



March 27, 2020

News for All the Saints

All Saints' Memorial Church, Navesink, NJ

www.allsaintsnavesink.org

Greetings from All Saints' Island....or at least, that's how it feels. But thanks to the internet, I think I've been just as busy. On-line worship is a whole new skill set (one I have just begun to explore). I miss all of you, and I am sure you miss one another as well.

I pray, and will continue to pray, that you and yours are safe and well. While the case counts and number of deaths continues to rise alarmingly, and it can be scary—it does not tell the whole story. I have seen, as I am sure many of you have, heart-warming stories of drive-by birthday greetings, neighbors dining together (and apart), seated along the street and across from others on their side of the street. There are funny video's, beautiful videos of singing or performances, You-Tube video's being made of people reading books to kids, prayer being offered on line—so many people doing their best to share of themselves. Some are doing fund-drives, others are gathering supplies for healthcare workers—those who along with first responders are truly on the front lines., not to mention store clerks, warehouse workers, and so many others.

It struck me while reading the Magnificat, the prayer lifted up by Mary in response to the Angel's visit and her visit to Elizabeth, that no matter how wealthy or powerful or famous you are—Covid-19 does not care. And it is those who usually escape our attention—the store clerks, the postal workers, the hospital workers and nurses, those who know how to clean and disinfect our facilities, and others like them—that they are the ones we revere right now. The ones on whom our lives depend., the ones putting themselves out there time and again. And often, they are amongst the least paid in many ways. Maybe , just maybe, when this is over, that appreciation will carry over into our pay structures, etc. (I am an optimist at heart). Maybe not. But regardless, as Christians, we are to hold each person as valuable as the next. That's why we practice the social distancing mandate—because each person is of value and deserves every possible chance to stay well. That is how we show love.

I ask you to show love in other ways too—appreciate those still out there on the front lines, share of yourselves with others (online or on the phone), take care of yourself, practice lots of forgiveness. This trial of a time will come to an end—even if it seems endless now. But the key question is—who will we be after this is over? Let's hope we will more grateful, more compassionate, kinder, and loving—and that our world will be too.

Mother Debbie

JOIN US FOR ON-LINE WORSHIP!

Sunday Morning Prayer
at 10:15 am



Wednesday Healing Service Prayers
at 10 am

Find us on Facebook Live

<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintschurchnavesink/>

Find bulletins and links at: www.allsaintsnavesink.org

Finances

Finances are no doubt a concern for all right now. There are a number who can work from home, or whose employers will continue to pay for some time; but for many, no work means no pay. Not to mention, the falling stock market impacts 401K balances and other investments. Finances are a concern for All Saints' too—no weekly collections affects our income substantially, and the falling market affects our limited investments. If you submitted a pledge for 2020, we respectfully ask that you try to keep it up as you are able. As we work to setup on-line options, **you can still mail your payments to the All Saints' address at:**

P.O. Box 326, Navesink, NJ 07752.

The parish, of course, continues to have financial obligations for utilities, insurance and other fixed costs—as well as staff costs. Inasmuch as we are able, we are committed to fully paying staff as long as we can. We have some savings which we can draw on, if necessary, to get through about six weeks or so.

One on-line option we are getting ready to launch is a text-to-give system, which will be handled through our new Church membership data base system, called *Breeze*. Look for more information on that coming soon. Breeze is a cloud based system through which ministry leaders can manage communications, where we can take event registrations, and process on-line giving, among other things.

Pastoral Care

Mother Debbie and Deacon Michelle are committed to being available in any way we can be. While in-person visits are discouraged now except in the case of emergency, we are available by phone, email or text. The best number to reach Mother Debbie is 732-492-1943, and her mail is mother.debbie@comcast.net. And while we will be checking in with people, please also reach out and check in with one another. Now more than ever, we need some sort of connection.

Meetings

Vestry and other meetings are or can be on-going, via Zoom, a videoconferencing service the parish has had for a year. It is easy to use, and the Zoom app can be downloaded onto a computer, phone or tablet. Once downloaded, if you receive an invitation to a Zoom meeting, just click on the link offered, and it should open up and launch for you.

We are also working on embedding Zoom into our Facebook live so we can have additional voices during on-line worship.

Zoom can be used for bible and book studies as well, stay tuned!

USEFUL LINKS

All Saints' Website: <https://allsaintsnavesink.org/>

All Saints' Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/allsaintschurchnavesink/>

New Jersey Government Covid19 Site: <https://covid19.nj.gov/> (or Call : 211)

Diocese of New Jersey Covid19 site: <https://dioceseofnj.org/covid-19-guidance/>

Includes links to Resources, On-line worship and studies

Legal Aid Society of Monmouth County: <https://monmouthlegalaid.com/>

DEACON'S DOINGS

Dear Fellow Saints!

Corrie Ten Boom, a woman famous for her accounts of how God brought her through a German Concentration camp during WW2, author of numerous books, once told a story of how she was hospitalized with a fracture. There she was with numerous speaking engagements scheduled and stuck in a hospital bed. When she prayed, God spoke to her - along these lines **"Corrie, you have been so busy lately, you don't spend time with Me like you used to. I have missed you."** ...¹

As I write to you today, I join you with my thoughts of at times feeling overwhelmed, anxious and just plain numb. We are constantly getting bombarded by the news of Covid-19, in every area - news, social media, emails. It has peppered our movements, our conversations and our daily interactions. As a person who is immune compromised, I feel the worry of what may happen ... Then, I have to check myself and think of my, nay, Our Papa because the tendency is there to turn legitimate concern into illegitimate worry. Legitimate concern is being **responsible** to mind the information we have been given - to observe social distancing, be mindful of what we touch, wash our hands, stay away from crowds and stay home. Worry is when situation controls you and your feelings and thoughts run amuck (i.e. worse case scenarios). Please remember: If we react in fear, we can't respond in Faith! I trust, believe & feel that in the midst of all this Our Father - **God is here with Us** - Our Lighthouse in the dark - **"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light upon my path"**. In this challenge to our way of living and our well being; I believe this is an opportunity. It's a chance to get to know God, ourselves and each other. A chance to recognize what's important and what's not ... A chance to respond with kindness to our neighbor and love one another ...

So Let us discuss the power of our God : **"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever."** The Our Father prayer that Jesus left us as a legacy begins with a statement that God is a loving father; it ends with a reminder that God is still the all powerful creator of the universe. He has the power to shape stars and galaxies, and yet He chooses to care for us fallible humans and guide us home to Him. As this prayer comes full circle by closing with a reminder that all things originate in God. And it's then that I feel the need to express gratitude and appreciation for the beauty of all I survey.

And now for the closing.....

The Lord's Prayer is a fascinating, complex, yet surprisingly simple prayer. The Lord's Prayer, and most Christian prayers, ends with a simple word, "Amen." So as we end our study of the Our Father prayer - Let us discuss - **Amen**. We say it without thinking, "What does this word mean?" What does Amen mean in Hebrew?

Origins of **Amen**

It is spoken to express solemn ratification or agreement. It means "it is so" or "so it be." **Amen** is derived from the **Hebrew** *āmēn*, which means "certainty," "truth," and "verily."

It's more than just a holy period at the end of our prayers, a word that signifies to everyone involved that the prayer is over. The word, "amen," says something about how Christians approach prayer and the promises that God has given us.

When we say, "amen," we are acknowledging that God has promised to hear us and commanded us to pray. That's exactly how Martin Luther explains the word when he writes in his *Small Catechism* , "That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and heard;

DEACON'S DOINGS...Continued

for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised that He will hear us. Amen, Amen; that is, Yes, Yes, it shall be so.”² Often “**amen**” is a response, by which someone other than the speaker confirms the speaker’s words. It acknowledges that the word spoken is valid and true.

“*Amen*” means that we have confidence that God listens to our prayers and responds to them. We have the command to pray at all times for all our cares, not just the prayer that Jesus taught us. We use the word, “amen,” to show our trust that God listens to us. In the Lord’s Prayer, we have a double-promise: Jesus commanded us to pray these very words when the disciples asked him to teach them to pray. We know that the prayer that Jesus taught is the highest and most holy of prayers. When we say, “Amen,” to it, we know that God listens to us.

You know my fondness for acronyms ... so here goes

A – Always **M**- Ministering to our **E** - Every **N** - Need

Prayer is our special way of talking to God, so remember to pray as many times as you can or need to. God loves you and wants to know everything about you and how you’re doing every day.

In closing, I hope this study has opened your eyes to see and feel this prayer in a new way. To **not** say this prayer by rote or take it for granted or just part of a routine. To appreciate the gift we have been given. To say the **Our Father** prayer is a blessing and a privilege. Our needs are not separate, because all of us are one. Honestly, when it comes down to it – We all want to know that we mattered and that we are loved! What I think about you, I will think about myself. What I see in myself, I will see in you. It’s only by seeing our differences in the light of truth that we can accept our Oneness as children of God. Amen!

Deacon Michelle

From Central America

Nicaragua

Our Father, who is and of this our land,
May your name be blessed in our incessant
search for justice and peace.
May your kingdom come for those who have
for centuries awaited life with dignity.
May your will be done on earth and in
heaven,
And in the church of Central America,
A church on the side of the poor.
Give us today our daily bread,
To build a new society.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who have trespassed
against us
Do not let us fall into the temptation of be-
lieving ourselves already to be new men and
women.
And deliver us from the evil of war,
And from the evil of forgetting that our lives
and life of this country are in your hands.
Amen.

From the Torah -

Ancient Hebrew

O Cosmic Birther of all radiance and vibration.
Soften the ground of our being and carve out a
space within us where your Presence can
abide.
Fill us with your creativity so that we may be
empowered to bear the fruit of your mission.
Let each of our actions bear fruit in accordance
with your desire,
Endow us with the wisdom to produce and
share what each being needs to grow and
flourish.
Untie the tangled threads of destiny that bind
us, As we release others from the entangle-
ment of past mistakes.
Do not let us be seduced by that which would
divert us from our true purpose, Illuminate
the opportunities of the present moment.
For you are the ground and the fruitful vision,
the birth, power and fulfillment,
As all is gathered and made whole once again.
ĀMĒN

From Deacon Michelle:

Women's Sharing and Bible Study—in lieu of meeting on March 28

I hope you are all well ... **It's Spring. Life Goes On?** Last week, I was caught off-guard by a calendar notice declaring the 1st day of spring. So much of life has been put on hold by the coronavirus pandemic—our schedules cleared and events canceled—that part of me had forgotten that we'd still proceed with the seasons as planned. Sure enough, my backyard is abloom with hyacinths, crocus and daffodils. With no regard for lockdowns or distancing, the flowers have come forth as they do every year, scattering a thick dusting of yellow pollen everywhere to alert anyone who didn't happen to look at the calendar that spring is really here. It's the first of a string of reminders that life goes on—in its own way.

We love to think of life in seasons. The church calendar gives us rhythms —now we wait, now we sacrifice, now we celebrate. Christians have embraced the language of “seasons” of life, implying that God gives us windows and opportunities that will change and evolve as we do. Plus, people cling to the changing of the seasons, gleefully breaking out our walking shoes on the first day when the winter chill is gone or clamoring for the return of the pumpkin donuts in the fall.

It's comforting to go through the rhythms knowing another season is coming, that there is something else ahead and something familiar to return to, that whatever we're in the midst of now will not last forever. This coronavirus scare started as a short season: two weeks to avoid crowds and self-quarantine if you could. But as public health and government officials revise their recommendations, the trajectory keeps extending. Schools that were initially off for a few weeks have called off classes for the rest of the year. First spring sports seasons were delayed, now the Summer Olympics won't go on as planned.

There is nothing familiar or comforting about a difficult season that has no foreseeable end. It made me think about the endurance and faith required to face what's ahead...

To those facing their darkest days, I also want to say it's just a season. It's easier to say that than telling them it might not get better. **Jeremiah 6:14 reads**, “They heal the wound of my people lightly, saying ‘Peace, peace,’ where there is no peace,” she wrote. “We often want to offer the ‘light’ words because we desire peace more than actual healing.

Just as God gives us deep healing for our doubts, I trust that he will orchestrate the healing of our country and our world in the midst of a pandemic like none of us alive have ever seen. It may not come according to our timetables or projections, but we know that he will remain with us, hear our cries, and comfort us in our suffering.

As COVID-19 sends the globe into crisis, it lends to small and helpless. Perhaps, feeling small is the best reminder to pray. Prayer is how we actively practice believing, so simply confidently, that God has the whole world in his hands. It's where we let petitions and praises shape our anxieties and worries into prayers, “letting God know our concerns”. Prayer is never the last resort of God's people. It's our first point of action.

With that in mind, here are a list of prayers to pray during this pandemic. Each one addresses the .specific needs of a specific community.

For the sick and infected: God, heal and help. Sustain bodies and spirits. Contain the spread of infection.

For our vulnerable populations: God, protect our elderly and those suffering from chronic disease. Provide for the poor, especially the uninsured.

For the young and the strong: God, give them the necessary caution to keep them from unwittingly spreading this disease. Inspire them to help.

For our local, state, and federal governments: God, help our elected officials as they allocate the necessary resources for combating this pandemic. Help them to provide more tests.

For our scientific community, leading the charge to understand the disease and communicate its gravity: God, give them knowledge, wisdom, and a persuasive voice.

For the media, committed to providing up-to-date information: God, help them to communicate with appropriate seriousness without causing panic .

Continued....

For those with mental health challenges who feel isolated, anxious, and helpless: God, provide them every necessary support.

For the homeless, unable to practice the protocols of social distancing in the shelter system: Protect them from disease, and provide isolation shelters in every city.

For international travelers stuck in foreign countries: God, help them return home safely and quickly.

For workers in a variety of industries facing layoffs and financial hardship: God, keep them from panic, and inspire your church to generously support them.

For families with young children at home for the foreseeable future: God, help mothers and fathers to partner together creatively for the care and flourishing of their children. For single mothers and fathers, grow their networks of support.

For parents who cannot stay home from work but must find care for their children: God, present them with creative solutions.

For those in need of regular therapies and treatments that must now be postponed: God, help them to stay patient and positive.

For business leaders making difficult decisions that affect the lives of their employees: God, give these women and men wisdom, and help them to lead self-sacrificially.

For pastors and church leaders faced with the challenges of social distancing: God, help them to creatively imagine how to pastor their congregants and love their cities well.

For college and university students, whose courses of study are changing, whose placements are cancelled, whose graduation is uncertain: God, show them that while life is uncertain, their trust is in you.

For Christians in every neighborhood, community, and city: May your Holy Spirit inspire us to pray, to give, to love, to serve, and to proclaim the gospel, that the name of Jesus Christ might be glorified around the world.

For frontline health care workers, we thank you for their vocational call to serve us. We also pray:

- God, keep them safe and healthy. Keep their families safe and healthy.
- God, help them to be knowledgeable about the diagnosis and treatment of this disease, as well as the changing protocols.
- God, help them to stay clear-minded in the midst of the surrounding panic.
- God, deliver them from anxiety for their own loved ones (aging parents, children, spouses, roommates).
- God, give them compassion for every patient in their care.
- God, provide for them financially, especially if they fall ill and are unable to work.
- God, help Christians in health care to exhibit extraordinary peace, so that many would ask about the reason for their hope. Give them opportunities to proclaim the gospel.
- God, we trust that you are good and do good.

Teach us to be your faithful people in this time of global crisis. Help us to follow in the footsteps of our faithful shepherd, Jesus, who laid down his life for the sake of love. Glorify his name as you equip us with everything needed for doing your will. Amen.

Let us go to our Bible study.

Book of Genesis Chapters 16 -21.

These questions are to review aspects of the readings.

God responds to Abraham by acting out a covenant ritual where He, God, takes full responsibility for the terms. How does that help you grow in confidence in God?

Sarah's plan with Hagar was to help God in the fulfillment of his promises of a son. What are some ways that you have tried to "help God?" How did that turn out?

Why don't Abram and Sarai seem like logical choices for God's plan? (18:11) • How can you relate to Abraham/Sarah in this story?

How does God begin fulfilling his promise to Abraham? (21:1-7)

I pray for safekeeping for us, our families, our communities and our world

For His Sake, Your Deacon Michelle

SANITIZE... DISTANCE...&..PRAY



Pictures from All Saints', an early Spring evening.....



Reminder

**All campus buildings are closed through May 1st,
though this date is subject to change.**

**The grounds and cemetery are open; please maintain the
recommended minimum six foot distance between persons.**

**Office phone, mail and email continue to be checked on a regular
basis; please call contact Mother Debbie for immediate assistance.**

Prayer during Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or
making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips
Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country,
let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors. Amen.