



Red Door in the time of COVID 19

June 14 - 21, 2020



The role of dirt in our lives

I have often thought that really interesting people are those who get their hands dirty: sculptors, woodworkers, bakers, gardeners, to name just a few. Surely you can think of others, and perhaps you, yourself, engage in work or a hobby that requires you to get your hands dirty.

Life in any democracy is messy, and it can be downright dirty. Here in the United States of America, life is messy and for far too many Americans, life has been way too dirty for far too long. The same is true of much human life in South and Central America, Europe, Asia, Australia – all over the world, in fact. The sins of racism and white supremacy are hardly unique to the US. However, they are deeply woven into our civic fabric when we consider the many decades and centuries of work and struggle before all people who are born or naturalized into the US won not just the right to vote but also the elimination of impediments to voting, such as poll taxes and literacy tests.

A challenge for many of us is to broaden both the breadth and depth of our relationships and connections by venturing outside the “bubbles” of our routines and habits. Studies of brain health show that simply taking different roads strengthens the diversity of the neural pathways in our heads! How can we likewise strengthen the diversity of our social networks?

An idea that I am considering for St. John's is inviting six people from six different households to gather at the rectory once a week for four weeks as a way for us to begin to connect with each

other beyond “hi, how are you” and the weather. Not sure when this might launch, but please know that I am thinking about it, and consider if you would like to feel connected within this faith community on a deeper level. And, if you have found ways to broaden and deepen the diversity of your social network, please share them with your St. John’s community, and thank you!

Peace, and all blessings,
Henny+

A Statement on Race

By our bishop, The Right Rev’d. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry

In the last two weeks something changed in America; a strong wind is blowing. The murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, captured on video and shared worldwide, caused a shift in the collective conscience of many Americans. Something was laid bare that as a nation we often don’t see or simply choose to ignore: the unchecked use of force and disproportionate violence by law enforcement against people and communities of color.

Acts of violence against people of color are not limited to law enforcement personnel. Racist behavior that demeans and demonizes men and women with black and brown skin happens regularly in all areas of our country. We have seen it on video over and over and over again. These are more than individual acts of racism; they are a culmination of actions that create a culture that values one group of people over another. The murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and countless other people of color, are the devastating results of this sin of systemic racism.

How we act, how we respond, will determine whether a wind of chaos and destruction will blow through our country, or one filled with the scouring power of the Holy Spirit stripping away our sins of passivity and complicity. A holy, scouring wind that will once again eviscerate the barriers that blind us to our common humanity.

I pray that we as the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, and all who join us, will respect the dignity of every human being and embody this in what we do, collectively and individually, as citizens and faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Will you join me, and bring all of the gifts God has given you to this journey? If we do this together – ALL of us – we will, with God’s help, begin to create a just and more equitable world where all of us – ALL may flourish.

If you would like to join Bishop Perry in this work, visit edomi.org and add your name and the name of our church.

Bishop Perry also asks us to share this statement on our social media and invite 5 friends to sign and share it.

Sources of information from our diocese and The Episcopal Church

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To learn what is happening in our own diocese, visit <https://www.edomi.org/news/newsletter/> to sign up to receive important announcements, notices of events, job opportunities, and much more.

Current book discussion concludes June 17 at 11:00

A collection of his sermons, *Crazy Christians A Call to Follow Jesus* by our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is available from Church Publishing (800-242-1918) for \$18.95 and from online retailers. We will discuss the final chapters, 9 through 13, this week.

Participate via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89149196582> or via telephone by dialing 1 253 215 8782 and then enter 891 4919 6582.

Know of another book that you would like to read and discuss? Email the author and title to revhenny@stjohnswestland.com.

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