

THE BELFRY

Trinity Episcopal Church | Wethersfield, CT

Inside This Issue

- 1 From Our Pastor
- 2 Readings
- 3 From Our Wardens
- 4 Outreach
- 5-6 Announcements, Prayer
- 7 Our Prayer List
- 8 A Prayer for Parish Mission

Services

Worship services for every day of the week (including Morning Prayer, Compline and Sunday Eucharist) will continue to be recorded until further notice. These services can be accessed on Trinity's website at trinityepiscopalweth.org

Please leave a contact number at the office if you want to participate in a live ZOOM Morning Prayer on Wednesdays.

From Our Pastor

Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do. And the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:8-9

Dear Trinity Family,

Saint Paul wrote the words above while he was in prison in Rome. He was waiting to be tried before Caesar and he knew he was probably going to die. In the midst of those grim circumstances, he wrote to his fellow Christians with words of encouragement. Focus on what is true, lovely, just, pure, gracious, excellent and praise-worthy. Focus on what God is doing in our lives. And when we do that, God's peace will be the most prominent feature of our lives.

For the past three months, we have all been in a prison of sorts. Our lives have been restricted in order to protect ourselves and our neighbors. And some of the people near to us have died from the coronavirus. I personally know three who have died and I know several people who have lost loved ones. One friend of mine lost two of her brothers in two weeks.

How are we, as people of faith and followers of Jesus, supposed to respond to this threatening and confining and often depressing reality? The best thing we can do is what Saint Paul encouraged his friends to do in another confining and threatening and depressing time: focus on the good stuff God is doing in our lives and in our faith community.

We have not been able to meet for worship together in three months. Many of you have told me how much you don't like that reality. I can assure you, I don't like it any better than you do. However, I try to practice what I preach. I try to look at the good things God is doing in our parish community during this unusual time.

(continued on page 2)



Study of a Flying Sparrow, between 1515 and 1520, Giovanni da Udine

Readings

June 7

Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Matthew 28:16-20

June 14

Proper 6

Genesis 18:1-15

Psalm 1, 10-17

Romans 5:1-8

Matthew 9:35-10:8

June 21

Proper 7

Genesis 21:8-21

Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

Romans 6:1b-11

Matthew 10:24-39

June 28

Proper 8

Genesis 22:1-14

Psalm 13

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

(FROM OUR PASTOR continued from page 1)

Ever since we stopped worshipping in the church building, we have been doing online services seven days a week. And we have had a remarkable and consistent response. Our Sunday services have been ‘attended’ by a steady average of 60 to 70 respondents every week, with a high of 103 on Easter. Our weekday services have been attended by an average of 20 to 30 each and every day. Our ZOOM Morning Prayer service on Wednesdays is attended by an average of 15 people each week. The same is true with our ZOOM Bible Study on Thursdays. This comes to a weekly average of about 250. To put this in context, we have not had this many weekly participants in worship services at Trinity for many, many, many years. Judging by these numbers, more of us are praying ‘together’ and we’re praying more consistently than ever before. This is very good news!!

And here is some more good news. People from many different places are writing to say how much the services mean to them. A friend of Father Darryl’s in Philadelphia has been watching every week and has decided to return to the Lord after many years of absence from Church. One middle-aged woman in Florida, a friend of mine for 40+ years, has re-dedicated her life to Jesus after being away from Church for many years. And her parents have done the same. One young man from Nigeria called me to say he watches the service every Sunday and is getting a lot out of the sermons. Two women, one from East Haven and one from West Haven, have been attending our Thursday Bible Study every week.

Whatever is true, lovely, just, pure, honorable and praiseworthy, focus on these things. Focus on what God is doing with and through our Church community.

We (the clergy, wardens and vestry members) are beginning to discuss what the next steps might be for reopening the church consistent with the guidelines of the State of Connecticut and the bishop of our diocese. Because we have an older demographic in our parish, we will be using extreme caution with whatever we decide to do in the future. And we will be letting you know more details when we have them. Whatever we decide to do, it will probably not be anything like ‘normal’ for a long while. Until a cure or a vaccine is found for COVID-19, it will continue to be a threat to members of our congregation. And we do not want to bring harm to anyone.

Please be patient and prayerful with us as we seek to discern God’s purpose for our future. And if you are disappointed with the speed of progress, please take some time to consider “whatever is true, lovely, just, pure, honorable and praiseworthy” about our current way of worshipping God and our being together by being apart.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Father Tom

Message From Our Wardens

Peace, I leave with you.

My peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid.

John 14:27

This verse from John is very comforting as we move forward in these times of uncertainty and unknowing. Connie, as warden, attends a ZOOM conference every Wednesday morning for an hour and reports back to the vestry, the contents and conversations. It is moderated by both bishops and is open to clergy and wardens from all across Connecticut.

Participants are invited to ask questions of the bishops, the chancellor or any other member of the diocesan staff. The questions are all about COVID-19 and what is happening in parishes. The bishops are working closely with other religious leaders and with the governor to chart the path forward.

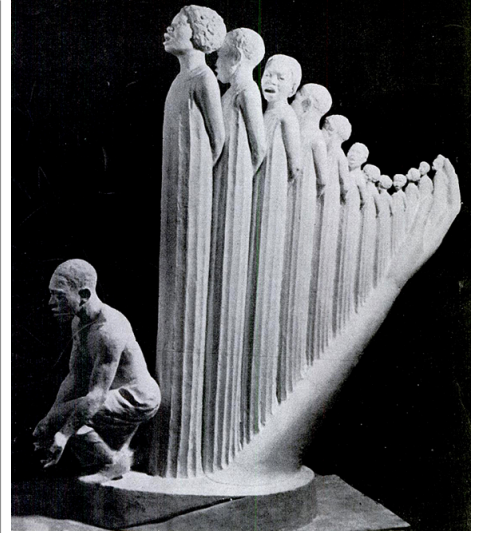
The initial phase or Phase I of the reopening of the state began on May 20. The governor did not specifically address houses of worship in his plans for reopening but the bishops, following CDC guidelines and the governor's recommendations, did develop protocols and directions with respect to in-person worship and the opening of church offices.

The two major recommendations are as follows. First, the diocesan guideline for in-person worship recommends that worshipping communities in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) should not return to in-person worship during Phase I which is anticipated to last until June 20. The second guideline from both the governor and ECCT is that individuals who are 65 and older continue to stay home.

Given these two primary recommendations from the governor's office and ECCT, it is clear that we should continue with the online Sunday Eucharist and Morning Prayer services in addition to the Bible Study on Thursday mornings and ZOOM Morning Prayer on Wednesdays. Father Tom, Father Darryl and the wardens are continuing to talk about the hows and whens of re-opening while we wait for updated guidelines and for the announced beginning of Phase II and what that may look like.

Whenever the stress and the angst of our present situation makes you feel like you cannot continue this way, with the uncertainty and the unknowing, read again the verse above and know and feel the peace that is offered.

In peace,
Rebecca, Warren and Connie



*Lift Every Voice and Sing,
Augusta Savage, 1939*

Visiting the Office during the Pandemic

In compliance with State guidelines and for the well-being of Linda and all who enter, we ask that if you plan to visit the Parish Office for any reason, *please wear a mask and gloves. Please assume someone will be in the office whenever you choose to go.* The office is used even when Linda is not there. Thank you for your caring and support.



Creation of Adam and Eve, 1792,
Russian lubok

Parish Leadership

PASTOR

The Rev. Thomas Furrer
For a pastoral emergency,
please call 860-212-6994.

CURATE

The Rev. Darryl Burke

STAFF

Linda Rubera, Administrator
Tuesday-Thursday, 9-12
operations@trinityepiscopalweth.org
860-529-6825

Dorothy LaBelle, Music Director
Nick Tracano, Sexton

VESTRY

Warren Blessing, Co-Warden
Connie Harasymiw, Co-Warden
Robert Heath, Treasurer
Leslie Jones, Clerk
Greg Joseph
Tina LaMorte
Cheryl Lewis
Rebecca Scruton, Co-Warden
J. R. Stanko
Ann Marie Stavola
Linda Traue

Outreach to Local, Regional and Worldwide Communities

Thank you letters have been received from South Park Inn, Hands on Hartford and Wethersfield Social Services for the recent donations from Trinity. Yaman, our Syrian friend, asked me to say thank you to everyone as her family so appreciates our help.

South Park Inn

In line with social distancing guidelines, we cannot bring donations to South Park Inn. We can, however, donate financially online at southparkinn.org/donate or, if you prefer to send a check, make it payable to 'South Park Inn' and mail to: South Park Inn, Office of Development, 75 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106.

Wethersfield Food Bank

Although we can't donate and deliver food to the Wethersfield Food Bank during the pandemic, many of us still want to help feed people who are hungry. The good news is that you can donate to the Wethersfield Department of Social Services Food Bank and Special Needs Fund. This fund is used to assist residents with different needs in addition to food insecurities. Simply mail a check to Town Hall, Attn. Wethersfield Food Bank, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, CT 06109.

Our Syrian American Family

Here again, following the guidelines of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) for COVID-19, we cannot take groceries and personal care items to the family we support. So far, parishioners have brought cash and items like toilet paper to Marilyn's home, and she is able to safely deliver it to the family.

Hands on Hartford

Hands on Hartford used our gift for the Community Crisis Fund which was established to enable them to continue to help the most vulnerable folks in the community as they address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Checks payable to Hands on Hartford can be mailed to 55 Bartholomew Ave., Hartford, CT 06106.

Thank You All for Keeping Up Your Pledges

Dear Trinity members,

I want to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who has kept up your pledge payments during the lock down. I have read many reports about churches around the country and right here in Connecticut, in which donations have dropped dramatically in the past three months. But not here.

Our treasurer Rob Heath reports that, through April, our pledge payments are about 3% below expectations. However, our expenses are about 9% below expectations due to lower heating, printing, cleaning and other things. So, as a result, we are doing very well at paying our bills and meeting our commitments.

I also want to thank everyone who has helped with the production of our seven-days-per-week worship schedule. First and foremost, we want to thank Leslie Jones, who spends many, many hours filming, editing and posting our worship services on YouTube. Also, we want to thank Joan Joseph for doing such a wonderful job of managing our website and adding so much content every week. We also wish to thank Clark Tomlinson for his help with lighting, sound and other logistics, Sal Basile for his wonderful musical leadership and, most recently, Dorothy Labelle for supplying organ and piano music and April Labelle for singing. We also want to thank Marc-Yves Regis (a professional photographer and not a Trinity member) who has loaned us some of his lighting equipment to make the videos easier to see. And we also want to thank Bishop Gordon and Rebecca Scruton and Father Darryl for conducting the regular worship services, Clark Tomlinson for leading ZOOM Morning Prayer on Wednesdays and Warren Blessing for hosting the ZOOM Bible Study on Thursdays.

I don't have any empirical proof, but my hunch is that the daily worship services are helping many of us to stay connected during this very unusual time in our church community life; and that the financial giving is a reflection of our feeling the continued connection.

This has been a challenging time for everyone. And we hope and pray that someday, we will return to something like 'normal' even though we know it will be a 'new normal' with unforeseen features.

Thank you all for your prayers, faithfulness and dedication.

Gratefully yours,
Father Tom



Detail from *Angel Appears to Sarah*,
Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, 1726

Sunday Holy Communion

For the Sunday service, we celebrate Holy Communion at 9 am. If you have a conflict at that time, you can tune in at any time. We encourage everyone to enter this service as fully as possible. When the Holy Communion is shared, we encourage everyone to pray this prayer.

Prayer for Receiving Spiritual Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are present in this Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, please enter my heart spiritually. I embrace you as if you are already here and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you.



Holy Trinity, Andrei Rublev, 1400

Business Report

Pledge Status (end of April)

Total Pledge	\$ 42,918
Received	\$ 44,310
Difference	\$ 1,392

Income/Expenses (end of March)

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	\$ 51,159	\$ 52,493
Expenses	\$ 47,777	\$ 52,493

If you'd like to learn more about the business of the church, you can check out the monthly vestry minutes on our website at trinityepiscopalweth.org/vestry-minutes and/or attend regular vestry meetings.

Our 'Behind the Scenes' Photo Journal

By Joan Joseph

It all began with seven photos from our Annual Paint Day on May 16. It got me thinking about the best way to share those pictures. And that led me to thinking about all of the other things currently happening at Trinity despite this coronavirus pandemic that has shuttered the physical doors to our house of worship. And so, Trinity's *Behind the Scenes* photo journal was born. Check out the photos of how our Sunday and Morning Prayer services 'magically' appear on our website and FaceBook page. See how ZOOM has become Trinity's meeting place for interactive Morning Prayer, Bible Study, Vestry Meetings, and Book Club gatherings. And enjoy some photos of your friends because it takes a village of people whose gifts from God enable Trinity to continue to spread His love. Check it out at trinityepiscopalweth.org/photo-gallery

Maintenance and Paint Day

By Warren Blessing



Even though we are not currently worshipping in our building, maintenance continues. We had a team of eight volunteers on May 16 painting exterior windows and doors. Everyone was outdoors and appropriately spaced apart. Windows and doors on the north and east sides were all painted. If we combine that with what the professional painter completed last month, we're looking pretty good.

The painter is returning in the next couple of weeks and will finish high areas. It is a great thing to have the exterior looking good in addition to protecting its longevity.

Another area that was attended to in the early winter was roof leakage from rain storms that was allowing water to run in several areas of the church. The masonry crew came and fixed the roof area where the leakage originated. This is something you will not notice, but makes for a more secure building.

So the building will be all set and awaiting our arrival.

Our Weekly Prayer List

May Your kingdom come and Your will be done.

MONDAY

Susanna, Mike & Avery	Kathy	Roger
Tom & Maryjane	Carol	Rose & Ray
Jimmy & Kristine	Ginny & Mike	Ginger
Ellie, Amy & Alexandria	Clark & Joyce	Anne
Josue, Kayla & Josue Jr.	Nancy, Cole & Tate	Mel & J.R.
Margarita & Hugues		

TUESDAY

J.P. & Mauricio	Tim	Bruce
Joan & Greg	Arline	Martha
Jane Helen	Linda	Sue
Arnold & Barbara	Nick	Mary Lou
Susan & David	William & Lilyan	Joan

WEDNESDAY

David	Sarah	Audrey
Denise	Vicki	Lorraine
Connie & Raymond	Bruce	Ken
Dorothy & Lauren	Michael & Cheryl	Joan
Paul & Keri	Jan	Dan
Denise & Carl		

THURSDAY

Warren & Lynda	Sarah	Ashley
Mark & Cheryl	Marilyn	Corinne
Judith & Charles	Taylor	Darren
Jessie, Tom & Bernadette	Billye & Jack	Barbara & Ed
Allison & Jamie	Heidi & Brianna	Leslie
Helen, Ben, Molly, Hannah & Andrew		

FRIDAY

William & Marion	Lorraine	Shirley
David & Mary	Rebecca & Gordon	Marilyn
Peter & Sheila	Rob & Nan	Michael
Geraldeen	Robert & Arney	Anne
Kirk, Tracey & Hayes	John & Diane	Sue
Garth, Melanie, Atlee & Phebe		

SATURDAY

Sal & Mimi	Judy	Donna
Nancy & Paul	Ray & Denise	Theo
Rob & Mitch	Tina & Peter	Barbara
Paula & Arthur	Carl & Sue	Darryl
Linda & Tom	Brooke, Fred & Lulu	
Patrick, Jennifer, Hannah & Lily		
Jerry, AnnMarie, Elizabeth, Catherine & Pete		



Sacrifice of Isaac, Armenian Gospel book, 1455

Bishop Scruton's Daily Prayer during this Pandemic

O Lord, keep bringing redemptive moments and actions out of this calamity day by day. Please open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son, our savior. Amen.

Evening Book Club

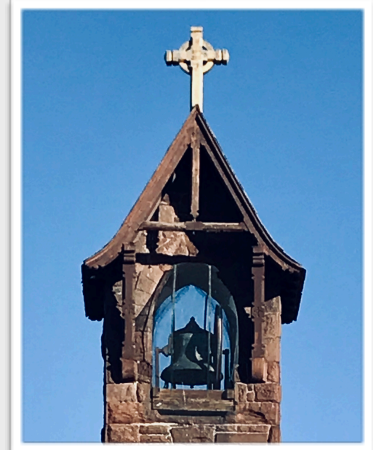
Save the date! The Evening Book Club will resume on Tuesday, September 8, at 5:45 pm (BYOE - Bring Your Own Everything) at the home of Judith Melchreit for our annual planning meeting. Bring a reading suggestion or two and your calendar. Our summer read-ahead choice for October is *Bad Blood* by John Carreyrou. Contact Joan Joseph at 860-666-4847 for more information.

A Prayer for Parish Mission

Dear and Gracious God,

Please send us the people we need in order to become the church You want us to be, and please send us the people who need us in order to become the people You want them to be. Help us to respond with love to those You send, making room for them at our table and in our hearts so that together we can share Your love with our neighbors in need both locally and around the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who met people where they were, loved and cared for them, and invited them into a deeper relationship with You.

Amen



The Belfry

The Belfry is a monthly publication of Trinity Episcopal Church, 300 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT. Send articles and photographs to lesliejonesie@gmail.com

The Belfry

Trinity Episcopal Church
300 Main Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109

If you prefer to receive The Belfry by email, please contact the office at operations@trinityepiscopalweth.org or 860-529-6825.