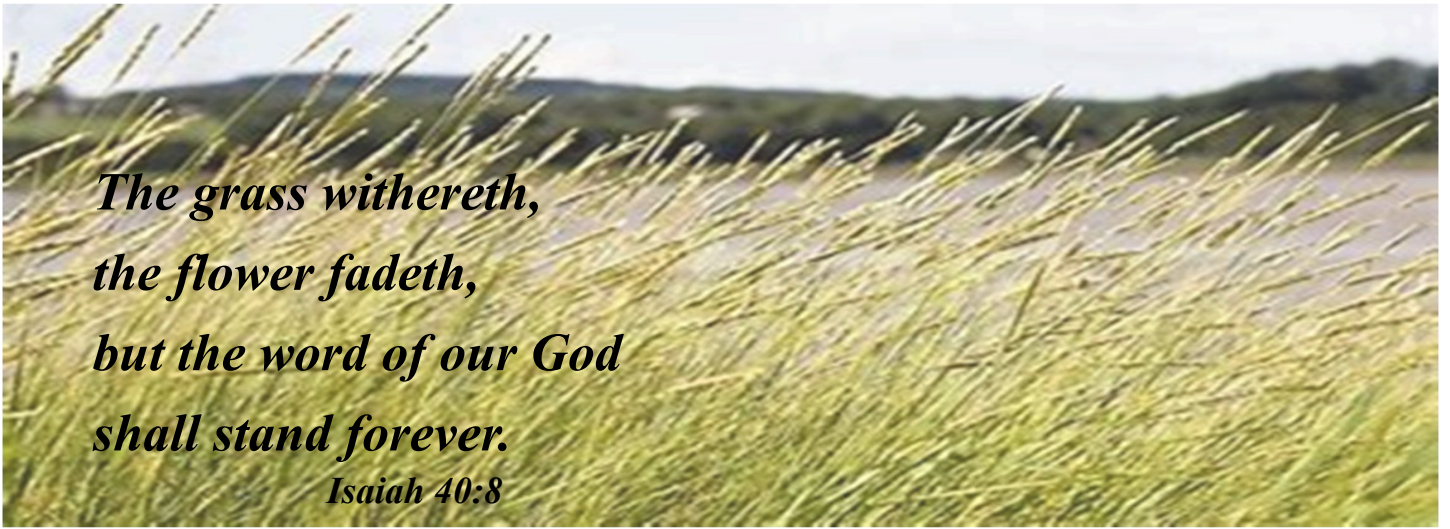
THE CHRONICLE

A publication of the Northern Miami Valley Episcopal Cluster
230 Scioto St.
Urbana, OH 43078

Printed by



1333 N. Main St.
Urbana, Ohio 43078

The background of the bottom section is a photograph of tall, golden-brown grasses in the foreground, with a body of water and distant hills in the background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

*The grass withereth,
the flower fadeth,
but the word of our God
shall stand forever.*

Isaiah 40:8