

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.”

Imperfect Daily Prayer



When we are together in our usual way, I sometimes cringe inside if I lose my place while reading the gospel or drop a wafer or see that my stole has been crooked the whole time. I thought that these last six weeks had cured me of all that, but then I reviewed Sunday’s sermon video and realized that I was looking too high—I was actually looking at a picture of all of you that I had taped above the camera, so the video is a little wonky. And I get to learn and *move on*.

I know the greatest blessings happen when I let go of getting it right. Just last Friday, I was on-

line all day with a trusted group of colleagues with whom I have been doing continuing education for seven years. We all needed hair-cuts. Smoke alarms and tele-phones sounded, internet service cut out and back in, children and pets wandered in and out of the background and foreground, and we relaxed and made room for it all.

Leading us was one beloved teacher and mentor who had retired two years ago when he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Two years ago, I wrote a note to him via his caring bridge site, then just quietly backed away and prayed and waited. He had successful surgery and treatment, got better, even teaches a spin class now. And here he was, two years later, subbing during a pandemic, working hard with my small group and staying overtime.

He is a deeply faithful and honest person who is back from the edge---and he will be the first to add, “for now,” to that. In the midst of our time together he said things like, “We really don’t know if we’ll be here next year,”

and, “While I was sick, if I thought of someone, I would call them. No agenda. All I had to say was, ‘I was thinking of you, and thought I’d call,’ and that was more than enough. Maybe I would bring up a memory I had of them, and even if that memory was not accurate, they would be off and talking, the most natural thing in the world, even if we had not spoken in decades.”

He wasn’t waiting for perfection. He didn’t have time to wait. He was grabbing the moment and thanking God for it. And, that timely imperfection has been a huge part of his healing.

During this time of imposed retreat, I am trying hard to remember to give thanks for every moment, and to remember the Talmud’s teaching to recite 100 blessings a day. Upon waking, for the Kibble as I pour it into the dogs’ bowls, for coffee, for laundry, I try to remember to give thanks. I am more and more aware of God’s messy grace, and of the opportunity to be grateful in the moment when there is no way I can get something “perfect.” *(con’t on page 2)*

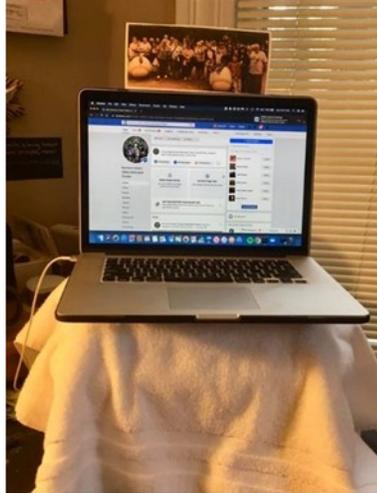
Imperfect daily prayer

(con't from Page 1)

My prayer life now wears sweatpants and leaves dog toys on the floor. Instead of Eucharist, I am trying to remember to thank God for that, um, *interesting* soup I made. And, now, after hearing my teacher's voice, I am screwing up the courage to pick up the phone. I will, with God's help. It is most definitely time.

Christa

Reverend Elizabeth's Sunday sermons come to us from her unique home stu-



A FRIEND IN NEED

Longtime friend Don Bauer is in residence at Oakwood Village taking some rehabilitation after a bit of illness.

Oakwood doesn't provide computer connections and because all such facilities are under quarantine to outwit the ubiquitous Covid19, Don can't even have visitors!

But mail can zip right past quarantine to be our proxy visitors to Don and Jane—Room 70, Oakwood Village 1500 Villa Rd., Springfield, 45503.

From the Bishop

April 22, Bishop Breidenthal emailed a second pastoral letter following Ohio Governor DeWine's announcement of the May first beginning of Phase I of Ohio's "return to business as usual." The Bishop, while acknowledging the easing of restrictions, "extends my request that you continue to abstain from physically gathering for worship, and to thank you for abiding by this request."

Phase I guidelines permit religious gatherings, assuming adherence to social distancing. The Bishop appreciates the permission, but "feels strongly that, as a religious body, the Diocese of Southern Ohio must go the extra mile to take every measure not to spread COVID19."

As of May 1, unless Phase I is postponed, the Bishop will permit live-streaming or prerecorded streaming of church services from the interior of our church buildings with a maximum of five people, physically distant from one another: one officiant, one or two readers, a musician and a technician. Masks must be worn, and hand sanitizer or hand washing must be used frequently."

We are to continue to limit worship to Morning Prayer or one of the other Daily Offices. The Bishop shares the hardship of fasting from the eucharist, but quotes Bishop Singh of the Diocese of Rochester: "Our fundamental sacrament is the word of God, and Jesus himself, walking beside us. Bishop Breidenthal calls us to use this time to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" God's holy word in scripture, prayer and give generously to those less fortunate than ourselves (BCP, P. 236).

He closes by acknowledging the "many painful cancellations in the Episcopal church, the worldwide Anglican Communion and locally in our diocese this summer: EYE (Episcopal Youth Event); the Lambeth Conference and summer camp programs at Procter. It is hard, but we will come through this stronger. Please be assured of my prayers, and my pride in you for your witness in so many ways to the resurrection of our Lord."

Easter Blessings, +Tom

Celebrating a Community Meal anniversary

A cadre of masked volunteers at Our Saviour prepared carry out meals for about 70 guests April 29. An elegantly decorated cake marked the ninth anniversary of the Community Meal program at Our Saviour. “It’s been a partnership with every aspect of Mechanicsburg,” said Amy Boeck, program coordinator. “We are so grateful for the continuing participation of many longtime benefactors including Hemisphere Coffee Roasters, Oasis Food Pantry, Our Saviour and our dedicated committee.”



Typical of the tasty, satisfying meals offered were buns filled with beef brisket prepared by Bill Miller, green beans, potato chips, fruit cups and anniversary cake. Bill also provided the buns, beans and cake. At the side door Todd Boeck and former Mechanicsburg mayor Greg Kimball distributed boxes of food. Pictured in the kitchen, creatively masked and keeping their distance, are, l to r, Jodi Compton, Tony Rozmus, Elizabeth Smith, Emily Rozmus, Sarah Bradford, Dusty Hurst and Amy Boeck, who was taking the picture. Amy spoke for the delegation when she said, “We felt blessed to be able to work together and see each other!”



Greg Kimball, left, and Todd Boeck

And God was pleased



David F., a writer for Kairos’ devotional booklet *Prisoner to Prisoner*, was puzzled by a familiar verse in Mark: *And there came a voice from heaven, saying, thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* “This event occurs before Jesus even started his ministry,” ponders David, “and all the things we tend to focus on have not taken place---but God says, he is well pleased. We hardly ever think about what Jesus had to do to get ready---and why it pleased God so much.” David explains that when he is released, he will study for the ministry. He says, “I think I’m starting to understand why God was so pleased. Preparing for the ministry, I realize all the hard work that is put in ahead of time, learning to be receptive to what God wants me to know. Being so full of ourselves it’s hard to empty out and let God fill us until we understand who we are.” David is discovering that before the baptism at the Jordan, the wilderness testing, choosing disciples, preaching and teaching and healing, Jesus was an innocent child, learning Jewish family life and traditions; a youth in the temple glimpsing a future only he could comprehend; a young carpenter learning his trade; a son, brother, grandson, neighbor, friend and teacher in the synagogue, learning people. Jesus was “putting in the hard work ahead of time,” struggling to “be receptive to what God wanted him to know; to let God fill him until he understood who he was.” Even before Jesus began God’s work, God was pleased. Or was it all God’s work? May David’s ministry prosper; he, too, is being prepared by doubt and hard experience---and God will surely be pleased.

Paddy remembers

According to the popular press, the Pandemic has folks in the United Kingdom growing fruits and vegetables much as they did during World War II when Dig for Victory was a slogan. Rationing of meats, milk, eggs, butter and cheese reduced the quality and quantity of food available to those on the home front and garden produce supplemented their diets.

Paddy Barr of Epiphany, a native of England, remembers those gardens. She recently wrote an article for the Urbana Citizen with a front-page banner headline, *Time to return to Victory Gardens?* The war was a reality for Paddy. She lived many miles from Liverpool, but vividly recalls the sky lighting up when German bombs exploded on targets in that city. She never left home without her gasmask.



Gardening on the lawn

“As a young girl growing up in Cheshire, England during the war, I remember how everyone’s yards were growing food, not grass. It was such a tremendous war effort by private citizens. That’s how they got their name---Victory Gardens or War Gardens.

“The program took hold in the United Kingdom and spread to Ireland, Canada, Australia and the United States. Many schools around the country dug up playgrounds to plant Victory Gardens and used what they grew for school lunches.

“Others improvised using window boxes, clay pots, roof tops and even the occasional bomb crater. The foods were shared in the community. The possibilities were endless. The government printed

recipe books on how to make tasty meals and how to can the extra food for winter. There were tips on what seeds to grow in different climates. Maybe we could do the same thing now at this time of stress and uncertainty.

“A good selection would be veggies like tomatoes, beets, carrots, lettuce, peas, cabbage, broccoli and, if you are skillful, cauliflower. Swiss chard and kohlrabi are easy to grow. What about fruit?
 “Put in raspberry and blackberry bushes, but do practice ‘social distancing’ as, if planted close, they will cross pollinate. Strawberries and blueberries are also excellent choices. Not enough room for strawberries? Put them in flower beds. They also make excellent ground cover---with a bonus of fresh berries to eat!

“Urbana’s Market Street Gardens are fine examples of this kind of small plot and show how much food can be grown in a small area. Perhaps, as we did during the war, groups of neighbors could work together to make residential Victory Gardens, sharing the harvest.” Paddy suggests using the Internet to learn more about Victory Gardens. “It’s fascinating to read all that was done with the food ordinary citizens grew in wartime and to see what a community can do together today.”



Paddy is standing fourth from left in this picture of Master Gardeners visiting a greenhouse in St. Paris. Photo courtesy of the Urbana Citizen.

The rest of the story

Paul Harvey, former ABC radio news anchor, often closed broadcasts with “the rest of the story,” giving the surprise ending of a news item.

The Chronicle recently had a Paul Harvey experience. When Chronicle staffer Amy Boeck learned that Victory Gardens were to be a topic for the May issue, she offered this information:

“My Great Uncle Andrew S. Wing, brother of my Grandfather David Wing, was Secretary, Manager of the National Victory Garden Institute in the United States during World War II. I found this Internet article that Uncle Andrew had written for Modern Mechanix in 1944.”

There it was! The Paul Harvey surprise sequel to Paddy’s story! Amy provided the link <http://blog.modernmechanix.com/?s=planning+your+%2744> and the article blossomed onto the screen.

Do read it. It explains and encourages participation in this vital war effort. And offers some good technical advice. Andrew Wing knew soils, climates, rainfall, plant life and seeds. Yes, Uncle Andrew knew his subject, even the habits of the critters that

Bread bakers of Champaign County, arise! Create a National Loaf for America battling Covid19. A delicious, healthy food with yeast to leaven our spirits!



by Andrew S. Wing, Secretary-Manager National Victory Garden Institute

attack gardens. He warns, in wartime terms, “Blitz those invading insects.”

Another Wing ancestor, Joseph Wing, was also an innovator in farm crops. The family’s agricultural heritage is impressive as is the enduring faith of this generation which continues to love and support Our Saviour: John Wing, who still farms the family acreage; Amy Boeck, Emily Rozmus and Sarah Bradford. As Paul Harvey would say, “And now you know---the rest of the story.”



A National Loaf?

Hand in hand with World War II Victory Gardens in the UK was a kind of brown bread designated Britain’s National Loaf. Food historians note that the dense, dark brown, whole wheat National Loaf, introduced in 1942, was not popular. A 92-year-old Englishman remembers it as “grainy and a bit mushy...it wasn’t very nice,” adding, “Most things in war weren’t very nice, mind you.” Food in the UK is again scarce and expensive due to the Pandemic. A small bakery in Scotland made a few loaves from the old WWII National Loaf recipe---salt, water and yeast added to the 85% brown bran flour. He sold the first batch and received 400 requests for the bread. Now it’s made and sold for \$1 a loaf and is free to the jobless.

Seasons of the Church Year

Last in a series by Heather Angus

PENTECOST

Pentecost, from the Greek word *pentekostos* meaning fiftieth, begins on the fiftieth day of the Easter Season. Pentecost could be considered the birthday of the church, commemorating the day of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the early followers of Jesus.

The disciples had come to Jerusalem for Shavuot, a Jewish Spring Harvest Festival. There was a second harvest, but Rabbinic tradition ignored scripture and decreed that Pentecost offerings had to be made from old grain saved from previous spring crop.

The disciples were gathered in a house while the festival was being celebrated outside in the streets. The day unfolds as described in the Acts of the Apostles:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.



The liturgical color of Pentecost is generally red, symbolizing joy and the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Wikipedia informs us that in the Middle Ages, cathedrals and great churches throughout

Western Europe were fitted with a peculiar architectural feature known as a Holy Ghost hole: a small circular opening in the ceiling that symbolized the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the midst of the congregation.



*Holy Ghost hole,
Church of St. Peter and
St. Paul in Austria.*

At Pentecost, these Holy Ghost holes would be decorated with flowers and sometimes a dove figure would be lowered through the hole into the church while the narrative of Pentecost was read.

The Sunday after Pentecost is called Trinity Sunday. The season of Pentecost begins on the Monday following Pentecost Sunday and continues for fifty 50 days, as many as twenty-eight Sundays, seven weeks---depending on the date of Easter.

The period after Pentecost is called Ordinary Time. This is not included in the Prayer Book. A website called ThoughtCo. explains that it is named ordinary not because it is unimportant or uninteresting, but the Sundays after Pentecost are numbered. Latin for a numbered series is *ordinal*, which comes from another Latin word, *ordos*, which gives us the English word order.

Ordinary Time, then, represents “the ordered life of the church, neither feasting (Christmas, Easter) nor penance (Advent, Lent), but in watchfulness and expectation of the second coming of Christ.

“It is also called the green season because after Pentecost, the church, enlivened by the Holy Spirit, began to grow and spread to all nations.”

Rags, a second life

A recent article by Geoff Dyer really struck a nerve. He recalls how his parents repaired and mended and preserved everything---from cars to plumbing, to torn trousers and father's frayed shirt collars.

My parents were equally self-reliant, and all within our home were taught their skills: how to drive a car, change a tire, sew, repair and alter clothing, grow, prepare and preserve food, make music, clean house, wash and iron clothes, milk a cow and other useful things.

The Pandemic has, in a way, thrown us back a few generations and what we learned then is valuable now. Geoff relates how he bought an expensive, brand name shirt that gradually faded, frayed and split. "It was ready for its last incarnation: as a duster and a rag." He said. As we did at home, he cut off the buttons and put them in a can. We kept ours in a quart Mason jar and I spent many a childhood hour sorting and stringing the prettiest ones.

Geoff's buttonless shirt went into the ragbag. A ragbag! Part of my past! Ours were burlap and housed in an upstairs storage room. They held vintage clothing, lace and sheer curtains, quilts, old fur pieces and elegant beaded handbags. We "dressed to the nines" and made afternoon calls.

Ragbags figured in another favorite pastime. Come a rainy afternoon, I gathered books, Little Women or Heidi or Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, a handkerchief for the sad parts, an apple or raw potato (peeled), and, perched on a ragbag, spent hours reading.

Geoff's repurposed shirt brings us to his point, "A lifestyle of galloping consumption is not only unsustainable, it also fails to make anyone happy. A button jar, on the other hand, is a source of considerable happiness, as is using a much-loved piece of clothing as a duster.

"I love the way you don't have to think about cleaning in order to clean," he said. "I love it that after two hours, you have unfailingly



achieved something. I love knowing that the rags under the sink are waiting to step up.

"Shirts in the closet are comfortable in the knowledge that when they are worn out, they will have a functioning afterlife."

I hope you have a ragbag with a worn, much-loved piece of clothing. Take it out, cut off the buttons (start a collection), and let that garment know that, it, like you, can look forward to a functioning afterlife. S. L. J.



Academic encore

They did it again---Emily Westfall and Gwen Westfall, Cecilia Bradford and Will Boeck were named to the Mechanicsburg Schools Honor Roll for the third quarter. Well done, Emily, Gwen, Cecilia and Will.

Community Meals on hold

In an effort to reduce the spread of Covid19 and protect those who sponsor, serve and attend, Epiphany is suspending the free monthly Community Meals until further notice. The announcement comes from Ed Hardin, coordinator of the Community Meal program,

It was a hard decision to make, but Ed assures us that it is temporary and that the suppers and socializing will resume as soon as conditions in Champaign County are determined to be safe for us to be together again.

A hymn story

After Easter, this important day on the church calendar has occasioned beloved hymns. Pentecost, marking the descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' disciples, inspired Anglican minister Rev. George Croly to write the text for Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart.

Rev. Croly was an Irishman, well educated at Trinity College and a published author of novels, poems and historical material.

His fundamentalist theology and fiercely conservative politics won him the task of opening St. Stephens Church in one of the worst parts of London. It had been closed for over 100 years.

He answered the call and sent forceful messages echoing wall to wall. Before long, St.

Stephens was filled wall to wall with his followers. Late in life, Rev. Croly was unhappy with the church's hymnal and he wrote and published a book of hymns and poems for worship. We are so grateful that this one hymn from that collection survives:

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move,
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,
And make me love thee as I ought to love.*

*Teach me to feel that thou are always nigh,
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear---
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh,
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.*

THE CHRONICLE

A publication of the Northern Miami Valley Episcopal Cluster

230 Scioto St.

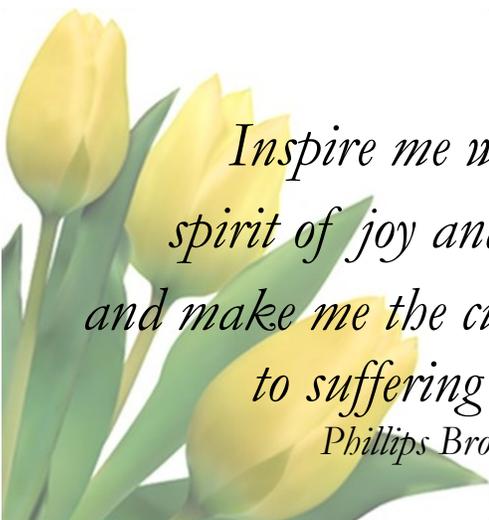
Urbana, OH 43078

Printed by



1333 N. Main St.

Urbana, Ohio 43078



*Inspire me with the
spirit of joy and gladness
and make me the cup of strength
to suffering souls.*

Phillips Brooks