

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,

We have one month down in our time together and I am happy that we'll continue through my favorite season of the year. Fall is like Spring for me and some of my family. The colors, the smells, and everything else, too. As for sports, I still miss backyard football more than the packaged performances on the TV.

We know that quick on the heels of Fall comes Old Man Winter. Another favorite season of mine as I love the colder weather. That can be traced to the fact that my new mother put her oldest child into a snowsuit that July I showed up. Ever since, the colder the better.

Now, I know that I am probably in the minority with my appreciation for the cold. Not too many are looking forward to winter and its more intermittent beauty, roughhousing coldness, and the heavy-handed grayness of sky.

But I wonder if in thinking about that other thing fast approaching there might be a softening in thinking about that snowpack dropped outside



Rev. Charles E. Wilson, Jr.

our doors. This other thing, I mean of course, is the election. The election. The one this time that we are told will be "the most [insert hyperbolic adjective here] of our lifetime. That's coming, too. And in less than a month.

I know I have referred to it several times so far. I hope I have not given any indication for whom any of us should vote. This has always been my practice. For instance, once I was invited by the local Democratic Party to attend a Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast. "Come sit with the Democrats," they said. "I think I will sit with the Christians (our Parish's table)," I demurred.

Another time, I was met by two parishioners who were outraged that someone would pray aloud (no less) for George W. Bush to repent. "Make him stop," they told me. "No," I said, "You can just offer the prayers you want, and God will separate what's what."

I have tried to connect what the Scriptures are telling us this time around in the lectionary with what's going on around us. Mainly and noticeably, I think, the message has been, this is a different time for us in our country, but also humanity around the world. We should act or begin to live accordingly.

And we start that movement by making our voice heard on our own behalf, but for those whose voice falters, wavers, or simply is not heard.

Easier said than done. Hard for any of us. Harder for a Christ-follower. Hardest for Episcopalians whose love and sweet spot is comprehensive-ness and to stand in the middle (and therefore midst) can get us run over. Think when you drive around – it's all yellow lines and squashed creatures who were merely minding their own business.

(Cont'd on page 2)

Dear Friends

(Cont. from page 1)

I know, though, it's worth it. And I know, too, that the world's business is our business. The seasons are changing and it will be colder before it warms up again. We might be ready. And that's good.

We have been deluged this year about how voting is a right. And that's true. And by voting we share in our common life together. Your vote, my vote, our vote goes out beyond the booth.

What we have, here in our parishes and in our faithful lives, too, is a gift. And such a gift cannot be ours alone, just as a vote is not ours alone. The gift we have can be shared and must be, too with the world outside our doors.

It is just the right thing to do. See you in church.

Charles +

Office Hours

Rev. Wilson will be in Champaign County on Wednesdays; at Epiphany from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 12:15 to 3 o'clock at Our Saviour. With one exception.

On the last Wednesday of each month when Our Saviour offers its Community Meal at five o'clock, Rev. Wilson will be there from 3 to 6 o'clock to meet congregants and join the committee in welcoming those who come to pick up the boxed dinners.

Remembering Joanie

Joan Patten Stadler, longtime member of Epiphany, passed away peacefully at home October 1, surrounded by her beloved family. She is mourned by Charles, her husband of 69 years, children, Marc, William and Karen and their spouses, grandchildren, siblings, fellow members of Epiphany and legions of friends in Champaign County and beyond.



She loved the outdoors and worked tirelessly in her picture-book garden. She was a member of several garden clubs, became an herb specialist and her 2007 garden is part of the Smithsonian Institution's Archive of the American Garden. She was a Girl Scout leader, school room mother and active in PTA. Joanie was also a Hospice volunteer, helped establish the Champaign Transit System, was a member of the Champaign Family YMCA and served on the Columbus Opera Board.

Joanie's energetic, eventful, productive life was supported at all times by her unwavering faith in God. She was a benefactor and staunch participant in every aspect of the mission of the Church of Epiphany. Her vibrant Christianity will ever reside in the front pew, Gospel side.

Bishop Breidenthal to retire

The Cluster will ever be grateful for the faith, the wisdom and work of this stolid Christian leader. And for the spiritual guidance and practical encouragement he has provided to each parish over the past 13 years.

His letter of resignation explains that he is slowly regaining his strength after a long hospitalization and is confident that he will return to normal life "sooner than later." However, he feels it is best for his long-term health that he retire and will do so November 29.

Communion is reinstituted

Bishop Breidenthal has authorized the return of Communion to worship, beginning October 18. It will be somewhat different, but guidelines are being sent to the Altar Guilds and congregants will be instructed before Oct. 18.

At a future date, perhaps Advent, singing may also be reintroduced into the service. Guidelines for this are based on the state's level of alert reflecting the number of cases of Covid 19 at that time. We will publish more about this in future, but it is a candle in the dark.

Yada Yada continues its mission



From Yada Yada l to r: Cindy Melvin, Wilma Hartley and Carole May.

“We worked hard, but it was another night that we felt glad to be together,” observed Community Meal coordinator Amy Boeck after Our Saviour’s September supper. She praised the help of Carole May, Wilma Hartley and Cindy Melvin from the Yada Yada Bible Study group of the Mechanicsburg Christian Fellowship. Yada Yada is from the Hebrew and means, “sharing love, showing mercy, acting justly, understanding the needs of those around us and taking care of them.”

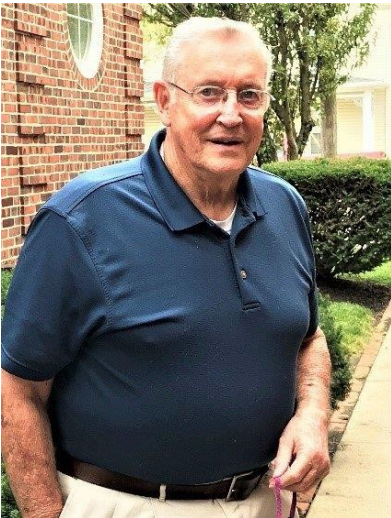
Assisting with Community Meals is just one of the ways their mission is served. They provided valuable help at Our Saviour, cooking the breaded chicken breasts, centerpiece of the delectable menu, and boxing meals. The chicken was served with mashed potatoes and chicken gravy, mixed

vegetables, fruit, Kay Keller’s home-baked chocolate brownies and cookies, chicken and cookies gifted by Bill Miller of the Oasis Food Pantry.

Bill and former Mechanicsburg mayor Greg Kimball, realtor Dusty Hurst, and Todd Boeck, Emily Rozmus and Amy from Our Saviour were also on duty from early afternoon until the last chicken dinner was claimed.

About 20 of the 70 meals distributed were delivered. Todd, Greg, Dusty and Amy took food to Village residents who had called ahead for home delivery, as the program requires. As Amy confided, being together, doing God’s work, overpowered weariness and, for the moment, the anxiety about Covid 19 that has seeped into every aspect of our lives.

However, we know that where two or three are gathered in His name, His presence enfolds and upholds those two or three---and those nine or ten, gathered at Our Saviour, feeding the hungry in Mechanicsburg.



Bill Miller

Greg Kimball and Todd Boeck



Emily Rozmus and Dusty Hurst



Parting probes the depths of love

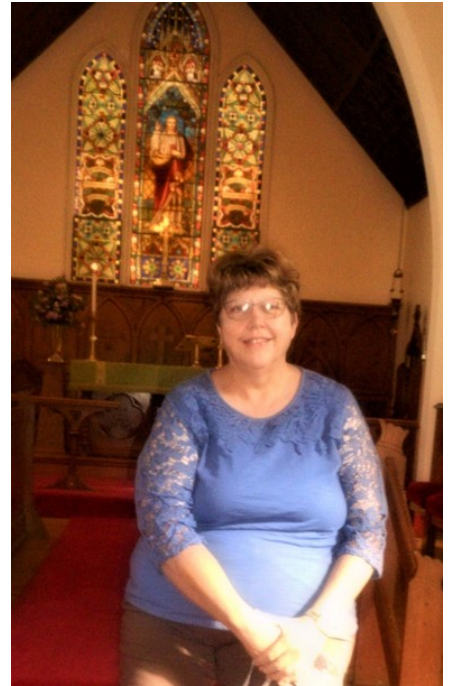
We were loathe to say good-bye. Diane Kremer's soaring soprano solo, "Be Thou my vision," left us tearful and breathless on that Sunday in September when we parted with her for a while. Perhaps a long while, but not as long as we have known and loved her. Not as long as we have been blessed by her talents and the days which became years of her life spent on behalf of the mission and ministry of the Church of the Epiphany and the Cluster.

Diane trained as a musician and her career as Bill's wife, mother of Joe and Tom and professional accountant, civic servant, Epiphany vestryperson and treasurer, was lived to a musical accompaniment. As a longtime member of the Epiphany choir, her magnificent vocal selections on holidays and special occasions touched the very souls of the congregation. Her Christmas Eve solo, "O, Holy Night" was the essence of the Nativity and will ever resound in our hearts on Christmas.

As a member of the board of the Champaign County Youth Choir, Diane served as treasurer and valuable contributor to the purpose and policies of that organization as well as guiding the selection of fine music for the children to study and perform.

After Sunday services, Diane and her husband, Bill, outlined their plans for the future with sons Tom and Joe and Joe's family, including grandson, Ben, in San Diego, California. They will head west in early October. Diane was given a scrapbook of letters, pictures and cards lovingly and artfully prepared by Epiphany Senior Warden Cindy Heffner. On behalf of Epiphany, Ed Hardin presented a gift certificate to Bill. As we stood with hands not quite touching, Father Charles assembled our thoughts into a blessing for this family's safe journey and the establishment of a new home.

Still we lingered, making it last, remembering humorous experiences and memorable occasions, easing the density of the moment, eyes speaking what we found so difficult to say. But, isn't it wonderful to have known people who were so hard to part with? Dr. Suess puts it this way, "Don't be sad because it's over; smile because it happened." How lucky that it happened here.



On behalf of Epiphany, Ed Hardin presented Bill Kremer with a gift certificate.



Friends, from left, Barb Renkert, Rev. Charles Wilson, Shary Stadler and Angela Murray.



Friends gathered with Bill and Diane in the Parish Hall to wish them well as they start a new life in San Diego.



Laura Milton and Sharon Applegate



Heather Angus, left, and Mary Neal Miller



Cindy Heffner, right, presented Diane with a book of memories—photos, cards and letters from congregants—that she had prepared.

Remembering Don Bauer

After some years of failing health, Donald Crain Bauer passed away September 6, and is mourned by a community which is the better for his presence. Any tribute to Don embraces his parents Bill and Louise, brothers Rod and Andy, his wife Jane and their children, Heather and Chuck, grandsons Will and Charlie, countless friends and associates and the Church of the Epiphany.

Several generations of the Bauer family have worshipped at Epiphany and clergy and congregants from that church and the Mechanicsburg Church of Our Saviour were welcomed to the Bauer's Hearthstone Farms for social occasions. Don was instrumental in the establishment of the Urbana Rotary Club's Freedom Grove Park and was designated as Steward for its continuing development. Don also took the lead in recruiting local corn producers to join Rotary's Acre of Corn Club. Its members annually donate the value of an acre of corn to support vaccination of children against polio worldwide. We pray for the repose of the soul of Donald Crain Bauer and for God's peace to comfort the bereaved.

Don and Joanie Stadler share a private moment before Epiphany congregants arrive for a supper party at Hearthstone Farm.



Stewardship in 2020

How does one interpret stewardship nine months into a Pandemic; national fatalities exceeding 200,000? How can civic, service, charitable, governmental and religious organizations steward their resources to give the most help to businesses which have had to close, some permanently, the unemployed without savings or benefits, the homeless, the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled.

The free Community Meal program has continued at both Our Saviour and Epiphany as carryout rather than dining in. Epiphany's response has been minimal, in some measure because the social aspect is no longer part of the event. So, the church recently supplemented its meal program by donating \$10,000 to Urbana's Caring Kitchen. This non-profit organization provides daily food, maintains a homeless shelter and clothing for those in need, a growing number in Champaign County.

Some thoughts about school

Mechanicsburg schools are open with in-person classes. Amy Boeck has been substitute teaching four days a week. Her impressions are encouraging.

"Everyone is masked and very good about cleaning, hand sanitizing and social distancing." She said, "so I feel okay in most classrooms. I open the windows, too. I'm sorry for the smallest students, starting their school careers like this. And the oldest, the seniors, who won't have the traditional prom or graduation ceremonies. But it's for the best and they will form memories from the good and the bad."

Community News

The Woman's Tourist Club honored Rev. Mimi Ault, pastor of the United Methodist Church in the Village at its Empowered Woman Banquet Sept. 28.

Rev. Ault has officiated at annual Maundy Thursday services of the Methodist Church, Epiphany and Our Saviour held alternately at the Methodist Church and Our Saviour.

We are grieved to report the August death of Charles R. Wibrig, Sr.. He is the husband of the late Ruthie Wibrig of Our Saviour, While not a member of Our Saviour, Chuck was "a good friend of the church and the community." We share the sorrow of their daughter, Betsy Wibrig Kovacic and son, Charles (Chip) Wibrig, Jr.

A reason to rejoice

By virtue of the recent birth of Nora Ann Hardin, Ed and Rev. Nancy have joined the Cluster ranks of proud grandparents. Nora Ann was born at 7:20 a.m., September 25, the daughter and first child of Paul and Brittany Hardin.

She is a dark-haired beauty, weighing in at a prosperous 9 pounds, 21 inches. Many prayers have been answered with this occasion and baby, parents and grandparents are well and busy assuming their new lifetime roles. A child is a gift from God and this child will be nurtured in His presence.

*Brittany and Paul Hardin
with daughter Nora Ann.*



Belltower qualifies for Diocesan grant

Cluster Administrator Amy Boeck reports that the diocese will fund a substantial portion of Our Saviour's proposed belltower restoration. The cost is estimated at \$32,115. The diocesan grant of \$27,115 was confirmed in September with the remaining \$5000 to be paid by the church. The Champaign Preservation Alliance has awarded \$3000 to support the work and that will cover over half of the church's portion.

Amy said work on the belltower may begin this fall if weather permits, but the vestry is confident the tower can tolerate another winter. Meyer Restoration Inc. of Piqua has been engaged for the job. The firm offers restoration and preservation of commercial and private buildings. It uses laser scanning to determine and document conditions, design engineers to maintain architectural authenticity and specialists in carpentry, masonry, cleaning and sealing.

The grants do not cover renewal of the narthex plaster, damaged by water. That and any other interior work may be done next spring when the rest of the project is complete. The belltower was part of the original structure built in 1893. It was designated by historian/author Judge Evan P. Middleton as "one of the most distinctive churches in the city."

Good news from Eileen

Heather Angus reports that former Epiphany member Eileen James, now a resident of Erie, Pennsylvania, is rounding third and heading for home after months being benched with a staph infection in her foot.

In late August, Eileen emailed, "The wounds are officially healed! I see the surgeon September 2 and if the bone is healed, no more boot!"

The September message said: "It's official! I can begin wearing shoes for one hour today, two hours tomorrow. I can take a shower tomorrow and will soon be able to drive. Overall health is good!"

Eileen praises her daughter, Amy, for all the care and support during the weeks in a wheelchair. She also appreciates the Cluster friends who have included her in their prayers.

Heather suggests prayers of thanksgiving as well as those for Eileen's total recovery. Heather also secured an email address for Eileen. You can reach her at havetimetomusttravel@gmail.com.

Testing

Testing is helping to determine the location, scope and severity of Covid 19 and the resources needed to control the spread.. Coronavirus is also testing the depth, the breadth and the reality of Christianity. Living up to our calling can be tough and lonely. But a Christian knows where to go for strength, patience and the peace beyond understanding.

Wise words from our first president

George Washington demonstrated wisdom, insight and foresight as this infant nation soon stumbled into the pitfalls and temptations of self-government. Pitfalls and temptations that still exist, as Washington knew they would.

He spoke candidly of the potential for “mischief: from political parties, foreign countries and regional alliances that could threaten the Unity critical to the survival of a democracy. He cautioned his and future generations to be guided by that “spark of celestial fire called conscience.”

And without apology, named Morality and Religion as the essential support of administrators. No distinctions of place, party or power were ever to be placed above the name American, so hard-earned in blood and bone.

As we accept the privilege and responsibility of choosing our leaders, let us be aware of the Wisdom of the past and the Truth of the present, remembering that governments derive their power from the consent of the governed.

THE CHRONICLE

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*Wherefore, by their fruits
ye shall know them.*

Matthew 7:20

