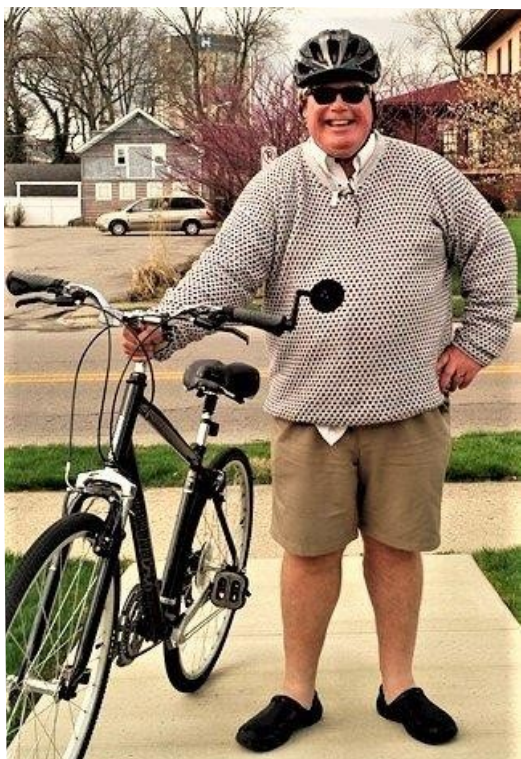


Cluster Chronicle

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



Dear Friends,

When I wrote last I thought February would be a quick month! Even though the shortest on paper, my February has been long. I wonder about yours, too. And I wonder why this might be?

Certainly the snow. And cold. And although lessening each day by about two minutes, the dark, too. Old Man Winter has woken up and now is puttering around where he usually has no business. Here, but also way down Texas way and points yonder.

The Pandemic goes on. So easy to get lost in so many ways. What day is it? But also in the lostness of ebbing and flowing connections as well as mis, dis, and information. With TMI (too much information) it might seem we barely have a shot at, well, getting a shot to make sense and normalize.

And all this is added onto what goes on day in and day out.

That might all read broken record-y. That is, these things are so in our face and have been for so long everything revolves around it.

Like a spoke in some spinning wheel of fortune. I'm sorry that if it

does sound like the same old same old stuff. It's always been a source of pride for me when I can see and share a different perspective. And I think I've got one to share.

This last Saturday of the long month, I took advantage of the temperature hitting close to 50. So, having to do some banking, I decided to ride my bike to our branch. I dressed in my favorite jersey, sweatshirt, and of course, shorts. Plus an old lace-less pair of Clarke shoes I use for riding (never liked the clip in bike shoes).

It was a beautiful day that reminded me more of March and parade day in my hometown, which has the 2nd or 3rd largest St. Patrick's Day in the country. It depends on who you talk to about placement. A beautiful and brisk day.

I left the garage, put the Chieftans on my phone and headed out around the block. And the chill got to me. But I didn't want to go change so I stopped at my car and pulled out my warm gloves and put them on.

And I was fine. Even going into the wind.

(Continued on page 2)

Friends (Con't from page 1)

I thought about this as I pedaled along. And what I came up with is the understanding that sometimes to make it all work we only need to address one thing. With my gloves I was warm enough to ride and get to where I was going.

I guess this is analogous to the whole “squeaky wheel gets the grease” aphorism. But there is more to this. Besides the squeaky and creaky would have been my knees!

The more I see here falls into a Lenten thing: we aren't all bad or ill-equipped, or less than G-d thinks we are. But also, in engaging the challenges of Winter pattering around when it should be getting ready for bed or the timelessness (Good Lord) of this Pandemic, we can engage and get ready and move where we need to go. And on the way we might see what's needed for the trip. And address it then.

That's better than the alternative, I think, believe, and know. The alternative tells us to stay put and prepare completely before we venture out. That might be reasonable seeming. And may even sound like sound advice.

But, gosh. How will we ever get on to that Easter that awaits even as its coming to us? The R—word is a real word. And it is a word that trumps everything else: our limits, our reasonableness, and our wildest dreams. That R-word is Resurrection. A word not too early to say and contemplate. But a word to always practice and seek to live out.

I went to the bank this weekend to check on our treasure. But on the way I recognized and found something valuable.

See you in church!

Peace,

Charles +

Online services well attended

At the request of the diocese, Cluster Administrator Amy Boeck has compiled actual and estimated numbers of those who have tuned in for Cluster Sunday and weekday services during 2020. Beginning in March, Rev. Elizabeth Hoster initiated Sunday Morning Prayer services via Facebook. Forty-one people participated.

Four April Sundays totaled 125 viewers, two at 52 each. May had five Sundays, 136 participating, a substantial 88 attending on Pentecost, May 31.

Attendance in June slowed to a total of 75 for the four services. July through November viewer numbers weren't available. Services for November 29 and three December Sundays were estimated at about 30 each.

Christmas services included Christmas Eve, attended by 30 from Our Saviour and 20 from Epiphany; Christmas Day with 20 viewers and Sunday, December 27, with 20 attending. Father Charles Wilson became Cluster Priest-in-Charge in September and, in addition to Sunday Morning Prayer on Facebook, offered Wednesday Noon Prayer followed by Bible Study using Zoom technology.

The nine Wednesday services (November 4 through December 30) were attended by about 20 each week and an equal number viewed a celebration of the Winter Solstice. While we have returned to in-person worship, services are still offered on Facebook. We are grateful to Fr. Charles and Administrator Amy for arranging online activities and emailing links and info needed for our participation.



Epiphany submits slate of officers for 2021

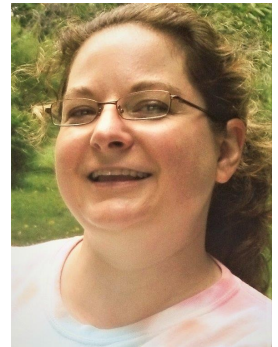
A recent message from Epiphany Senior Warden Cindy Heffner to her “church family” regrets that Covid restrictions have kept Epiphany from an in-person annual business meeting. Cindy also submitted her resignation as senior warden, detailing circumstances which have prevented her from devoting suitable time to the duties of that office. Cindy, Director of Logan County Job and Family Services, explains:

“Our building was damaged in the heavy snowstorms and we can no longer work there. We are in the process of moving staff to remote work until we find a new space...For several weeks I have been passing my church duties on to others and that is not fair. Therefore, until such a time as a meeting of church members can make this official, I ask that you approve Mary Neal Miller as temporary Senior Warden, Angela Murray as Junior Warden and renew the terms of Vestry members Heather Angus and Paddy Barr. Other vestry members are John Spencer and Jennifer Murphy.

“Everyone has worked so hard to keep things operational. Communication throughout our Church and Cluster has been awesome. Father Charles has done a wonderful job meeting our needs. Shary has kept the money flowing in and out. Mary Neal has covered for me so many times, I have lost count. Sally has continued to publish our beautiful monthly newsletter.

“I am very sorry for abandoning my post at this time, but I have to place my staff and our consumers first right now. Hopefully, we will be in a new location soon and things will be more normal. I miss and love you all! I would welcome any and all prayers you can send our way.” Cindy

We will keep Cindy and her staff in our prayers and assure her that she is in no way abandoning her post but sensibly making priorities in this difficult situation. Mary Neal has previously served as senior warden, and as a life-long member of Epiphany, knows the scope of its mission and the dedication of its members. She welcomes your concerns and questions; you can reach her at 937- 935-3612. Angela isn’t available daytimes, but Mary Neal will take calls for her. We are grateful for the vestry’s steady oversight and for Father Charles’ patience with diverse modes and schedules as well as his guidance of mid-week discussions.



Left to right, retiring senior warden Cynthia Heffner, new officers, Mary Neal Miller, senior warden, and Angela Murray, junior warden.



Registrations are open

Amy Boyd, Procter Center executive director, announces “with happiest heart” that there will be a summer camp season at Procter including family, senior high and day camps. Pandemic protocol and procedures from national YMCA and CDC will be in place and an on-site Health Care Team will assure the safety and well-being of campers and staff. For more info call Amy at 614-425-2892 or email aboyd@proctercenter.org.

Looking back; planning ahead

The first Sunday of Lent, February 21, marked the return of Cluster parishes to in-person Sunday morning worship. At Our Saviour, congregants took advantage of the opportunity to convene the 2020 Annual Business Meeting. Amy Boeck served as clerk, submitting the following information.

Senior Warden John Wing and Junior Warden Jim Westfall were approved to continue in those positions. The expiring terms of Vestry members Shelley Foulk, Todd Boeck and Bill Westfall, were renewed for additional terms. Completing the vestry are Larry Rammel, Bill Westfall, Emily Rozmus and Gary Lantz. Emily Rozmus and Todd Boeck will serve as delegates to the 2021 Diocesan Convention.

The 2020 Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Susie Westfall. Amy Boeck reviewed the previous year's activities of the Church Workers/Community Meal Committee. She also reported that more than 40 coats, as well as myriad hats, scarves, gloves and boots from the church's collection, are warming community residents during an especially frigid February.

Senior Warden Wing noted that, in spite of the Pandemic, the church had been able to hold a number of significant activities and events. He credited the dedication and creativity of church wardens, the treasurer, the vestry, committees and delegates, musicians and the understanding of members for these successful ministries.

Treasurer Westfall concluded the meeting with a request for information to complete the Diocesan Parochial Report. New questions concerning finances and services during 2020 were aimed at determining how Our Saviour and the Cluster have adapted to Pandemic restrictions.



John



Jim

Community Meal is well named

The February meal offered by Our Saviour was truly a community venture. Pizza Alley, Mechanicsburg area business, supplied its specialty entrée and tossed green salad, fruit and cookies completed the menu. And management of Pizza Alley and several of the youth wrestling groups that it sponsors picked up the tab for every meal that was consumed by the 60 guests. Community spirit at its best!

Each meal was boxed and bagged in the church kitchen by Our Saviour regulars Todd and Amy Boeck, Dusty Hurst, Greg Kimball and Emily Rozmus. Many thanks to Amy for her reporting and photos. She also noted that Our Saviour has received another \$3000 grant from Episcopal Community Ministries in support of the Community Meal outreach. Well deserved and wisely used.



Left, orders filled and bagged, Todd and Emily meet and greet Our Saviour's February guests. Right, behind the scenes, servings of salad, pizza, fruit and cookies are boxed by, l to r: Emily, Greg, Todd and Dusty.

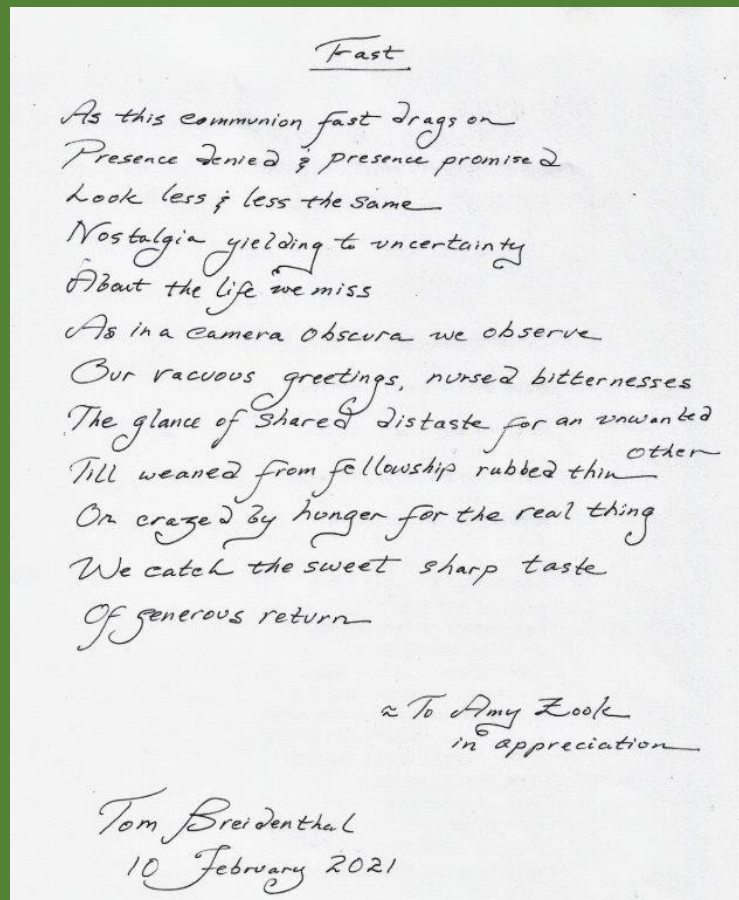


Manus Dei

The diffident beauty of hands
work-worn, well-scrubbed, small,
large, pale or dark,
replaces the usual chorus of faces
as priest and deacon move
again and again
across the altar rail, sharing
the mystery of the faith
in sacraments of bread and wine.
Palms opened upward, the lifeline
traced in a curve like moonrise,
fingers slightly curled, some
crooked, some tapering,
blue tracery of veins in the
wrist like rivers stirring under
spring snow – such ordinary beauty.
Recalling his years of ministry
the bishop remembers the hand
more than processions or candles
or the sunlight blazing through
stained-glass windows. Those
who could not sing or teach or
swing a censer could always come,
hands outstretched, and become
equal to every other child of God.

Amy Jo Schoonover

© Ohio Poetry Day Association



Our poet laureate, Amy Jo Schoonover, kindly permitted us to publish the poem she wrote “in gratitude” for Bishop Thomas Breidenthal at the time of his retirement, and the poem he wrote to her “in appreciation.”

A sound investment

Epiphany financial reports and regular updates on pledging recently reflected decline but also determination. They note with gratitude that ten families have formally committed to support the church for 2021. Ten is good, but quite a drop from the previous year’s 22. It’s gratifying that two of the ten contributors are new---welcome first-time investors! Eight felt able to renew---good for you! Of those eight, one increased the amount of the pledge--hallelujah! Five were able to offer the same amount, wishing it could be more. Two pledged less---but pledged!

A pledge amounts to an investment in maintaining and growing Christ’s Kingdom on Earth. There was never a time more desperately in need of strengthening the Christian way of life. Your pledge makes it possible---here and beyond. There is no deadline for pledging or paying---what you can, when you can. Bless and be blessed.

Drew named student of the year



Drew Hansen

Congratulations to Drew Hansen and his justly proud grandparents, Jim and Gloria Westfall, of Our Saviour! In February, Drew was named Student of the Year by Red Music School in Marysville. Congregants at Our Saviour may remember Drew as a Sunday School student. He's now a senior at Marysville High School where his love of vocal music led to participation in the high school choir, the show choir and annual musicals.

Drew will graduate from Marysville High School May 22 and plans to enroll as a business major at Ohio State University's branch in Marion. His singing skills have been fostered at Red, a private music school founded by award-winning musicians Paul Melcher and his wife, Chelsea.

He's a medalist

Will Boeck of Our Saviour took home gold and bronze medals in the medley relay and freestyle events, helping Mechanicsburg High School to third place in the field of seven schools participating in the Second Annual Darby Valley Swim Championships January 29 at the Urbana YMCA.

Mechanicsburg sophomores Alekah Daniels and Ethan Kramer came away with gold medals winning their individual events. More gold medals were earned by the Mechanicsburg boys' medley relay team of Kramer, Nik King, Tyler Hennigan and Will Boeck.

In the freestyle events, a Mechanicsburg trio, including Will, swimming the 100 meter, won bronze medals.



Will Boeck

Emily named to Village zoning board

Emily Rozmus of Our Saviour is one of three new members of the Mechanicsburg Board of Zoning Appeals. Mayor Ben Layne welcomed Emily, Tom Talbot and Mike Hull who were sworn in during the Zoom Council Meeting February 1. Emily will be working with board member Todd Boeck and another good friend of Our Saviour, Dusty Hurst, Zoning Board Inspector and a regular volunteer with the church's Community Meal program.

Grant will benefit Community Meals

Mary Neal Miller of Epiphany recently received word that a grant of \$2500 from the Episcopal Community Ministries has been approved for the church's Community Meals program.

This outreach has been on hold since the pandemic restricted group gatherings, but it is hoped that the food program can be fully resumed in coming months.

Mary Neal explains that, for the time being, the vestry has opted to purchase meals from participating local restaurants to be distributed without charge by the church each month. Volunteers will be needed. Please call if you can help.

Keeping in touch

We parted with Bill, Diane and Tom Kremer some months ago when they left Urbana to make their retirement home in California near son Joe and his family. When we said goodbye, we promised not to let our friendship fade. We include their new address in El Cajon, California, a suburb of San Diego, so we can keep that promise.

Bill and Diane Kremer
2033 Seca Street
El Cajon, CA 92019-4160

A surprise gift

Epiphany Treasurer Shary Stadler recently received some information that she thought at first must have been sent by mistake. The legal document stated that the Church of the Epiphany in Urbana, Ohio, is one of the beneficiaries of a Charitable Remainder Trust drawn up by Peter McNeely Fyfe of Nashville, Tennessee, a renowned church organist. Further investigation revealed that Mr. Fyfe, age 92, died in 2016, his wife, Lois Gainer Fyfe in 2014 and that the trust is now in the hands of their daughter, Catherine Fyfe McEachern of St. Paul, Minnesota. If the trust is still in existence at the time of Mrs. McEachern's demise, Epiphany and several other entities will receive bequests from the estate. Nowhere is Mr. Fyfe's connection to Epiphany disclosed. The church would welcome any clues to this relationship.



Shary wrote to Mrs. McEachern expressing gratitude for the gift to Epiphany and for Mr. Fyfe's kind encouragement of the church's ministry of music. Shary mentioned that music is still a vital part in the life of Epiphany and that the church is home to the Champaign County Youth Choir, of which the church is a sponsor.

Peter Fyfe's obituary notes that he was "an esteemed organist, conscientious teacher and quiet authority who enriched the local scene and sent proteges to sanctuaries across the nation". He held degrees from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Union Theological Seminary in New York and was active in the American Guild of Organists. He was organist and choirmaster of several Episcopal churches, the last 35 years at Christ Episcopal Church in Nashville, now the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee. Peter's wife, Lois, was also a talented musician and they were many times honored for their "commitment to excellence in music, unparalleled knowledge of sacred music, their roles as teachers and mentors, leadership, devoted service and extraordinary generosity."

Speaking of polar vortexes

Centuries of weather have been enjoyed and endured. Early man reckoned quite accurately that some force beyond his own was responsible, and he had to be satisfied with that explanation. Much of scripture attributed this force to The Lord, creator and controller of people and planet. The Old Testament God calls on these elements and forces to demonstrate His power and to reinforce His guidance, to reward and remonstrate.

But as time and travel expanded knowledge, these explanations fell before the revelation of scholars and an expanding breed of investigators called scientists. Much of what once puzzled and bewildered is common knowledge to 21st century school children.

We now know that a vortex is air spinning like a top 15 to 30 miles above earth's surface. Such arctic air spinning over the North Pole is a polar vortex. We are told that the strength of the spin can be weakened by random weather patterns and climate change caused by humans. It appears that is what happened when a recent polar vortex was slammed into by a disruption called "atmospheric waves" and cold air escaped and headed south. Temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere plunged to 50 degrees below normal.

Today's scientists are revealing facts about our planet that were once quite beyond human imagination. And have increased awe of a creator who endowed human, and all life, with the ability to comprehend, appreciate, make use of, control and sustain the great interactive habitat on which that life depends. Stay tuned, we're just beginning to realize the creator's genius.



Ash Wednesday at Our Saviour: Fr. Charles, Amy Boeck, left, Vicki and Larry Rammel.

A wintry Ash Wednesday

The traditional Cluster Ash Wednesday services adapted to Pandemic Protocol, heavy snow and arctic air, but were none the less meaningful. Fr. Charles met members of Our Saviour in front of the church at 10 o'clock and drove on to Epiphany for the Imposition of Ashes at noon.



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