

The Angelus

June 2018



What's Inside?

Reflections from Rev. Simpson – A tweet from our Presiding Bishop about ReclaimingJesus.org leads to an opportunity for some discussions over the summer.

From Our Senior Warden – Great news about an Interim Rector and our first Capital Campaign project!

Search Committee – Thanks to Focus Group participants and a promise to keep us informed as the process moves forward.

Environmental Stewardship – Did you know that Styrofoam never decomposes?

Inside Outreach – Come read about our incredible accomplishments, and remember that there is no Outreach meeting in June.

Acolytes – A call for new Acolytes.

Music – Music Pilgrimage 10 years later, Summer Choir, Call for Choristers, and Mass of the Month.

Supper Club – Come to supper, June 9th.

St. Francis Flock – Visit Poplar Springs Animal Sanctuary and Ongoing Activities.

The **Bargain Box** – Meet another volunteer and Outreach Sundays is moving for the summer.

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The **Angelus** is published 10 months a year.
Editors: Kathy Moch & Tim Smeltzer
Direct queries to the Church office or email to angelusnewsletter@yahoo.com and editor@cecrockville.org



Reflections from Rev. Simpson

Dear Friends and CEC Family,

I received the Confession of Faith “Reclaiming Jesus” via a tweet from our Bishop Mariann last week. It was created by our Presiding Bishop, The Most Rev. Michael Curry, along with leaders of many denominations and faith-based organizations in our country. An enclosed letter from Bishop Mariann gives great detail regarding the context of its design creation. The Confession emerged from an Ash Wednesday 2018 retreat, and as I read it, I sense the Spirit breathes into it as a Pentecost utterance as well. I find myself often conflicted by what I’m experiencing these days as an American and as a person of faith, and I want my principles as a disciple of Christ to guide my decisions and actions over all other allegiances. This Confession provides a framework for viewing the challenging issues in our national politics through a lens of the life and way of Christ. I know the way forward on any matter often falls short of the ideal. That being said, I find this Confession to bring light and opportunities for seeking “a more excellent way” in this land we love, according to the Lord we love and follow. I think as a starting point, it could provide opportunities for conversation as parishioners who approach these crucial issues from varying vantage points. Discussion guides are part of the resources offered with the Confession, on the web site ReclaimingJesus.org. The Confession may be found at the back of this *Angelus*.

If others would like to discuss this Confession together, perhaps we could do so on summer Sundays after the 10:00 a.m. service or between the 7:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services. Let me know if such an enterprise would interest you. Blessings to you in your summer journeys and times of work, rest, and re-creation; and as Harry Emerson Fosdick prayed, “God of grace and God of glory...grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days.” Amen.

From our Senior Warden

I am excited to tell you that the Rev. Canon Debra J. Kissinger will begin at Christ Church as Interim Rector on August 1. Rev. Kissinger is currently the Canon for Transitional Ministry in the Diocese of Indianapolis. The Vestry is very excited to have attracted such a well-qualified individual, and she is equally excited to be joining us at Christ Church. More details will be available soon.

On another exciting note, this summer we will begin the first concrete project in our Capital Campaign, renovation of the Murdock Room. As Dr. Caroline Chapin, the Head of School, discussed at the Annual Meeting, the money raised during the Raise the Paddle event at the Christ Episcopal School Annual Gala, was designated for renovating the Murdock Room. In addition, the school applied for, and received, a small grant for helping to restore the infrastructure of aging schools. Together, these monies should cover the costs projected to renovate the Murdock Room. Earlier this spring, a joint church-school committee, representing the largest users of the Murdock Room, was formed to oversee this project. Comprised of Dr. Chapin, the Rev. Cindy Simpson, Michele Craig, Nancy Small, Janet Gerber, and Cyndi Mamalian, the group has had multiple meetings to discuss what needs to be done and how to accomplish it within budget. They have met with architects and designers to get samples and estimates. At their most recent meeting, the committee chose paint colors, ceiling type, lighting (including wall sconces similar to the ones in the Dining Room), countertops, and molding/trim. There are still more decisions to be made, but the end result will be a beautiful room for receptions, lectures, classes, adult forums, school dances, and other church and school events. The downside of this project is that the Murdock Room will be under renovation for about six weeks this summer. This will mean some inconvenience and relocation for Veggie Tales and CES Summer Camp, but I promise you it will be worth it when you see the new Murdock Room in September.

Christie Carrico, Senior Warden

Search Committee Update

The Search Committee would like to heartily thank all who participated in the focus groups conducted to elicit responses from the CEC parish. We have collected an enormous amount of information, and it will take a few weeks to collate, analyze, and synthesize all of the responses. You may have noticed that the procedures we are following are different from years past, as Canon Paula Clark articulated in her Adult Forum presentation at the beginning of our search process. Be assured we will continue to keep the Parish informed of the committee's progress with more updates as information becomes available.

A Parish Prayer for our New Rector Search ***Adapted from St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church, Keller TX***

Almighty God, you know the needs of your Church in every place.

Look graciously upon our parish family at Christ Church;

Help us remember our mission to serve you by what we do for others in this complex world and through the inspiring education Christ Episcopal School offers our children;

Grant us the insight and guidance your Holy Spirit provides as we search for our new Rector;

May we be living examples of your love for us throughout this journey;

Lead us towards becoming one heart and mind as we search for a faithful priest who will bring inspiring vision;

Remind us that we are stewards for our church family now and in the future;

Give us confidence to trust your wisdom and timing, remembering what we seek is grounded in your Providence;

May we find continued strength in the mission of our Savior Jesus Christ...to become the heart, hands and feet to our neighbors no matter where they are on their journey of faith;

Bless us with mutual trust, respect for each other, patience and foresight as you shepherd our community through challenges and decisions we make;

Grant us inspiration and humility as each of us weighs what is most important through heartfelt self-reflection;

All this we ask in the glory of your name as we continue to walk in the pathways that you have set for us.

Amen

--edited for CEC by Dr. Jim Suit

Inside Outreach

An Update on the Christ Church Outreach Program

"Freely you have received; freely give" Matthew 10:8b



As we approach the summer, the Outreach Committee wants to talk about some of our accomplishments this year. First, as a result of our strategic planning effort two years ago, we have adjusted our focus to better address local needs. While we still look outwards, more of our efforts now focus on needs in the DC area and especially in Montgomery County.

For examples of our local efforts, look to some of our recent activities. In April, the Outreach Committee held an event with A Wider Circle. At their warehouse and store in Silver Spring, 18 volunteers helped sort, clean, and move various items for families in need. In April, we also collected supplies for the Kaseman Health Clinic managed by Community Ministries of Rockville, which is the charity we donate more funds to than any other. In 2017, we donated funds to the Interfaith Women's Shelter in Rockville and we continue as a church to provide meals to residents on fifth Sundays. Volunteers from the church work with Loaves & Fishes to serve lunches for up to 200 people in need. In addition, last fall, the English Conversation Club hosted two outside speakers and served a total of 22 students from five continents. These were all local efforts.

We have continued to help those in need in other areas as well. After the hurricanes of last year, we donated funds to Episcopal Relief & Development's Hurricane Fund for relief efforts. One of the largest events of the year is the multigenerational meal packing event with Rise Against Hunger. We pack an amazing 15,000 meals with the help of the Youth Group and a donation from the Bargain Box. Last fall's meals were sent by Rise Against Hunger to Madagascar, but the locations where meals are needed change each year.

We continue to engage the local community and to partner with people across the church and from other organizations to do God's work and to enable others to as well. If you would like to help, there is a place for you!

*The Outreach Committee meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in the Parish House beside the church. **There will not be a June meeting. The next Committee meeting will be July 10th.** All are welcome to attend and learn more about the opportunities to live our faith through service to those who need us most. For further information, contact Ben Shuman at benofwater@gmail.com.*

Environmental Stewardship

Ever wonder how long that piece of trash will take to decompose if left in the environment? Here are some numbers from the Alice Ferguson Foundation:



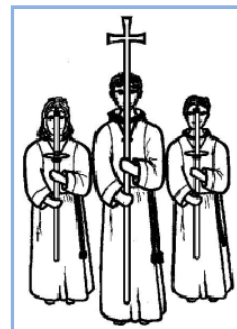
Newspaper: 2-4 weeks
Cardboard: 3-6 months
Milk carton: 5 years
Steel can: 80-100 years
Aluminum can: 200-400 years
Plastic bag: 300 years
Plastic bottle: 450+ years
Glass bottle: Hundreds or thousands of years
(unless constantly tumbled/ crushed)
Styrofoam: Never

Hope we can get together again in the fall for another watershed cleanup!

Acolytes

Call for New Acolytes

Youth in grades 6 to 12, here's your opportunity to participate in worship services at Christ Church. Training classes will begin in late September and run for seven weeks. Sessions are one-hour long. We would love to have you join us. Once you have completed training, you will be scheduled to serve on Sunday mornings about once per month. Choristers are welcome too – participating as an acolyte does not interfere with singing as a chorister.



To sign up, or for more information, give Mr. Bob James a call. Thanks for considering this service to Christ Church. Bob James, Acolyte Master, 240-731-9928, bobjames3@msn.com.

Supper Club



June Supper Club will be held at the home of Ellen van Valkenburgh on June 9th from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. All adults are welcome. Just bring a dish to serve approximately eight people and enjoy an evening of good food and lively conversation. The address is 9117 Willow Pond Ln., Potomac, MD 20854 and phone is 301-424-8040.

St. Francis Flock

I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. Genesis 9:15



UPCOMING FIELD TRIP!! We are making plans to host a field trip to the wonderful Poplar Springs Animal Sanctuary as part of the **Montgomery County Farm Tour** on Saturday, July 22nd, 2017.

What is Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary? As they describe it: The sanctuary is a 400-acre non-profit refuge in Poolesville, Maryland for farm animals and wildlife. Founded in 1996, their mission is to offer care, rehabilitation, and permanent sanctuary for neglected, abused, or abandoned farm animals, as well as providing a protected habitat for wildlife. They promote compassion and the humane treatment of all animals by educating the public on farm animal and wildlife issues.

The restored colonial-era farmhouse situated on the property houses the operations of the sanctuary. Overlooking the Potomac River, and surrounded by ponds, streams, and open fields of preserved natural habitat, the sanctuary provides an idyllic setting for wildlife and farm animals.

Through generous public donations, and the dedication of over 100 volunteers and seven paid staff members, they've been able to not only maintain the farm and its acreage but also build new barns and fences to house their growing animal family, from Petunia the pig, their first rescue, to the over 200 animals currently living at the sanctuary.

Plan to come and join St. Francis Flock for a grand day out! Further details will be coming.

Ongoing Activities

- Don't forget our pet food drive to help keep pets with their families. Please provide unopened donations in the shopping cart in the main dining area of the basement (same cart as Manna donations) and the Flock will deliver to the Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County's Chompers Pet Food Bank. Pet food donations benefit local families struggling to provide for their pets. In many cases, providing pet food to families makes the difference between being able to keep their pet or having to surrender them due to a lack of food. With our donations, Christ Church is making a difference!
- Donations of pet toys and old sheets, towels, & blankets are ALWAYS welcome. Many dogs, cats, and other critters are waiting for their forever families at the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center. They would love to have toys (gently used or new) to play with, soft blankets to lay on, and sheets & towels to be cleaned up with. Drop off your donations in the shopping cart in the main dining area of the basement and the Flock will deliver them to the shelter.
- Pet grievance ministry. St. Francis Flock provides ministry to those grieving the loss or illness of a beloved pet. Please contact Carolyn Cole at stfrancisflock@cecrockville.org for more information.
- Assistance to the elderly and/or disabled. St. Francis Flock provides assistance to Christ Church elderly and/or disabled parishioners in driving them and/or their pet to the veterinarian. Please contact stfrancisflock@cecrockville.org if you need assistance.

All who feel called to expand their circle of compassion, please join us! Our monthly meeting is the second Sunday at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish House. For more information, contact stfrancisflock@cecrockville.org.

Music at Christ Church

Musical Pilgrimage - Ten Years Later

St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle has been in the news recently due to the wedding of Harry and Meghan, witnessed by 800 close friends and our own Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry. It brings to mind that just ten years ago in 2008, the Christ Church Choir was singing Evensong, Matins, and Eucharist in that extraordinary gothic building as part of their musical pilgrimage to the UK. One of the featured pieces in Windsor was a Jubilate Deo composed by HRH Prince Albert, consort to Queen Victoria. One of our present Choristers was then a 6-month-old traveling with his choir parents, and he received there an extra-baptismal blessing. Another choir couple chose to renew their wedding vows in that sacred space.

As we moved on to Canterbury, spiritual center of the Anglican Communion, we sang three Evensongs in the Cathedral. Anthem repertoire included "O nata lux de lumine" by Morten Lauridsen and "Judge Eternal" by Gerre Hancock, both Americans. It was the week following the gathering of Anglican & Episcopal bishops for the Lambeth Conference, and Robert Willis, Dean of Canterbury gave us a hymn text, "I am the vine", which he had written for the closing Eucharist of the Conference. We use this hymn at Christ Church whenever the related Gospel text appears. Before leaving, we gathered to sing "Almighty and everlasting God" in the cloister where its Tudor/Jacobean composer, Orlando Gibbons is buried.

After a short stop to give a recital at Ely Cathedral and an awe-inspiring visit to the glorious perpendicular Kings College Chapel, the Choir, friends, and family returned to London to celebrate four services at Westminster Abbey. For Evensongs, we sang the Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis in G composed by Tad Cuvoti for our Christ Church Choirs, and the Evening Service in G by Henry Purcell, Organist of the Abbey during the reign of William & Mary. The monuments and memorials to composers and poets abound, and in addition to Purcell, we were able to find Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams, George Frideric Handel, and Sir Isaac Newton.

Mass of the Month – June 3rd

On Sunday, June 3rd at the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist, the Choristers, Choral Scholars, and Choir will sing Joseph Haydn's Missa brevis St. Joannis de Deo accompanied by string trio.

Most likely written in 1775 for the monastery of the Brothers of Mercy in Eisenstadt, it quickly earned the nickname "Little Organ Mass" because of the extended duet between organ and soprano soloist during the Benedictus. In the past decade, it has become a favorite to celebrate the end the Easter season.

June 3rd is Corpus Christi Sunday, and in addition to a setting of Psalm 130 accompanied by hand bells, Mozart's lovely "Ave verum corpus", and a special arrangement of Vaughan Williams's "God be with you 'til we meet again" will adorn the service.

We are blessed in being able to offer polyphonic Mass settings sung by an intergenerational choir as part of the monthly musical cycle at Christ Church. We hope you are able to join us for these wonderful occasions.

Summer Choir Begins June 10th

Singers of all ages are invited to help lead the music during June, July, and August. Join us for one Sunday or as many as you can. We rehearse in the Choir Room at 9:15 a.m. directly before the service to prepare a simple anthem, metrical psalm, and service music. While a number of regular Choir members and Choristers sing through the summer, the relaxed schedule allows additional members of the congregation and visitors to sing for specific Sundays.

Speak to Tad Cavuoti at the organ console, call 301-762-2191 ext. 14, or email tcavuoti@cecrockville.org for more information.

Call for New Choristers

It's an excellent time for Boys and Girls in grades 3-8 to plan on joining the Choristers of Christ Church in September. Previous singing experience, while welcome, is not necessary.

Woven into each rehearsal is instruction in voice production, music reading, following the bulletin, and the mechanics of leading a congregation in worship. Choristers are introduced to a wealth of glorious liturgical music, which will last a lifetime. Perhaps in no other area of church work can they aspire to function on the level of adults.

Rehearsals will resume in September on Thursday afternoons 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., in the excellent acoustic of the Choir Room. Choristers sing each Sunday at one of the services. Speak to Tad Cavuoti at the organ console, call him at 301-762-2191 ext. 14, or email tcavuoti@cecrockville.org for more information.

Christ Church Chefs



Christ Church Chefs are looking for a few new chefs to join us to cook and deliver a meal to an individual or family about once a month. The meal can be simple, a main course, bread, vegetable and fruit or dessert. This is a good way to help out your fellow parishioners in their special needs time. Comforting others by delivering a hot cooked meal is a great way to show you care.

Why not try something different this summer? You can involve your children in this preparation and show them how to care for others. This is a win-win event. Everyone gets a good feeling! Men chefs are most welcome to participate too!

You do not need to be a member of Pastoral Care to participate. All participation and communication is done through emails.

Christ Church Chefs is a sub committee of our Pastoral Care Committee. Questions? Please call Marylouise Roach at 301-351-9112.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS



Nancy Small began volunteering at the Bargain Box in 2008. A long-time member of Christ Church (45 years!), Nancy believes that the mission and work of the Bargain Box are so important to Rockville and Montgomery County. Through its outreach, the Bargain Box has helped thousands of people in the community by giving items to those in need and by using the proceeds from its sales to help many other causes. She also feels that the Bargain Box is a way to introduce Christ Church to our customers.

Nancy works with consignments and also as a front desk volunteer. When asked what she liked best about working at the Bargain Box, Nancy said, "I particularly like the interaction with our customers, which, at times, can be both challenging and/or entertaining, and I love working with the other volunteers. Most of them have worked there much longer than I and are all dedicated to the mission of the Bargain Box. In addition, working there has given me an insight into the needs of our community. The children who come in with a parent give a particular joy - especially when I see the look on a child's face when he or she brings their money and places it on the counter to pay for a toy, a stuffed animal or something else they want to buy. And, because we are a congenial group, we volunteers do have fun, even finding humor in dealing with a difficult customer." As a retiree, Nancy has the time to indulge in the things she loves to do, such as visiting with her children and grandchildren, traveling, volunteering at Christ Church, reading, and spending time with friends.



OUTREACH SUNDAY

We will be moving to the Parish House for June, July and August.

The third Sunday of the month is Outreach Sunday at Christ Church. We will be in the Parish House Dining Room on Sunday, June 17 for last minute Father's Day shopping and a summer fun themed raffle. Come over to shop and enjoy lemonade on the porch.

We are still in need of small and medium (grocery-size) plastic bags. Please recycle your plastic bags at the Bargain Box instead of throwing them away.

The Bargain Box

Thrift and Consignment Shop

An Outreach Ministry since 1957

398 Hungerford Drive, Rockville 20850
301-762-2242

Monday - Saturday, 10 am - 4:30 pm

Donna Wolohojian, Manager

Email: bargainbox@cecrockville.org

On the web: www.bargain-box.org



Follow us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BargainBoxRockville

All our profits fund outreach projects in the community and diocese.

Year End Parish Picnic

Celebrating Graduates, Choir & Choristers

Sunday, June 3rd
11:15 am –12:30 pm



Friends & Food
Fellowship & Fun
in the Dining Room

Please bring a side dish to share!

Fried Chicken, Potato Salad, Watermelon,
Drinks & Popsicles will be provided.

Questions?

Contact: Michele Craig at mcraig@cecrockville.org or 301/762-2191

June 10 Newcomer Reception!

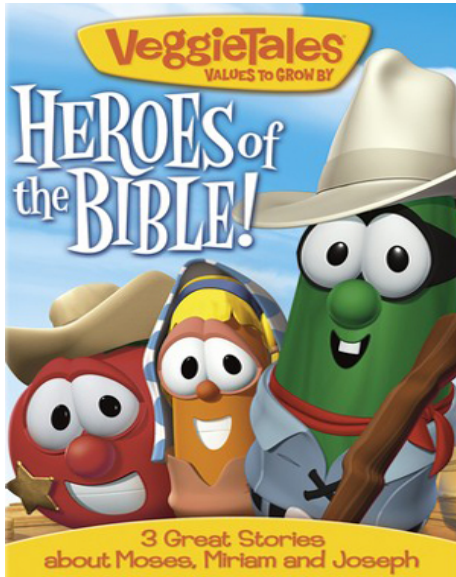
All Christ Church Worshipers

*Especially those new in the past twelve months
and those who feel new at heart!!!*



*The Welcoming Committee cordially invites you to a
Newcomer Reception (in the Murdock Room!)
to be introduced to our parish family*

*Sunday, June 10, after the 10:00 AM service
All in the Parish are invited!*



Veggie Tales

Summer Sundays

June 17 –August 12
10:00 –11:15 am
Murdock Room

Summer Sundays are a fun time for children 4 to 10 years old.

A fun chance to worship using Veggie Tales DVDs.

We spend our time learning Bible stories, playing games, making crafts, singing songs, having fun & eating snacks!

Children in Pre-Kindergarten to Third grade.

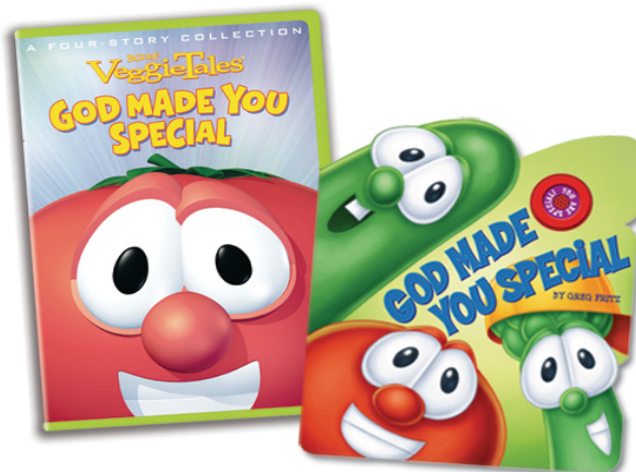
We begin at 10:00 AM in the **Murdock Room??**
and conclude immediately after the service.

Dress is casual attire. We play with paint, glitter, dirt, food, outside, inside, on the floor, with water and glue, etc.

Snacks provided, but it's NOT a balanced breakfast or lunch! Please feed your growing, hungry children before they arrive.

Thank you for supporting this exciting program!

Questions? Michele Craig at mcraig@cecrockville.org or 301/762-2191



Youth Mission Trip Schedule

June 17 – 23

Appalachia Service Project Work Trip

Jonesville, VA

ASP provides one of the most rewarding structured service opportunities in the nation – bringing thousands of volunteers from around the country to rural Central Appalachia to repair homes for low-income families. Life changes happen from the ASP experience: of families renewing their faith in the goodness of others, of people newly motivated to continue their education, of youth choosing careers of service - building relationships with each other that break down cultural, social and economic barriers – truly amazing!

June 25 – 30

Outdoor & Environmental Education Experience

Harper's Ferry, WVA

Our youth are going to leave the city to live and learn in the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. They will be given the opportunity for hands on learning through a variety of activities. They will investigate, explore, and develop a sense of wonder - in understanding their relationship to both the natural world and the human environment within it. Our youth will spend time learning about bees and pollination, water ecology, gardening along with participating in ropes and challenge courses, hiking, canoeing and campfires!

July 6 – 14

Best Friends Animal Sanctuary Work Trip

Kanab, UT

This is no shelter. This is no roadside diversion. This is Best Friends, the nation's largest no-kill sanctuary for companion animals. Nestled in between the sprawling red rocks of Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Parks, our youth will experience the nature and nurture of this lifesaving haven for hundreds of adoptable animals as volunteers for the week. We'll do everything from walking an enthusiastic dog, to cleaning a rabbit run, to just sitting and talking to a shy cat - we'll make a difference in the lives of homeless pets, meet others who love animals, and have fun! Sanctuary is home to dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, horses, goats, pigs, mules, sheep, burros, and wildlife. They all receive everything they need, physically, emotionally and psychologically, to thrive and find a good home or just live their lives in a safe haven.

July 28 – August 3

DC Urban Mission Work Trip

Washington DC

Youth will experience a week of hands-on urban ministry and outreach, living and working in the city. They get the opportunity to build relationships, learn about life and some of the challenges in our nation's capital, and answer God's call for social justice while serving those in need. They will wake up early to prepare and serve breakfast for those needing a meal, spend the afternoon preparing to feed others for the next day, and then return to their hostel for a night of discussions, games, touring or just hanging out together. The youth develop skills in building relationships and engaging with people who are different than themselves. They learn of poverty and need, without bias or fear. They learn that they can make a difference and be part of the solution to end social injustice! Our goal being to be the hands and feet of Christ and to lead others through example....one day and one smile at a time.



A Letter from Bishop Mariann Budde regarding a communication from the Presiding Bishop, Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis

“Dear Clergy Colleagues,....

I write with a Pentecost invitation, and challenge, from our Presiding Bishop.

While the headlines regarding Presiding Bishop Curry have focused of late on his role in the royal wedding in London, he has been quietly at work for months with other Christian leaders calling themselves ‘the elders,’ on an initiative that they have named **Reclaiming Jesus**.

Today he wrote to all bishops in the Episcopal Church asking us to share with you the first fruits of this work.

First a bit of background: On Ash Wednesday, Presiding Bishop Curry gathered with leaders from across the spectrum of Christian denominations, among them, Richard Rohr, Amos Brown, National Baptist, Walter Brueggemann, Barbara Williams-Skinner, Tony Campolo, Jim Wallis, Cynthia Hale and others. They came together to pray and share their concerns, in their words, ‘for the soul of our nation and the integrity of faith.’

Together they drafted a statement: Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis. Throughout the Easter season, they worked to refine their message and provide resources to accompany it. They wanted it to be more than a statement, but the beginning of a process of discernment, prayer, reflection and, action for us all. Now they are preparing for a public launch of this initiative at Pentecost including a prayer vigil and service on Thursday, May 24th in Washington.

The elders have invited other Christian leaders to co-sign the confession of faith, provided that we would share the statement and supplemental resources with the clergy and congregations in our charge, which I am glad to do, for the concerns they raise are ones that I share.

Much of the language of the confession is in the form of renunciations, rejecting the forces of wickedness that rebel against God and demean humankind. There is also a bold affirmation that being a disciple of Jesus propels us not only to a personal journey of salvation but a public life committed to the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. I am committed to both the personal and public dimensions of being Jesus’ disciple, which is why I signed *Reclaiming Jesus*. I am well aware that statements are insufficient without corresponding action, as we are called to join in creating a world aligned with God’s dream for humankind....

If you resonate with the concerns expressed in *Reclaiming Jesus*, please share it with the people under your spiritual care.

May we all be open to the Holy Spirit life-giving power, this Pentecost and always.”

--The Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde
Bishop of Washington
May 18, 2018

Reclaiming Jesus

A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis

We are living through perilous and polarizing times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches. We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake.

It is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else—nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography—our identity in Christ precedes every other identity. We pray that our nation will see Jesus' words in us. "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church's role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government's role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behavior while restraining bad behavior (Romans 13). When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state."

It is often the duty of Christian leaders, especially elders, to speak the truth in love to our churches and to name and warn against temptations, racial and cultural captivities, false doctrines, and political idolatries—and even our complicity in them. We do so here with humility, prayer, and a deep dependency on the grace and Holy Spirit of God.

This letter comes from a retreat on Ash Wednesday, 2018. In this season of Lent, we feel deep lamentations for the state of our nation, and our own hearts are filled with confession for the sins we feel called to address. The true meaning of the word

repentance is to turn around. It is time to lament, confess, repent, and turn. In times of crisis, the church has historically learned to return to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is Lord. That is our foundational confession. It was central for the early church and needs to again become central to us. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar was not—nor any other political ruler since. If Jesus is Lord, no other authority is absolute. Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God he announced, is the Christian's first loyalty, above all others. We pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Our faith is personal but never private, meant not only for heaven but for this earth.

The question we face is this: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What does our loyalty to Christ, as disciples, require at this moment in our history? We believe it is time to renew our theology of public discipleship and witness. Applying what "Jesus is Lord" means today is the message we commend as elders to our churches.

What we believe leads us to what we must reject. Our "Yes" is the foundation for our "No." What we confess as our faith leads to what we confront. Therefore, we offer the following six affirmations of what we believe, and the resulting rejections of practices and policies by political leaders which dangerously corrode the soul of the nation and deeply threaten the public integrity of our faith. We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.

I. WE BELIEVE each human being is made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). That image and likeness confers a divinely decreed dignity, worth, and God-given equality to all of us as children of the one God who is the Creator of all things. Racial bigotry is a brutal denial of the image of God (the *imago dei*) in some of the children of God. Our participation in the global community of Christ absolutely prevents any toleration of racial bigotry. Racial justice and healing are biblical and theological issues for us, and are central to the mission of the body of Christ in the world. We give thanks for the prophetic role of the historic black churches in America when they have called for a more faithful gospel.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We, as followers of Jesus, must clearly reject the use of racial bigotry for political gain that we have seen. In the face of such bigotry, silence is complicity. In particular, we reject white supremacy and commit ourselves to help dismantle the systems and structures that perpetuate white preference and advantage. Further, any doctrines or political strategies that use racist resentments, fears, or language must be named as public sin—one that goes back to the foundation of our nation and lingers on. Racial bigotry must be antithetical for those belonging to the body of Christ, because it denies the truth of the gospel we profess.

II. WE BELIEVE we are one body. In Christ, there is to be no oppression based on race, gender, identity, or class (Galatians 3:28). The body of Christ, where those great human divisions are to be overcome, is meant to be an example for the rest of society. When we fail to overcome these oppressive obstacles, and even perpetuate them, we have failed in our vocation to the world—to proclaim and live the reconciling gospel of Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harass-

ment, and assault of women that has been further revealed in our culture and politics, including our churches, and the oppression of any other child of God. We lament when such practices seem publicly ignored, and thus privately condoned, by those in high positions of leadership. We stand for the respect, protection, and affirmation of women in our families, communities, workplaces, politics, and churches. We support the courageous truth-telling voices of women, who have helped the nation recognize these abuses. We confess sexism as a sin, requiring our repentance and resistance.

III. WE BELIEVE how we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner is how we treat Christ himself. (Matthew 25: 31-46) "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." God calls us to protect and seek justice for those who are poor and vulnerable, and our treatment of people who are "oppressed," "strangers," "outsiders," or otherwise considered "marginal" is a test of our relationship to God, who made us all equal in divine dignity and love. Our proclamation of the lordship of Jesus Christ is at stake in our solidarity with the most vulnerable. If our gospel is not "good news to the poor," it is not the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18).

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable children of God. We strongly deplore the growing attacks on immigrants and refugees, who are being made into cultural and political targets, and we need to remind our churches that God makes the treatment of the "strangers" among us a test of faith (Leviticus 19:33-34). We won't accept the neglect of the well-being of low-income families and children, and we will resist repeated attempts to deny health care to those who most need it. We confess our growing national sin of putting the rich over the poor. We reject the immoral logic of cutting services and programs for the poor while cutting taxes for the rich. Budgets are

moral documents. We commit ourselves to opposing and reversing those policies and finding solutions that reflect the wisdom of people from different political parties and philosophies to seek the common good. Protecting the poor is a central commitment of Christian discipleship, to which 2,000 verses in the Bible attest.

IV. WE BELIEVE that truth is morally central to our personal and public lives. Truth-telling is central to the prophetic biblical tradition, whose vocation includes speaking the Word of God into their societies and speaking the truth to power. A commitment to speaking truth, the ninth commandment of the Decalogue, "You shall not bear false witness" (Exodus 20:16), is foundational to shared trust in society. Falsehood can enslave us, but Jesus promises, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32). The search and respect for truth is crucial to anyone who follows Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the practice and pattern of lying that is invading our political and civil life. Politicians, like the rest of us, are human, fallible, sinful, and mortal. But when public lying becomes so persistent that it deliberately tries to change facts for ideological, political, or personal gain, the public accountability to truth is undermined. The regular purveying of falsehoods and consistent lying by the nation's highest leaders can change the moral expectations within a culture, the accountability for a civil society, and even the behavior of families and children. The normalization of lying presents a profound moral danger to the fabric of society. In the face of lies that bring darkness, Jesus is our truth and our light.

V. WE BELIEVE that Christ's way of leadership is servanthood, not domination. Jesus said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles (the world) lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant" (Matthew 20:25-26). We believe our elect-

ed officials are called to public service, not public tyranny, so we must protect the limits, checks, and balances of democracy and encourage humility and civility on the part of elected officials. We support democracy, not because we believe in human perfection, but because we do not. The authority of government is instituted by God to order an unredeemed society for the sake of justice and peace, but ultimate authority belongs only to God.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT any moves toward autocratic political leadership and authoritarian rule. We believe authoritarian political leadership is a theological danger that threatens democracy and the common good—and we will resist it. Disrespect for the rule of law, not recognizing the equal importance of our three branches

of government, and replacing civility with dehumanizing hostility toward opponents are of great concern to us. Neglecting the ethic of public service and accountability, in favor of personal recognition and gain often characterized by offensive arrogance, are not just political issues for us. They raise deeper concerns about political idolatry, accompanied by false and unconstitutional notions of authority.

VI. WE BELIEVE Jesus when he tells us to go into all nations making disciples (Matthew 28:18). Our churches and our nations are part of an international community whose interests always surpass national boundaries. The most well-known verse in the New Testament starts with “For God so loved the world” (John 3:16). We, in turn, should love and serve the world and all its

inhabitants, rather than seek first narrow, nationalistic prerogatives.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT “America first” as a theological heresy for followers of Christ. While we share a patriotic love for our country, we reject xenophobic or ethnic nationalism that places one nation over others as a political goal. We reject domination rather than stewardship of the earth’s resources, toward genuine global development that brings human flourishing for all of God’s children. Serving our own communities is essential, but the global connections between us are undeniable. Global poverty, environmental damage, violent conflict, weapons of mass destruction, and deadly diseases in some places ultimately affect all places, and we need wise political leadership to deal with each of these.

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED for the soul of our nation, but also for our churches and the integrity of our faith. The present crisis calls us to go deeper—deeper into our relationship to God; deeper into our relationships with each other, especially across racial, ethnic, and national lines; deeper into our relationships with the most vulnerable, who are at greatest risk.

The church is always subject to temptations to power, to cultural conformity, and to racial, class, and gender divides, as Galatians 3:28 teaches us. But our answer is to be “in Christ,” and to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable, and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)

The best response to our political, material, cultural, racial, or national idolatries is the First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). Jesus summarizes the Greatest Commandment:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, and your mind. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:38). As to loving our neighbors, we would add “no exceptions.”

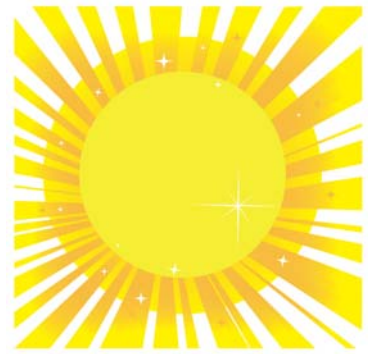
We commend this letter to pastors, local churches, and young people who are watching and waiting to see what the churches will say and do at such a time as this.

Our urgent need, in a time of moral and political crisis, is to recover the power of confessing our faith. Lament, repent, and then repair. If Jesus is Lord, there is always space for grace. We believe it is time to speak and to act in faith and conscience, not because of politics, but because we are disciples of Jesus Christ—to whom be all authority, honor, and glory. It is time for a fresh confession of faith. Jesus is Lord. He is the light in our darkness. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). ■

Signers: Bishop Carroll A. Baltimore, President and CEO, Global Alliance Interfaith Network; Rev. Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Executive Director Emeritus, Christian Reformed Church in North America; Dr. Amos Brown, Chair, Social Justice Commission, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.; Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, Professor Emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary; Dr. Tony Campolo, Co-Founder, Red Letter Christians; Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference; The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church; Rev. Dr. James Forbes, President and Founder, Healing the Nations Foundation and Pranching Professor at Union Theological Seminary; Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, General Secretary Emeritus, Reformed Church in America; Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, Senior Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA; Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, former General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Dr. Joel C. Hunter, Faith Community Organizer and Chairman, Community Resource Network; Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan Church; Bishop Vashit McKenzie, 117th Elected and Consecrated Bishop, A.M.E. Church; Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., Co-Convener National African American Clergy Network; Dr. John Perkins, Chair Emeritus and Founding Member, Christian Community Development Association; Bishop Lawrence Reddick, CEO, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Fr. Richard Rohr, Founder, Center for Action and Contemplation; Dr. Ron Sider, President Emeritus, Evangelical for Social Action; Rev. Jim Wallis, President and Founder, Sojourners; Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Director, NCC Truth and Racial Justice Initiative; Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Co-Convener, National African American Clergy Network; President, Skinner Leadership Institute; Bishop Will Willimon, Bishop, The United Methodist Church, retired, Professor of the Practice of Ministry, Duke Divinity School

ReclaimingJesus.org

Happy Summer!



June 2018

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July 2018

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August 2018

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JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2018 WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SUMMER SERVICES: JUNE 3, 10, 17, 24
JULY 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
AUGUST 5, 12, 19, 26
SEPTEMBER 2, 9

7:45 AM Holy Eucharist Rite I
a spoken service with Sermon

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II
with Sermon, Service Music, Hymns, and Anthems
Christ Church Summer Choir

10:00 AM Summer Sunday School – Murdock Room
a service for young children (ages 4-10), using Veggie Tale videos, games, stories and crafts
June 17 & 24
July 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29
August 5 & 12

Nursery 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM *for infants and toddlers*
6 months to 4 years old

ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS

9:00 AM Summer Studies in Christian Faith – Parish House
9:15 AM Summer Choir Rehearsal – Church

REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES:

Wednesday

12:10 PM Search Committee Meeting – Parish House
12:10 PM Holy Eucharist Rite II

Thursday

12:00 PM AA – Parish House

OTHER PARISH EVENTS

(Date/Event/ Time/ Location)

JUNE

- 3 Recognition for Graduates, Choir & Choristers
Year-End Picnic for EVERYONE **11:15am-12:30pm** (MR, DR)
- 5 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 8 CES Graduation
- 9 Adult Supper Club **7:00pm** (Ellen van Valkenburgh host)
- 10 Newcomer Reception for Everyone! **11:15am** (MR)
St. Francis Flock Meeting **12:30pm** (PH LR)
- 17 Youth Mission Trip Departs for Appalachia **7:00am** (PH)
Bargain Box Sale in the Parish House
Loaves & Fishes carpool **10:15am** (leave from Church)
Veggie Tales begins **10:00am** (MR???)
Lemonade on the Porch **11:00am** (PH)
- 18 Dessert & Deal **6:30pm** (MR)
- 19 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 26 Vestry Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 27 Holy Eucharist at Collingswood **2:30pm** (Rockville)
- 30

JULY

- 7 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 4 Independence Day/ Office Closed
- 8 St. Francis Flock Meeting **12:30pm** (PH LR)
- 10 Outreach Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH DR)
- 14 Adult Supper Club **7:00pm** (hosted by Dr. & Mrs. Von Arx)
- 15 Bargain Box Sale in the Parish House
Loaves & Fishes carpool **10:15am** (leave from Church)
Lemonade on the Porch **11:00am** (PH)
- 17 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 24 Vestry Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 25 Holy Eucharist at Collingswood **2:30pm** (Rockville)
- 29 Interfaith Shelter Meal Prep & Serve **4-8pm** (K, Shelter)

AUGUST

- 1 We welcome the Rev. Canon Debra Kissinger, our Interim Rector
- 7 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 11 Adult Supper Club **7:00pm** (hosts: J. Arnold & D. Reitwiesner)
- 12 St. Francis Flock Meeting **12:30pm** (PH LR)
- 14 Outreach Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH DR)
- 19 Bargain Box Sale in the Parish House
Loaves & Fishes carpool **10:15am** (leave from Church)
Lemonade on the Porch **11:00am** (PH)
- 21 Pastoral Care Committee Meeting **7:30pm** (PH LR)
- 22 Holy Eucharist at Collingswood **2:30pm** (Rockville)
- 27 1st Day of CES School

KEY	CEC = Christ Episcopal Church
PH = Parish House	CES = Christ Episcopal School
LR = Living Room	K = Kitchen
DR = Dining Room	N = Nursery
MR = Murdock Room	YR = Youth Room