

St. John's Good News



September
2021

From Rev. John...

Dear Friends,

Greetings. For the first part of this summer, we were comforted and encouraged by the falling Covid infection rate. Vaccines had become available to all who wanted them, and the vast majority of New Englanders embraced the opportunity to be inoculated. On June 18th, the graph representing the number of reported cases started to rise. And we now find ourselves in a time of uncertainty.

It is encouraging to know that the likelihood of serious illness for vaccinated persons is very low. It is also reassuring to see that more people have decided to receive the vaccination. Even with these encouraging signs, there are several breakthrough cases in Essex County which give us cause for concern.

At the present time, we shall continue having our in-person worship. Our services will also broadcast through Zoom for those who are unable to join us or feel uncomfortable about their risk of infection. We are inviting worshippers to resume wearing masks and will have them available as parishioners enter St. John's.

During Lent several of us gathered on Zoom once a week for the service of Compline. This is the nightly worship practiced by many in monastic communities around the world. Zoom has allowed folks to join us from their own homes and offer the day and our concerns to God before going to bed. We shall be resuming this practice on Wednesday evenings at 8:45pm, starting September 1st. We invite those who would like to join us to email the church office to receive a Zoom link. We also suggest that you invite any interested friends and family-even those who are scattered throughout the country-to join us as well.

Peace,

John+

Sunday worship remains at 10am, in-person and virtually: All are welcome to participate, and seating capacity is now at 75. The service also continues to broadcast via Zoom, with weekly link options shared by email.

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:
@StJohnsSaugus

Facebook: St. John's
Episcopal Church
Saugus

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Founder's Day

The Town of Saugus is planning to resume our celebration of Founder's day on Saturday, September 11th. St. John's church has reserved a table and is planning to have a presence in the town center. We have also be serving ice cream at the church. We are seeking parishioners to help for half an hour at either of these venues. If you are able to assist, please let the church office now. We would greatly appreciate it.

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Compline

Rev. Beach will offer Compline each Wednesday at 8:45 p.m. starting on September 1st. All are welcome. Please contact the office for the special Zoom link.

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Town of Saugus Covid Memorial Service
September 19th 7 p.m.

In front of the Saugus Town Hall

We shall remember all who have died during this past year and celebrating the heroic work of essential service workers and first responders. Please come and show your support during this brief service in which we give thanks for this community.

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Book Study Group via Zoom sponsored by the Saugus Public Library starting in early October.

Look for upcoming announcements:

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism
by Dr. Robin DiAngelo (Author), Michael Eric Dyson (Foreword)

Cont'd.

The New York Times best-selling book exploring the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality.

In this “vital, necessary, and beautiful book” (Michael Eric Dyson), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and “allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to ‘bad people’ (Claudia Rankine). Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how white fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively.

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Feast of St. Francis, Blessing of Pets

Sunday, October 3rd at 10 a.m.

Join us to celebrate St. Francis’s devotion to all living creatures. We will bless our scaly, fin or furry family members! Kindly use appropriate pet carriers, and dog leashes are essential.

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Lobster Roll Sale

Friday, September 24th ~ 7am - Noon

\$12.00 per roll

Order deadline: Tuesday, Sept. 21st

Includes one lobster roll, a bag of chips, condiments, and a homemade brownie.

Call or email office: 781-233-1242 or StJohnsSaugus@gmail.com

Orders must be picked up by 12pm on the 24th.

Free local delivery for orders of 5 or more.

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St. John's is Collecting Donations for ALS

In honor and in memory of long-time St. John's member, Christine Senftleben who died from ALS in 2020 after a 2 year courageous battle, we are collecting donations now through the end of September to send to the Mass Chapter of ALS. Collection baskets will be available in the back of the church as well as at coffee hour for your donations on Sundays. If you would like to make a donation by check, please make the check out to: St. John's Episcopal Church and add ‘Donation to ALS’ on the memo line on the bottom left of your check. At the end of September, Paul Felci will write one check from St. John's and send it to the Mass Chapter of ALS.

Thank you - Julia Aston

Prayers from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry

For Haiti

Eternal God, send forth your Spirit to encourage and strengthen the people of Haiti in these difficult times. We pray especially for those impacted by the recent earthquake. Encourage and strengthen those who help and support others. In your mercy, receive the souls of those who have died; comfort their families and loved ones. Surround with your presence the sick and suffering. Aid the work of those who still search and rescue. Empower the medical and aid workers and all who labor to heal.

For the people of Afghanistan

Eternal God, hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. There is a profound humanitarian crisis. Countless people, mostly women and children, are now fleeing and vulnerable. The lives of many are now endangered. The hopes of many are forgone. Send your Spirit, Lord, to rally the resolve of the nations of the earth to find pathways to save human lives, protect human rights and to resolve the hardships of those seeking refuge, asylum and safety. Hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. This we pray as followers of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

"Act generously, boldly": A message from Bishop Harris on Haiti & Afghanistan response

Aug. 24, 2021

Jesus said, "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." -John 6

Last Sunday, as Tropical Storm Henri battered our sister dioceses of Rhode Island, Connecticut and Western Massachusetts, I was sitting out the storm at St. Barnabas's Church in Falmouth following a regional Confirmation service there the day before. The Gospel lesson (above) was read, and in his sermon the rector, the Rev. Will Mebane, relating the Gospel to current issues, said:

The one-two punch of a devastating earthquake and deadly tropical storm has not been enough to move the hearts of some to care about our neighbors in Haiti. As a member of my prayer group stated, "Haiti can't seem to catch a break!" Once again women, children and men are not only left homeless but without food and drinking water.

Cont'd.

Jesus says, give drink to the thirsty, feed the hungry, care for the sick and injured. That, for some, even some that call themselves Christians, is too much to ask. They would prefer to turn away rather than send a donation to Episcopal Relief & Development or another organization responding to the call of Jesus to care for our neighbors.

Who among us has not felt a pit in our stomachs as we have watched events in Afghanistan unfold this past week? The tears streaming down the faces of men desperate to escape possible beheadings and torture for assisting the United States in its 20-year war have on occasion been too much for me to bear. Anguished mothers and fathers pleading for their children, including infants, to be lifted over fences surrounding the only relative haven of safety existing in Afghanistan leave me with lumps in my throat that choke off oxygen.

There are those that turn away from the command of Jesus that we welcome the stranger, preferring again to believe the lies that these women, children and men should be left behind because they are a threat to our security. As Brother James Koester, SSJE wrote, "To be a Christian in our culture is no easy thing, because it demands of us to live in faith, instead of fear; to live in hope, instead of despair; to live in love, instead of enmity."

As Christians, we are called by the Scriptures and our baptism to care for one another and to provide for those in need. Over and over again Jesus' words call us to act generously, and boldly from our faith to alleviate suffering. Jesus' familiar Parable of the Good Samaritan carries one of the many mandates he gives us and demands us to emulate in our times. To be a Christian is to turn to Christ, particularly when it is difficult, rather than to turn away in apathy because it is hard to answer the call to be a Good Samaritan in our own day: to live in faith, and to give hope and love to others.

I ask you to keep open your hearts to those who are suffering in despair and in crisis in both Haiti (our largest diocese in The Episcopal Church) and Afghanistan. Much will be demanded from us as Christians and as a country to respond and to receive refugees and asylum seekers.

I ask you to pray for them and those working to give aid through governmental and nongovernmental organizations. And I especially plead that you give of yourself through donations to Episcopal Relief & Development, our church's worldwide relief agency: www.episcopalrelief.org. Below are links* for information to assist in the response to these crises in Haiti and Afghanistan, as well as prayers from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry.

May we all respond as Christ wants us to, and demands we do.

Yours in Christ,

+Gayle

The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris, Bishop Suffragan

*At Diomass.org

Saints and Cities of the Bible Word Search

M R S S Q M I C H A E L T M J V P
 N D U K V D G B E T H E L O F K R
 M C F M V C J O M Y F C E A W A D
 L Z X I P H I L I P N D P B U Z H
 G A R F Q H G I M A T T H I A S X
 J S G S Y P T A G R F N E P O O N
 S E F F H E N H R J X X S Z J G U
 K P R N J I F I Q B G Y U M P Z Y
 Q U F E P O N P C C E R S J J S U
 I I R T M I H A X O J L E C C F F
 J O P P A I N N R A D I A G A W R
 S V B A R N A B A S N E H S O H A
 W C O R I N T H B Z G D M Q E R W
 J C T M Z F H E B R O N R U C I Y
 B A R T H O L O M E W E Q E S X S
 F W I Z V L A R S A B S F X W X P
 N Z X H W D S S T E P H E N Q G C

Andrew ~ Arbela ~ Barnabas ~ Bartholomew ~ Bethel ~ Corinth
 Ephesus ~ Gregory ~ Hebron ~ Jeremiah ~ John ~ Joppa ~ Larsa
 Matthias ~ Michael ~ Moab ~ Nicodemus ~ Philip ~ Shinar ~ Stephen

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Officers: The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge, Daniel Casey, Sr. Warden, William St. Clair, Jr. Warden, Phil Littlehale, Treasurer, Paul Felci, Assistant Treasurer, and Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry: Rose Holt (2022), Duana LeMay (2024), Donna Manoogian (2024), Samantha Martin (2023), Kristina Palazzo (2023), Sandy St. Clair (2022), and Kenneth Webber (2023)