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A Little Prayer

Amidst our fear, disappointment, confusion, uncertainty, grief, anger, frustration and more... May we be given peace and understanding. May we act with humility to not just preserve our own safety and health, but to look beyond ourselves and think of how our actions will affect others. May we be alert to the ways we may help those around us, and give us the grace to step forward without hesitation to be men and women for and with others.

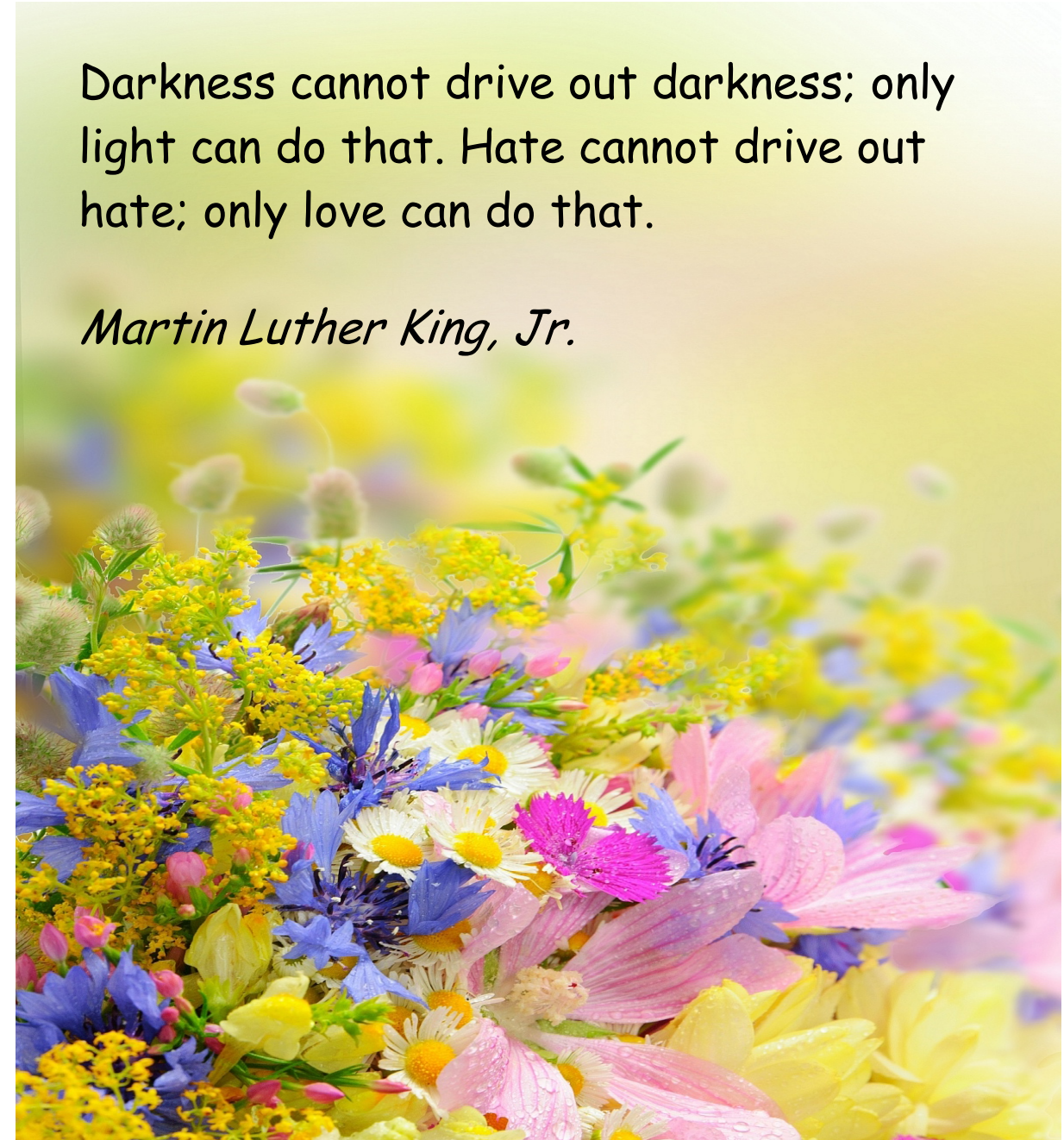
Onward

*A newsletter for and
about the people of
St. Peter's Church*

SUMMMER 2019

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Church School

Well, my dear Church School families, it has been a strange 3 months! Thank you for the feedback, encouragement and patience as I worked to figure out the best way to continue Church School. It hasn't been perfect, but hopefully the children have gotten something from this "new" Church School. I am praying that we can figure out a way to be together safely in the fall. The Church School lessons and stories will continue to be available on the church website so if your children want a little quiet time with God and church they can "go" to Church School any time :) <http://stpetersef.org/christian-education/sunday-school-lessons/>. I plan to record a few more stories and/or lessons over the course of the summer, but I'm not sure on the details of how that will look quite yet, so stay tuned :)

Thank you TEACHERS!! We had a wonderful herd of teachers for Church School before all was changed. I'd like to thank, Michelle Spell, Serena Watkinson & Emily Blake who each gave an entire 3 months to teaching PreK-K, and Laura Copeland, Christina Doyle & Quinn Egan who rotated through the 4th-6th grade. Each teacher brought special gifts to the class. We had so many who jumped in for a week or two (or more) to help as substitute teachers for me in the 1st-3rd grade or as greeters and I am so grateful: Kevin Hersh, Carolyn Wescott, Sarah Blake, Mary Shearin, Christine Albano, Stephanie Cutting, Sally Cutting, Patty Vitiello, Sammy Vitiello & Maggie Wohltmann. As a parish we are blessed to have so many involved with this critical ministry!

I wish you all well as the school year winds down. I encourage you to continue to pray with your children and remind them they can always talk to God. I continue to be available to all my families through the summer. I miss you all and pray for you often! Be safe, be strong and stay well (physically, mentally & spiritually).

With Love & Faith,
Dana Leach
scottdanaL@aol.com
home: 973-364-7544



Family Church

THANK YOU!! I'm so proud of the children of St. Peter's! They serve the church for Family Church with such purpose, seriousness and pride. The ushers care for us all beautifully, the readers proclaim the word with care, and the elements are delivered safely while bringing a smile to every face in the church. We have AMAZING children at St. Peter's!!

Vacation Bible School

I'm very sad to say we have decided to cancel VBS for this summer :(This was a VERY hard decision. VBS is so important to SPY, church families, nursery school families and many others from outside of St. Peter's, but with the current COVID-19 pandemic we can't picture a way in which we can ensure the safety of all and still have an effective program. We have already purchased the starter kit and puppet so plan to come back strong next year! We will miss the joy we all feel as we do science, share a snack, run amok at rec, sing, create and pray together, but we can stay connected by strong memories of previous years and anticipation of being together again. As we learned last summer in VBS, *Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us!* (Ephesians 3:20). May you all continue to feel His power within you until we can be together again!

With Love, *Dana Leach*

Littlest Parishioners' Playgroup

This group is for families with children age 3 and younger (older siblings welcome). It meets the first Saturday of the month from 9:30-11:00 AM often in the nursery school playground or upper room, depending on weather. Although we have not met in several months due to COVID-19 we are monitoring CDC & diocesan recommendations. I will send an email with plans for a July gathering when it gets closer (which will be on July 11th NOT the 4th, due to the holiday). If you'd like to be added to the email distribution please let me know! Or if you have ideas on how this could work going forward so you and your children will feel safe, I'd love ideas!

Peace & Love, *Dana Leach*
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Don't forget when you order from Amazon to use Amazon Smile and choose St. Peter's Episcopal Church Essex Fells as your charity!

Learning How to “Be Church” in New Ways

A message from Father Morris

Dear People of St. Peter’s:

How does a church “be church” when it can’t “come to church” in the usual way? Step by step, we’re feeling our way forward, even as the possibility of meeting together beckons sometime in the next weeks, possibly months.

How has this time tested us? What has it brought forth in us? We are now three months, and counting, into this deadly pandemic. “The Covid-19 virus is still in charge, and will be until we find vaccines that are widely distributed” so that we reach the desired “herd immunity” which begins to put the brakes on the spread, according to our Bishop. The steps toward opening up the economy do not change that overarching reality. Our bishop is instant that re-gathering for worship must be ruled by safety first of all: we must not invite harm, as reckless pastors around the country have done, merely serving the virus’s hunger for new hosts.

We know that the building is not the church, but where the church meets. So what can we learn about “being church” even while not gathering together for worship. St. Peter’s has some of this in its communal DNA already. We’ve been “being church” in many ways. Our extensive pastoral support by staff and clergy which has continued by phone and even a few “visits” to porches and windows. Our Angel Food team has delivered meals, and teams have kept their appointments at Christine’s Kitchen, when allowed. Our 8 a.m. congregation has continued to gather, week by week, for a Zoom coffee hour which is a major social support for this small “church within a church,” and some have taken advantage of our 11 a.m. Zoom coffee hours. Many of you have attended online worship, both with our own weekly services and going to church at Washington National Cathedral, or even at the online worship of other parishes.

If you have dropped out of worshipping altogether, or taking an annual “summer vacation from church” I urge you to think again: it’s never been easier to attend worship in the summer than now—from home! Online worship, possibly live webcasts are very likely to be part of our future when the congregation gathers again, serving high-risk members and as a way to reach out to prospective members and people looking for a church.

When we return to the building, we must not see it as “going back to normal.” When this is all over—the pandemic, the economic consequences, the unmasking of the significant inequalities in our country—neither the church nor the society will be unchanged. We’ll return to familiar realities eventually, but what ongoing cautions and new possibilities will be before us. “We need to think of church more as a set ‘gatherings’ for different purposes including ‘service to others’ than going to a building,” said one younger priest at the weekly online gathering of the Diocesan clergy with the Bishop.

How will it express itself in new ways in a society where “going to Church” hasn’t been a widespread social norm for over a generation. And how can our experience in this pandemic help us find new ways to worship, learn, and serve? The pandemic is our wake-up call to imagine being church in expanded ways.

Blessings to all our OpShop Family,

Here we are...12 weeks, 84 days and 2,016 hours since the OpShop closed its doors on March 14th, but that doesn’t mean that work at the Shop came to a grinding halt. Quite the contrary. Our volunteers have remained the dedicated and committed, they have always been, so we could make sure the Shop will be ready to reopen as soon as we get the green light. We’re very proud of how the Shop looks, and now we are eager to share the fruits of our labor with our customers and friends.

We are very pleased to share in the news that NJ has entered Stage II of our Restart and Recovery which includes the reopening of non-essential retail businesses and allows customers inside their stores as of June 15th. The CDC and State have released guidelines to follow and we have put together our Post COVID-19 Reopening Procedures which have been sent to the Vestry. At this time, it is our plan to reopen on Saturday, June 20th. The light is about to turn green.

We were going to tell you all what our volunteers have been doing the past 3 months, but now it is time for us to look forward.

In times such as this, it is especially important to thank those who kept our mission alive even while the State and Country went into a temporary hibernation. In that spirit, we want to recognize the customers, parishioners and residents of the community who continued to generously donate. We also want to send a sincere thank you to the Vestry for approving the installation of air conditioners in the Shop. Toby West did a fantastic job installing the units and can now everyone can shop (and work) in the comfort of air conditioning. I KNOW!!!!

We’re hoping to make up for some of the lost time the next few months and now we will be able to keep the doors open with summer hours. We plan on staying open on Saturdays as usual, perhaps some Thursdays and we are also looking to add another weekday to the mix. In order to do that, we need a few more dedicated volunteers who are able to commit some time in July and August. Whether its once, twice or more each month, we need to put together a schedule that we can stick to and on which our customers can rely. So if you’re planning a stay-cation this year as we unwind from this crisis, consider volunteering at the OpShop. We need people to work on the floor when we are open but we also need people to work behind the scenes getting inventory ready to restock and replenish the floor. Calling on all Angels...moms who want to escape the family and house for a few hours (although we’re sure there are none of those out there, wink, wink), SPY Alumni, telecommuters and remote workers (who may need a breather from all the screen time), college and high school students home for the summer (or longer), and even you dads (who also may want an escape). We will be putting together our calendar for July and August if anyone is interested in committing some regular hours please call either Dawn (973-865-0587) or Stephanie (973-461-3243). We will announce our schedule in the weekly eblasts, along with our usual sales and weekly promotions.

Our “*new normal*” will look different. Of that we are certain. We hope everyone will understand that restrictions will be in place at least for the near future but we will try our best to still make your shopping experience welcome and enjoyable.

Blessings and See You Soon, *Stephanie and Dawn*, St Peters OpShop Co-Managers

Sprucing Up The Church

If you have driven by the church lately you would see hard working members of St. Peter's prepping and painting the wrought iron handrails outside the church. Many thanks to Vestry member Tim Stafford and parishioners Jack Brown and Kevin Hersh for volunteering their time and energy, to strip, sand and repaint, especially during these hot days! I would also like to thank John and Esther Pivarnik for their donation of 6 rosebushes which have been planted on the wall of our Garth.

Toby West, Property Manager

Search Committee

Good News! We have received 7 candidates from Canon Clark and the Interview Committee is in the process of reviewing. We plan on holding a zoom meeting this Wednesday, May 6th to go over each candidate. We ask that you prayerfully seek God's wisdom to guide us as we go forward into God's future together. Hope everyone is safe and healthy ~ till we meet again ~

God speed. *Pam Bayard*

Health and Healing

Angel Food has been serving those in need of food and essentials with gift cards and this has been well-received. Gift cards from Amazon were given in March and April. If you know of a need, please call Serena Watkinson (201-774-2018) or Maggie Wohltmann (973-769-8318). Please consider donating toward the purchase of a gift card or a gift card itself. You can also contact Serena and Maggie for donations also.

If someone wishes to be added to the prayer chain, please call the Church office or Kathy McLaughlin (kmcl27@aol.com).

While we are prevented from visiting hospitals, rehab centers and homes, it is a joy to speak with the sick and home bound and offer prayers and encouragement.

Please call me at 201-637-2962 to let me know if you are ill or just to talk.

Enjoy the summer and keep safe!

Rev. Susan Negrotto, Pastoral Assistant

When and How Will We Gather Again? Diocesan Guidelines for Church Services

as of this newsletter

Prayer itself can be personal and private. Keep praying!

But Christian worship is, first and foremost, communal. We are part of the Body of Christ.

When "love your neighbor as yourself" means protecting each other from harm, we must "fast" or "refrain" from the support of communal worship.

- Saving lives through preventing infection means "abundance of caution"
- Outdoor interments only; limit of 10 persons, including the Officiant, social distancing, masks
- Outdoor weddings only; limit of 10 persons, including Officiant, social distancing, masks
- No public baptisms at present; concerned laity may do baptisms of young infants at home
- Outdoor worship permissible, with limit of 25 persons, including ushers and leaders
- Social distancing in seating arrangements and masks for all required
- Signing up for the service beforehand necessary
- Multiple Sunday services for 25 people may be held
- Church building remains closed
- Online worship will still continue for the congregation
- When we return to the building, the size of each gathering will be limited and practice social distancing with masks
- We will refrain from:
 - * receiving Holy Communion, probably for the duration of the pandemic.
 - * congregational or choir singing (singing fills a larger space with breath moisture)
 - * physical exchange of the Peace
 - * laying on of hands and anointing in healing rituals
 - * coffee hours

A special Vestry Task Force will be working exploring the when and how of regathering for worship and meetings, in line with CDC, NJ and Diocesan protocols as applied to our local parish situation.

We hope to have a "welcoming home" Sunday in the fall, and perhaps a few smaller gatherings during the summer months.' If you do not already subscribe to our Life at St. Peter's" e-blasts, please email Terri Korenstein at eblast.stpeters@gmail.com to be sure you don't miss important updates as re-opening continues in New Jersey. For up to date Diocesan Covid-19 information: dioceseofnwark.org.

Rev. Robert Morris, D.D.

Resources for Church Members: Ways to Support Our Local Senior Community

Over time, many of us begin to experience mobility limitations, physical impairments and cognitive changes. Other needs arise as well in the midst of global pandemic.

Since not every senior has a family member to lean on, those in the church community can step up in a big way.

Below is a list of ways to plug in to help those in need:

Assistance with Aging-in-Place:

Pitch in to ensure the home of a senior who is aging in place is free from hazards.

[Common In-Home Injuries for Seniors and How to Prevent Them](#)
[11 Low-Cost, DIY Aging in Place Modifications](#)
[4 Questions to Ask About Senior Safety At Home](#)

Assistance with Daily Living:

The activities of [daily living](#) (e.g. eating, bathing, and dressing) are challenging without assistance.

[The 5 Tasks Seniors Need Help With the Most](#)
[18 Easy and Healthy Meals for Seniors](#)
[Protective Face Masks: Resources on Making and Wearing Them](#)
[Finding Transportation Services for Seniors](#)

Assistance with Social Isolation:

Unfortunately, [social isolation](#) has been linked to several physical and mental health issues in seniors; here are ways to help prevent this.

[Easy Ways to Help Seniors Stay Social](#)
[How To Avoid Loneliness And Social Isolation For Seniors](#)
[What to Put in a Care Package for Seniors](#)
[Tips to Help Seniors Boost Physical and Mental Health During Quarantine](#)

Best, Beverly Nelson
beverly@standupforcaregivers.org

Thank You

This is the last Onward that I will have the pleasure of doing for St. Peter's. After many years, I truly don't know how many, it is someone else's turn to enjoy this ministry. And, I truly have enjoyed it!

I was asked to take on this ministry by Arlene Lookup at a Craft Show Meeting at Sue Mazur's house which can tell you it was a while ago! Pat Alliotta, who was doing the Onward at that time, kindly showed me some tricks of the trade and got me going. When I started printing the Onward I made 300 copies, now I make 180. Ask a friend to church!

Thank you to everyone over the years that answered my emails and sent in articles, announcements, vestry notes, music information, pictures and lots of other fun stuff! I want to give a big thank you to Eileen Andersen and Kathy McLaughlin who were my "collators, folders, labelers, and stampers" every month, THANK YOU!

Peace and of course, stay safe!

Mallory Copeland



It's easier than ever to attend Sunday services! You don't even have to leave the comfort of home. Come along and join us on Sundays at 8 or 10 a.m. or view the video any time after 7 a.m. Sunday mornings through the week via the website link <http://stpetersef.org/sermons/>.

This week we have our last Family Church worship, with Church School readers and intercessors, recognition of our Church School teachers and graduates from High School and College, as well as Fr. Bob's sermon on "**God's Steadfast Faith.**"

Plus a special Zoom Coffee Hour from 11-11:45 a.m. focusing on how are you doing? What's going on at the Church? When will we ever gather together again, and how?

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86243484791?pwd=S0hTQ3RsbmFaTjYyTkZMZHIWL3Q4dz09>