

THE ANCHOR



Newsletter

Fr. H. Alan Leonard, Rector
Patricia E. Keltie, Editor Emeritus
Kathe Christensen, Editor

Episcopal Church of the Advent

Franklin & Washington Streets

PO Box 261, Cape May, NJ

08204

609-884-3065

adventsecretary@comcast.net

capemayadvent.org

Volume 45 Number 7 July & August 2024

Dear Friends,

I had a wonderful six-week sabbatical. Thank you to the wardens, vestry, and all of you for your support. I very much appreciate how people came together to take care of Advent during my absence. Sabbatical time really helped me rest, rejuvenate, and focus on how to improve my ministry in order to be a better priest for you. I am truly happy to be back at work and look forward to sharing my sabbatical experiences.

Brenda and I spent the first three weeks of my sabbatical in Scotland. After a few days exploring Edinburgh, we drove south to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, then back north into the Highlands. We took a ferry to the Orkneys (some of Scotland's northern islands), visited the Hebrides (the western islands), the island of Iona, and spend a couple of days in Glasgow before flying home. Surprisingly, the weather was lovely with clear skies and pleasantly warm temperatures for our first two weeks, but typical Scottish weather — overcast, rainy, and cool — returned the third week.

In Scotland, we saw religious sites, including churches and other Christian communities: from ruined cathedrals and abbeys to active congregations of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) and the Scottish Episcopal Church. It was a glimpse of Christianity through the centuries and how this history informs our faith today.

Lindisfarne was an important center of Celtic Christianity under Saints Aiden and Cuthbert in the 6th century. Today, the abbey lies in ruins but a nearby Scottish Episcopal Church has an active congregation. Parts of their building are almost as old as the abbey! God's church is still alive in that community. This was a place that felt especially holy to me, perhaps because of the centuries of prayer that have sanctified the ground. When we are faithful in prayer and worship in our church, we help sanctify the place for future generations.

Many of the historic churches we visited were former Roman Catholic Churches that became Presbyterian congregations in the 16th century. They often had empty niches where statues once stood; they were destroyed when the Protestant Reformation

refocused people's worship on God, away from statues or relics of saints. I came away from these places thinking how important it for us to remember that our worship is about God and not about a pretty historic building, but that heritage is important and should be honored even when change is necessary.

One church we visited seemed more focused of the tomb of Scotland's beloved King Robert the Bruce (1274-1329) than on the oldest parts of the building, built by St. Margaret of Scotland (1045-1093). Patriotism has its place, but I would prefer to focus on the work of a saint who cared for the poor and built hospitals and schools to help those in need. My takeaway? We, too, need to remember and honor the departed saints of our own church and their ministries in Cape May.

The most inspirational religious site I visited was the Iona Community. Iona was founded by St. Columba, who came from Ireland in 563 AD. It thrived until the Protestant Reformation, when the community was disbanded and left to fall into ruin, like so many abbeys in Scotland. But their story changed in 1938 when a clergyman led a group of people to rebuild the abbey and founded an ecumenical community. The modern community worships in the rebuilt abbey church and is focused on peace and social justice issues. Iona attracts many visitors today; some people come to stay in the monastery and participate in the community life. It is impressive to see a Christian community dating back to the 6th century thriving today with vision and purpose. It inspires me to see Advent have vision and purpose so we, too, may thrive beyond our time here.

There was so much more to both the Scotland trip and the rest of my sabbatical, which I will tell you about in another newsletter article. Once again, thank you all for your support. I look forward to continuing to share this experience in sermons, articles and a presentation with pictures from our trip. I am so honored to be your rector and to be part of the Advent community.

Faithfully,
Alan +

ADVENT COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

We had our first Advent Community Breakfast on Saturday, June 22nd. We served over 50 guests, making sure each one was well fed and inviting them to learn more about the Church of the Advent. Feedback from our guests was very positive, thanks to our terrific team of volunteers. This was another great example of the ECM and ECW working together for the benefit of the Church.

Special thanks to Alison Cioffi-Brown, Scott Griffith, Dave Hammond, Richard Hudson, Skeeter Lee, Carol Mohr, Larry Morier, Carol Obligado, Lew and Joanne Price, Basia Smith, Janet Van Syckle, Joy Wadleigh and Sharon Werth.

We have three additional breakfasts scheduled this summer (July 20th, August 24th, and September 7th). We will be looking for volunteers to help with these events,

as well. This is a great way to let our community and guests learn more about our Church. Please plan to join us with your family and friends!

Again, thanks to all our volunteers who helped make this a success.

— Peter Van Syckle

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

There are many orphan dishes on the counter in the kitchen that need to find their owners. We would like to help them find their homes as we don't have room in the kitchen for all of them. So if one (or more) of them are yours, please take them home by the end of August or we will have to rehome them. And thank you for filling those dishes with delicious food for our receptions. We appreciate it.

— Carol Obligado

WE NEED SUNDAY WORSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

Each Sunday morning we have a few faithful folks who assist at each service to make sure the services flow smoothly. We really need more of you to participate in these rewarding ministries - ushers, readers, and chalcists are needed at each service and livestream operators are needed at the 10:30 service. Volunteers for each ministry will receive instructions so you will know what to do when. Our goal is to have enough participants so that those serving only need to be on duty once a month instead of every week as some currently are doing. Please contact the church office if you can join our Sunday service ministries. Thank you.

DIOCESAN CHOIR CAMP

This year Choir Camp begins on Sunday, July 14 and ends on Thursday, July 18. Diocesan Choir Camp is sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey and Church of the Advent. The camp takes place in Cape May and focuses on choral music, community building, and mutually supportive Christian fellowship. Choristers of all skill levels return annually and stay in the historic Holiday House, run by the Girl's Friendly Society of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. During their stay, the camp choristers receive individualized attention in dynamic, creative, structured, and hands-on setting from caring teachers who are accomplished professionals in their areas of instruction. Free time includes excursions to the Cape May Mall and boardwalk, trips to the beach, a scavenger hunt and more. The week concludes with choral festival Evensong on Thursday, July 18 at 4:00 PM: everyone is invited.

The choir camp experience gives young choristers the opportunity to join with peers from communities throughout the Diocese of New Jersey and Newark. Young singers who are ages 10-18 are welcome to register and they do not have to be from the Diocese of New Jersey. The cost of the camp is \$495 per camper for lodging and food. Local singers are welcome to attend at a reduced rate if they choose to commute and not stay at Holiday House. Contact adventsecretary@comcast.net for details.

THANK YOU

One of the awkward moments that occur in life is the experience of walking through doorways into unfamiliar settings. Relying on instinctive habit, we even find ourselves at times "pushing" against doors marked "pull" as we try to enter or exit. We discover "the rules" by trial and error. We wind up stalling for a time because we don't know the customs of a given situation or place to which we are new, and we are all new at one time or another.

It is here I suspect a community of faith has a choice in welcoming the new person—the stranger, to allow one awkwardly to discover the way things are done locally, or to offer the grace of hospitality socially to ease the learning curve. God chose to endow creation with such grace, giving us the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology to understand the rules governing physical existence so that we might have lives. Jesus, the man from Nazareth, morally clarifies life, he points to the ease of God's love and to himself as the doorway to living in the Kingdom of God (John 1:9). The early followers of the risen Jesus even named their journey in faith with him "the Way." In the current era, our church implements a theology of "inclusion" to remedy the awkwardness of newness or difference. Jane Carol and I have come to the personal view that this is "doorless" Christianity. We imagine an archway of hospitality that ushers all into the Kingdom through sustained acts of kindness. This hospitality applies to welcomes and departures.

Jane Carol and I always will remember the evening of Friday, June 21st as a departure through a gracious and generous portal into our future eased by Church of the Advent's warm hospitality and generous blessings. Together, we recalled our time in this community as only a family can recall and celebrate a passage of its own. We were invited to return and visit our "church home" repeatedly. We felt the sealing of a permanent adoption in word and spirit.

So it will be wherever we may worship. We will lift up our hearts together with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven—the communion of saints past and present—remembering our brothers and sisters of the Episcopal Church of Advent, Cape May, in joy and thanksgiving, always.

— Sam and Jane Carol Wilson

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The Church of the Advent Education Committee, along with the Sunday School Program, is proud to announce the return of our summertime Vacation Bible School. This year we will meet nightly beginning August 12th through August 16th, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM, at the Cape May Point State Park. Our volunteers will provide activities such as bible storytelling, arts and crafts, recreation, and science. Any questions please reach out to Trisha Andrzejczak at trishaann423@gmail.com. Registration information is attached to this issue of The Anchor.

We look forward to seeing everyone and learning to trust God in the face of fear and challenges.

— Trisha Andrzejczak



ECW Christmas Bazaar December 7 from 10:00 to 2:30

You're thinking it is a little early to think about ECW's biggest fundraiser of the year, but it is never too early to put things aside to donate to the bazaar. So here are a few reminders of what we are looking for as donations to the bazaar.

SOUP-TO-GO: get those recipes out so that they are handy when the time comes.

CRAFTS AND HAND MADES: Summertime crafts and needlework are fun. We will also have a workshop. Stay tuned.

RAFFLE BASKETS: Get your items for a gift basket while you have more time this summer.

JEWELRY: A good rainy day activity is cleaning out your jewelry box. Donations always welcome.

CHRISTMAS PASTS: Please consider looking through your gently used decorations for things that are still good, but you want a new look.

Just for your planning, other tables at the bazaar are GREENS and BAKED GOODS. We cannot do this without you!

Thanks,

ECW

WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday: The Holy Eucharist at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

The 10:30 service is also livestreamed on YouTube

Wednesday: Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m.

Thursday: The Holy Eucharist at 12:00 Noon