

Keynotes

May 2020



My Dear Friends,

It has been my pleasure and privilege to once again serve as your Supply priest. I have known many of you for “decades” and over the past few years have enjoyed getting to know all of you with fondness and appreciation. St. Peter's is a great parish family that among other things, through your Monday morning financial aid program, has manifested the belief that our responsibilities are to look beyond the parameters of our parish in an attempt to express our Lord's concern and care for others. Our parish family has been blessed over the years to have a great, competent, gracious and caring staff. Katherine, Jennifer, Doug and Vincent have “held the fort down” in so many significant ways that offered and continues to offer sustenance and strength to this parish family. And when they are in session I have certainly enjoyed the smiles, laughter and singing of our weekday church school and their teachers.



Obviously I miss, and I feel certain you also miss sharing with one another as we gathered as a parish family. I hope that the weekly Sunday Service video that is being offered is proving to be of value to each of you. We are trying to follow the Governor's information during this virus as well as the suggestions coming from our Bishop. We in no way want to risk the well-being of our parish family because of an urgent need to gather.

I especially want to thank our Deacon Katherine for her participation in our worship service and Brian for doing our tech work. I am especially grateful for Doug and the members of our choir who offer such joy and spiritual sustenance during these services. We purposely follow the “distancing rule” during the service. And again, I thank Jennifer for preparing our bulletin each week.

Our Vestry and Rector Search Committee continue to do their work as safely as they can. My blessings to each of you and please call Katherine or me if a significant pastoral or personal issue arises where we might be of value to you.



Give the Gift of Life

Mark your calendars for the annual St. Peter's Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, May 26th, the day after **Memorial Day**, from noon to six in All Saints' Hall. Our drive is especially important as many drives have been cancelled this spring. All donors will have their temperature taken before entering. Social distancing and other changes will be in place for your increased safety. I gave at the last public drive to see for myself what procedures were being used before committing St. Peter's as a site. You may sign up online at redcrossblood.org by entering our code, **ST Peters** (yes, written *just like that*), and following the directions. You may also sign up by E-mailing, calling, or texting me. Bakers, greeters, and kitchen help will also be needed, so let me know if you would like to volunteer. *Most urgently, you are asked to consider donating a pint of blood and passing the word to friends and neighbors. "Every two seconds, over 43,000 times a day, someone in the U.S. needs blood."*

Sallie Scales, 944-4842(cell) or 946-9443(home) scales.sallie@gmail.com

Dear Parishioners,

Your stewardship committee and finance group continue to work through the pandemic. To those who have continued to send your pledges- Thank You! The church appreciates your thoughtfulness. To those that have come by the church and dropped off pledges, Thank You! To those who pay on-line or by credit card, thank you, that is the easiest way for all and makes the cash flow most effectively.

Our needs are many as the church continues to do work in the community. Miss you all dearly and hope to see you soon.

Your Stewardship Committee!



Help us keep in touch with you!

Please make sure and contact the church office if you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address.

Send updated information to jennifer@saintpetersnc.org or call 946-8151.



Giving to Saint Peter's has never been easier!

*Automatic Credit/Debit Card Payments

*Gifts of Securities

*If you are over 70 1/2, consider directing all or a portion of your RMD from your IRA to the church. Please check with your tax advisor to see if you would benefit from using any of these options.

*Also, to make pledge payments or to give for any reason, you can do so from our website via the online giving link at www.saintpetersnc.org.

*Mail your payment to PO Box 985, Washington, NC 27889

If you need assistance with any of these options, email or call Jennifer Spivey at the church office. (946-8151, jennifer@saintpetersnc.org)

Our Financial Assistance Committee accepts requests from those in need of assistance with utilities and rent each Monday. Donations to the Rector's Discretionary Fund support these needs and are always welcome. Checks can be made payable to St. Peter's with "Discretionary Fund" in the memo line. You can also donate online via the website at www.saintpetersnc.org.

**Note: the Financial Assistance Committee has continued to help those in need during this time with the exception of Easter Monday. They are still working!



Office Hours

Mon-Thurs 8am-12:30pm & 1pm-3pm, Fri 8am-12pm

Note that church office hours vary right now, but you may always leave a message (252-946-8151) and it will be returned as soon as possible.

Saint Peter's Clergy & Staff

The Reverend Jim Horton, Priest
252-802-0216
horton.james64@gmail.com

The Reverend Deacon Katherine Mitchell
617-721-6614
katherine@saintpetersnc.org

The Rev. Fred Clarkson, Priest Spanish Congregation
252-940-1623
fclarkson@diocese-eastcarolina.org

Doug Cutler
Vincent Holliday
Lex Mann
Jennifer Spivey
Susie Taylor

Organist/Choirmaster
Sexton
Treasurer
Parish Administrator
Day School Director



Vestry Organization

Swanson Graves-Senior Warden
Richard Andrews-Junior Warden
Laura Bliley-Pastoral Care
Michael Behar-Stewardship
Ken Hadley-Clerk
Rachael Miller-Education
Carol Nash-Rector Search Liaison
Catherine Pfeiffer-Outreach
Katherine Tate-Parish Life



Please Pray For:



Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to thy never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that thou art doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. The Book of Common Prayer.

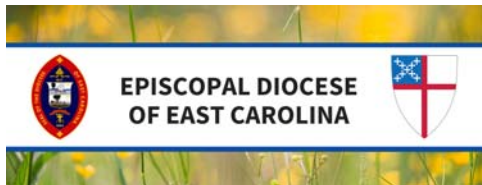
Please Pray for: David Barillaro-friend of Kathie Kriss, Betsy Beamon-sister of Cindy Cochran, Brandon Blount-friend of Ed & Pam Hodges, Charlotte Grace Buckner-granddaughter of Bruce & JJ Jarvah, Tom Bulla-son-in-law of Dr. Josh & Carol Tayloe, Bob Byrum-member, Charles Cantwell-friend of the Marles, Patricia Coffie-daughter of Terry Young, Mike & Pat DeVivo-friends of Kathie Kriss, Carol Federowicz-aunt of Sharon Yakubowski, Camden Green-friend of Janet Bradbury, Liv Jones-member, Barry Kausler-friend of Steve Barnes & Sarah Bernart, Lynda Lane-friend of St. Peter's, Jay Marle-member, Helen Nicholson-sister-in-law of Katherine Mitchell, Judy Nobles-wife of Steve Nobles, Verna Perry-friend of Saint Peter's, Ann Peters-member, Zoph Potts-friend of the Archies, Charlotte Reynolds-friend of Jean Sterling, Acra Samuels-daughter of Hodges & Marsha Hackney, Amy Sasnett-sister-in-law of Bonita Arvizu, Mary Satchell-friend of Ed & Pam Hodges, Mark Shippy-friend of John Thompson, Jackie Smilth-friend of Pam & Ed Hodges, Raymond Spencer-friend of Pam & Ed Hodges, Jorge Spiteri-friend of John Thompson, David Steenbergen & Family-nephew of Bill & Betty Cochran, Linda Strader-mother of Stacey Lynch, Gary Strang-member, Carolyn Thomas-member, Heather Van Staalduinen -friend of Ed & Pam Hodges, Piper Watkins-friend of Pat Capehart Brown, Barbara Winfield-member, Margaret Ann Woolard-friend of Betty Cochran.

Our condolences are extended to:



*Joffre Fisher on the recent death of his wife, Jane Alligood Fisher
Stephanie Harris and Family on the recent death of her mother, Virginia Hayes*

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life Everlasting.*



Visit www.diocese-eastcarolina.org
or <https://episcopalchurch.org> for information and links to useful websites.



Lost & Found

These items remain unclaimed and are located in the church office. If you wish to claim, please call the office. Otherwise, the items will be donated to the Salvation Army on May 15th.



Altar Guild Clean Up Day

All Altar Guild members (and anyone else who would like to help) are invited to clean and polish the church in preparation for Pentecost. We will have one session on Sunday afternoon, May 24, from 1pm-3pm and one session on Monday, May 25 from 9am-noon. All cleaning supplies will be provided. Hope to see you Sunday or Monday!

Thank you, Nancy Hamblin

"You are never more like Jesus than when you pray for others." (Max Lucado) We have a dedicated prayer team at Saint Peters. If you want to be "one that prays for others," please join our team. If you are in need of prayer for yourself or for someone else, you can call Laura Bliley at 252-495-3008 and know that prayer will begin in "real time." All of these requests are confidential and we are on call 24/7.

It works like this:

- a. We receive a prayer request from someone in our church to my number.
- b. A text message is sent to the team with the request.
- c. The team members respond back that they have received the request and that they will be praying.
- d. If the requesting person provides follow-up that they would like to share with the team, I will provide that.

We all know that prayer can have powerful results and to pray for others provides growth in Him.



Dear Friends,

To say that we are living in strange times is an understatement, to say the least. It is difficult to believe that it has been two months since we last gathered as “church”. Without sounding too desolate, I realize how very much I miss all of you and our ability to worship together.

Having said that, it is not my intention to dismiss the video broadcasts that we put together weekly. Doug and a small core group of dedicated choir members are doing a great job of leading us in song and chant that serve to make the services especially meaningful. And, as you would expect, Jim Horton, our supply priest, has done an outstanding job as our liturgical leader and celebrant.

But you know something? It just ain’t the same! Whether live-streamed or videoed – something is missing! That missing element is, of course, you, the individuals that make up the wonderful, warm, and caring congregation that we call Saint Peter’s.

In my limited knowledge and experience of Jesus, I have come to know one thing for sure. That is that Jesus has been and will always be about relationship; our relationship with Him and how that plays out in our relationship with one another.

What I hope you are gathering from this is that my relationship with each of you is very important to me. Although we are unable to meet one another face to face, please know that I hold you in my heart and prayers. I know that we will be together soon to worship, sing, cry, and laugh together. Until then,

“God be with you till we meet again;
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.”

Your friend,
Deacon Katherine





So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

If you happen to be a dog or cat guardian in life, you have to contend with the questions of life and death more often than those who are not. This challenge confronts dog and cat guardians because our non-human companions do not live as long as we do, and they rely on us for everything. This last week I had to say goodbye to my little dog Bella whose cancer got to the point where she was suffering, despite any attempt to make her comfortable. Many of us know how painful it is to say goodbye to a beloved pet. In the grand scheme of things, that is nothing except to those who know the animal, but it highlighted the strangeness of these times because I was sheltering at home for the last weeks of her life, and having me around was what she most enjoyed. She was diagnosed with cancer in March of 2019 when she was given six months to live, but she lived 13 ½ months. Those extra months were a blessing for me, and my being home was a blessing for her.

This present time is a time of numbers as we daily read the number of cases of COVID 19 and the number of deaths that stem from it. Unless we know someone impacted by this illness in some way, these numbers remain, just that, numbers. Yet each number is a death; each number is an incalculable loss. I recently read that on average, each person lost to the virus dies a decade prematurely, and that struck me since my little Bella was 10 when she died. There are no moments of life that can be taken for granted or sacrificed for the economy. Such beliefs are false dichotomies that arise when we forget the words in Genesis "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." This statement speaks of the invaluable nature of each human being, but it also speaks of the unique nature of the human being within creation.

Human beings have one thing that makes us unique out of all other creatures. That one thing is imagination. Imagination is the mark of the image of God on human beings. When we pit human beings against anything else, whether it be the economy or even each other, we forget who we are. When we forget who we are, we forfeit the imagination, which has allowed us to survive and thrive as a unique creature in the world. This spring is a time to reclaim that imagination as we imagine a world of increased selflessness and different ways of being a community. These new ways of being will allow members of the body of Christ to know that they will be alright as long as they are part of the Church. These new ways of being faithful should enable members to communicate their concerns and needs to the wider-body, and will allow each gathering to view each member as someone of incalculable value made in the image of God.

When we realize we are made in the image of God we will live contributing in more and new ways for the benefit of all. So as this pandemic threatens us with death, may we, who are made in the image of God, respond with an imagination that protects and cultivates life that overcomes death. In the next few weeks, we will be working on masks and other essentials for our community, from eggs to garden vegetables, which we will be able to exchange and account for locally to make sure everyone has what they need in these uncertain times. If you are interested in participating, please email me at Fclarkson@diocese-eastcarolina.org.



I don't know about you, but one of the things that has been a bit confusing during this pandemic has been sort of a discombobulation or a confusion about what time it is and what day it is. I found myself on more than one occasion just asking someone, "What day is today?" There's a Psalm in the Hebrew scriptures, Psalm 31. It's actually quoted in the service of Compline, which is a late night prayer service, and it's also quoted by Jesus on the cross. It says this:

*In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame:
deliver me in your righteousness.*

And then it goes on and says,

*(Lord) Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold;
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me. . .*

*Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me,
O Lord, the God of truth.*

On the cross Jesus quoted this psalm as he commended his life into the hands of the father. Into thy hands I commend my spirit. But as the psalm goes on, later on in the psalm it says, "My times are always in your hand." It may well be that if we have little reminders as the day goes on, we will have a sense of time not determined by a clock but determined by God.

In Psalm 55 the Psalmist says, "In the morning, at noonday and at evening I cry out to you, oh Lord." Maybe a little habit of grace during this time may be a moment of prayer in the morning, another one at midday, and another in the evening, whether using a prayer book or just a moment to pause and be silent. Whatever way you do it take a moment - morning, midday, evening. Father into thy hands I commend my spirit. For my times are always in your hand.

In 1931 a man named Thomas Dorsey composed a hymn, the words of which and the song have been a long-standing favorite with many people. Lyndon Johnson, President Johnson asked for it to be sung at his funeral. Martin Luther King asked that it be sung at his funeral. Mahalia Jackson sang it. Aretha Franklin sang it. B.B. King played it and sang it. Tennessee Ernie Ford sang it. Johnny Cash sang it. It was composed by Thomas Dorsey living in a time when his times were very much discombobulated. His wife died in childbirth, both she and the child died. In his time of grieving he wrote the words of the hymn that say just simply, "Precious Lord take my hand."

My times are in thy hand, oh Lord. Father into thy hands I commend my spirit this morning, in noonday, and in the evening.

God love you. God bless you. May God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.