

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

Oakland & Franklin Lakes

First Sunday after Pentecost

Trinity Sunday

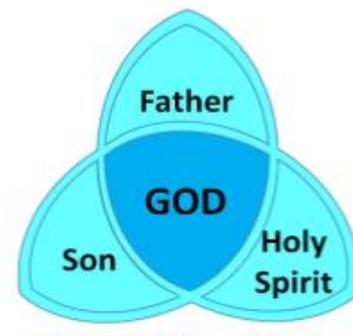
June 7, 2020

WEEKEND UPDATE

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT TOMORROW'S SERVICE

Trinity Sunday and Renewal of Baptismal Vows

This Sunday, June 7th, is Trinity Sunday. It is the day in the liturgical year when we pay particular attention to the theological articulation, our doctrine, of God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer; Mother, Brother, Wisdom ... there are countless ways that people of faith throughout the centuries have tried to explain what we experience as God. The reason there are so many descriptions is that none is sufficient to capture the whole.



At various times of the year, and every time we welcome someone through the sacrament of Baptism, we all renew the promised made on our behalf when we were Baptized. It is an important way to remind ourselves and recommit personally and as a family of faith of who we are and whose we are. Usually, the clergy person(s) present ask the questions of the vows that we make. Tomorrow I have divided them up and assigned them to people who volunteered. As I did a few years ago when I began to have the entire congregation join in the prayers of consecration at the Eucharist, I want this to be another concrete example of how we are a supportive community in relationship with God and each other. We are all sheep and all shepherds following in the Way of Love that is the way of Jesus.

If you will have young non-reading children with you please practice the response “I will with God’s help” so that they will be able to participate most fully.

Please be sure to tune into Zoom on the link that is sent to you. We will join together ... seeing and hearing each other ... as we together renew the vows by which we order our lives.

We will with God’s help ...

Kathryn+

*There will be a Zoom Sunday school lesson with Nicholas during the sermon time. Please print the frog blank frog image included with this mailing. Each participant needs at least one blank frog coloring supplies.

**FATHER’S DAY, ALTAR OF TIES,
and GRADUATION RECOGNITION**

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

We will be marking Father’s Day and celebrating our graduates on Sunday, June 21. We will be hanging our beautiful Altar of Ties which is made of ties donated by members of our parish family. Some are memorial ties and some are of those men who are still gracing us with their wisdom. If you would like to donate a tie to be included please mark the back of the tie with the name of the man in whose honor it is given and drop it off at the parish office in a marked bag. One of my father’s ties is included and it means so much to me to see his tie included and remember him.

If you have someone in your family who is graduating any level of education please submit the name of the graduate, the school from which they are graduating, and where they are headed next if their education will continue. We would also love to have a photo. We will list the names in the bulletin. More information will follow.



BEDTIME BIBLE STORIES AND PRAYERS RESUME THIS WEEK

After a week off because of conflicts in Reverend Kathryn's schedule with diocesan responsibilities, she will resume the Tuesday and Thursday evening sessions with our little ones. Zoom in at 6:45 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 10-15 minutes of songs, stories, and prayers to end your busy day. All are welcome! The Zoom link is sent out in the afternoon to keep the call secure. Feel free to share with other families who might be interested but please do not publish on social media.



THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE

Six young members of our parish have been Zooming twice a week with Reverend Kathryn and reading C. S. Lewis' classic, *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*. We take turns reading and spend about an hour each session. We are nearing 3/4 of the way through the book and having a GREAT time! It has been so well received that we will certainly start another book once we finish this one. It isn't too late to join in! All are welcome! We Zoom on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7 PM, right after the Bedtime Bible session.

Zoom links are sent out in the afternoon of each gathering.

We are planning a movie night to watch the movie as soon as we can safely do so. All are welcome for that regardless of whether you have read the book or not!

To learn more about our sessions you can talk with Sierra, Sean or Shane Mohamed; Stella Hancock; Helena Palmer; or Reverend Kathryn!





CONTINUING TO FEED CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN OAKLAND

The longer these stay-at-home orders continue, more stress is placed on those most vulnerable to scarcity of resources.

With your help, and the help of others through the Dogwood School community, we have been able to keep

over 30 children and their families receiving nutritious food during these last three months. We have delivered large quantities of groceries some weeks and certificates to Shop Rite, the Oakland Giant Farmers Market, and The Dollar Store. We have also surprised the children with small gifts to bring some extra joy. Nurse Barbara Verga, Dogwood School, reports that she knows that our efforts are all that is standing between these families and hunger. I have also been connecting them with additional resources that are available because service restrictions have been loosened in a number of programs. I was able to make a great connection with North Porch and get baby items that our folks needed while dropping off other sizes of diapers and supplies that were left behind when the preschool closed in March. I worked with Teresa to get permission from the families to donate their extra supplies and we also donated supplies that the school keeps on hand. Don and I went through the school snacks and coffee hour supplies that had already been purchased and bagged those up and I distributed those as well.

The kids were so excited to get those kinds of snacks! I have picked up two new families who need support and have asked Nurse Verga to check with other Oakland school nurses to see if they have anyone who needs support. Because this has gone on for so long, families that are normally able to get by are finding themselves struggling.

We have received very generous support through our on-line giving for Outreach. **Thank you** to everyone who contributed to get this all going. We are using every penny that you are so generously giving to directly support our neighbors. **If you are in a position to be able to contribute now it would be greatly appreciated.** The need is still very present and growing. At the same time I am happy to share that one of the families has notified me that her husband has been called back to work starting in two weeks and so she wanted me to know that they will only need support one more time. She is so thankful for all that we have been able to do to help her family and hopes that we will now be able to help someone else.

SUMMER TOYS COLLECTION - Are you cleaning out your garage? Do you have extra scooters, bikes, skates, helmets, and outdoor toys that you would like to 're-home'? As I get to know the families more closely, I would like for us to help them in other ways too. If you have some things that are in good condition that you would like to pass on, please send me a list and I will check with the families to see if they can use them. With the end of school coming and recreation programs in question we can help make summer a bit brighter for them.

BARBEQUE IN THE COLONY - The majority of the families that we are helping live in the area of Oakland known as The Colony. Dean and I have been making the deliveries and we have discussed that we would like to load up the church barbeque grill and set-up one evening in the park at the center of the area and provide a traditional barbeque of hamburgers and hot dogs with salads. We discussed doing one in July and one in August. The restrictions in place at the time will determine whether we can offer some picnic games too or whether it will need to be carry out only. We are looking to put together a team of at least 6 people to plan, coordinate, and pull this off.



A second and maybe third grill would be helpful too. If this is something you would be interested in being a part of and / or if you have a grill that could be transported and used please be in touch with me, Don, or Dean. The challenges of this pandemic have opened to us a new awareness of very real challenges and poor living conditions of our neighbors.

We now have the opportunity to respond and build a new branch of ministry right here at home. Can you help?

Monetary donations can be made electronically through our website at <http://stalbansflow.org/index.php> or by mailing a check to the parish office. Please note in the memo that your donation is for outreach. Thank you!

**ZOOM MEETINGS FOR “PRAYERS AND
REFLECTIONS
ON PANDEMIC, RACISM, AND PROTEST”
JUNE 8 and 11 WITH BISHOP HUGHES**

As with all diocesan-wide Zoom meetings, the information needed to access these Zoom meetings will be emailed beforehand to church leaders to send to their congregations.

You can get updated language clarifying this from the events posted on the diocesan website:

<https://dioceseofnewark.org/event/prayers-and-reflections-pandemic-racism-and-protest-2020-06-08>

<https://dioceseofnewark.org/event/prayers-and-reflections-pandemic-racism-and-protest-2020-06-11>

Nina Nicholson

Director of Communications & Technology

The Episcopal Diocese of Newark

973-430-9907

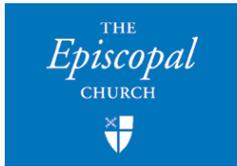
<https://dioceseofnewark.org>

<https://facebook.com/dionewark>

<https://twitter.com/dionewark>

<https://instagram.com/dionewark>

<https://youtube.com/dionewark>



Media Release



*Note: the following information is presented in English and Spanish
Aviso: La siguiente información se presenta en inglés y en español*

Habits of Grace, June 5, 2020: An invitation for you, from Presiding Bishop Curry

[June 5, 2020] *As we learn how to adjust our lives given the reality of the coronavirus and the request to do our part to slow its spread by practicing social distancing, I invite you to join me each week to take a moment to cultivate a 'habit of grace.' A new meditation will be posted each week through June. These meditations can be watched at any time by clicking [here](#).*

June 5, 2020: For Quiet Confidence

I had intended to do our *Habits of Grace* earlier this week on Monday or Tuesday, as I usually do, and then so many things began to happen, both in our country and in our wider world that I wasn't able to get to it.

In the midst of all that was going on, there were a few moments when so much was happening so fast and it was so chaotic, that at one point, I was on a Zoom call with a member of our staff and we were working on videos and interviews and it was so much and so chaotic, I remember just saying, "Let's just stop, and pray."

And the prayer I prayed was a prayer from our prayer book. It's toward the end of the prayer book on page 832 called "For Quiet Confidence". This prayer is based on a time in the life of the prophet Isaiah, when the people of Judah and Jerusalem were living in a time when their country was in turmoil and things were uncertain and chaos seemed to be ruling.

The prophet Isaiah said, "You must remember that it is in returning and rest, that you will be saved; in quietness and confidence, you will find your strength." And this is the prayer we prayed and I offer it for all of us. Let us pray:

Oh, God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and in rest, we shall be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be our strength. By the might of thy Spirit, lift us, we pray thee to thy presence, where we may be still and know that thou art God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

God love you and keep the faith.

To listen to the video go to: https://episcopalchurch.org/habits-of-grace?wvideo=xops3jbhvi&wkey=U1RBTEJBTINPRkxAT1BUSU1VTS5ORVQ=&foreign_data=mailchimp_campaign_id%3A78a145cfc2



The Episcopal Diocese of Newark

The Episcopal Church in Northern New Jersey

A Pastoral Letter from Bishop Hughes:

What direction shall we choose as health crisis and racism intersect with faith and politics?

Dear Companions on the Journey,

We had yet to get our bearings on the journey through pandemic when the violent slayings of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd thrust us suddenly on to a treacherous but familiar side road. The dangers of COVID-19 have not diminished. It has become even more clear in the last twelve weeks that African-Americans have a particular susceptibility to the virus. Theories abound about poverty and pre-existing conditions, but these theories do nothing to explain the death of young, healthy, professional African-Americans. Could it be the wear and tear of navigating racism adversely impacts the resiliency of African-Americans?

Public Health scholar Arline Geronimus, Sc.D., has presented research confirming that daily orienting oneself around and through racism is, of itself, a threat to the health of African-Americans. As a public health researcher and professor, she coined the term “weathering hypothesis” to describe the process of advanced aging that occurs as a result of the prolonged stress of daily racism. In other words, prolonged exposure to racism can compromise health. Some researchers suspect that it is weathering that leaves African-Americans more susceptible to COVID-19. In addition to the anxiety that all of us feel due to pandemic and its economic impact, for black and brown people there are the added layers of embedded systemic racism and overt acts of violent racist crimes adding to the burden carried every day.

Somehow a health crisis has become a partisan political issue, rather than a unified public health effort to defeat infection. Decades of violent death by excessive force used by police has become a partisan political issue, rather than a policy problem to be corrected. Embedded systemic racism has become a partisan political issue, rather than a challenge to recover the rights stolen from black and brown citizens. Non-violent protest has become a partisan political issue, along with the rioting so often intertwined with protest, instead of an indicator of unmitigated trauma. In the contentious cacophony of politics, we seem to routinely lose sight of the fundamental problem which remains racism.

The generational sin of racism embedded in our systems, experienced in overt ways to the point of death, remains a dangerous obstacle for every person. It may seem that racism is experienced only by black and brown people, yet the discord, disruption, and dulling of potential is felt by all people regardless of skin color. For Christians to ignore, diminish, or

accept racism requires a sinful rejection of Christ's greatest commandment: We are to love one another. Racism in any form demands walking away from Christ's teaching. Further, racism removes God's love from our encounters with each other. Politics is a poor substitute for God's love and as of yet has not stopped the death toll paid by black and brown people.

The response to the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd has disturbed our stoic tolerance of a broken system in a broken world. Their deaths, in the midst of a virus more deadly to African-Americans, have shaken us to the core of our beings. And in our shaken state we are more open, willing, and available for God's Spirit to shape our actions.

What direction shall we choose as health crisis and racism intersect with faith and politics? It will come as no surprise that I encourage you to start with your faith as a path to find your voice and your way. Start with loving your neighbor and then follow with the vows of the Baptismal Covenant. When we orient ourselves with the foundations of our faith then the paths we take are influenced by God's direction. It sounds simple, but it requires a rigorous discipline. This journey demands a fearless evaluation of our own motivations and actions. The chaos may continue, fed by the fuel of division in our country. It may feel like foreign territory to respond to the turmoil of unrest with Christ's love for all humankind. Still, that is our foundational practice. Our tradition goes a step further with promises made at baptism:

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

- *Book of Common Prayer, pp 304-305*

We are rescued from a perpetual wandering in the valley of chaos and hopelessness with the response to each of these promises: *I will, with God's help.*

With God's help, and guided by God's love, we will choose a direction from the deadly intersections of national conflict. For years now our Presiding Bishop, the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, has preached a sermon of love, often saying, "If it is not about love, it is not about God." His words are rooted in Christ's commandment to love one another. How might we travel this journey? By intentionally walking the way of love.

Love will give us the space we need to lament and mourn our losses. Love will help us ask and answer questions. Love will motivate us to insist on dialogue instead of diatribe. Love will propel us to seek equality, healthy life, and liberty for all people. Love will guide us to discover Christ in each person. Love can inform our learning, our actions, and our world, if we are able to walk, live, act, and speak the way of love.

There are three actions I encourage you take on your own and two opportunities to gather online as we continue this journey together:

1. Speak the baptismal promises out loud each day. Sometimes we need to hear ourselves say what we believe. Speaking our beliefs embeds them more fully into our being.

2. Read and reflect on Jesus' ministry as often as you can. Give as much to study and reflection of his ministry and teaching as you to reading, listening, or watching the news.
3. Ask yourself each evening, what of Jesus' ministry and teaching informs my thoughts and response to this day.

Next week there will be three opportunities for us to gather online:

Prayers and Reflections on Pandemic, Racism, and Protest – Members of Namaste will join me as we co-lead a time to share our hopes, worries, and fear in an uncertain time. We will talk about actions to end racism. This gathering will begin and end with prayers of lament and petition.

- Monday, June 8 at 6:30 PM, via Zoom
- Thursday, June 11 at 6:30 PM, via Zoom

Diocese of Newark Memorial Service – For all who have died during restricted distancing protocols.

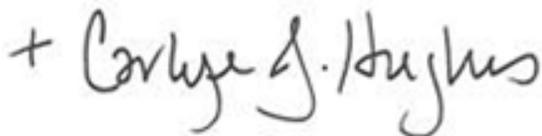
- Saturday, June 13 at 10 AM, via Zoom

(Please save these dates and times – further details about these online gatherings will be announced.)

We have traveled a tough part of the journey with God's help. While I cannot promise that the rest will be easier, I know that if we intentionally follow the way of love, God will guide us into a transformation as individuals, church, community, and nation that is more than we can ask or imagine.

You remain in my prayers and I hope to see you at one of next week's gatherings.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Carlye J. Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes
XI Bishop of Newark

If anyone needs to reach our bookkeeper Mike Geiger, please email him directly at mikegeiger1@aol.com