

Dear Beloved in Christ,

In the Church's year of grace, we have entered the season of "Sundays after Pentecost," known in some traditions as "Ordinary Time." The Ordinary Time of Sunday by Sunday gathering for worship, walking through the gospel with Jesus and his disciples and one another. The ordinary time of summer.

This year, the ordinary things we might some months ago have been planning for this time – as a church, as individuals, as families – are happening in extraordinary and inventive ways, and mostly from our homes "through" a screen. Worship, prayer, formation, service, fellowship, advocacy. Celebrations of personal and communal life passages: births and birthdays, graduations, weddings, anniversaries of all kinds, family reunions, funerals.

In this extraordinary Ordinary Time, the coronavirus is forcing us to find new ways to be church, new ways to celebrate familiar and loved traditions, new ways to do even such ordinary things as shopping for groceries, going for a walk, taking a pet to the vet. A virus is challenging us to consider and perhaps revise our notions of what is really important in our lives as persons and as a church. In a self-centered culture, a virus is challenging us to recognize each other as neighbors and be attentive to the well-being of all.

In this same extraordinary Ordinary Time, people of every race across our nation are rising up to proclaim that Black Lives Matter, to demand an end to the racism that has stained our country from its beginning. They are challenging us to *listen first*, to find new ways to *think*. They are daring us to *see and admit* what is wrong, false, and unjust in us, our church, and society – and to advocate, work, and pray for what is right, true, and just. In Christian terms, to create a society that is an image of the just and peaceable kingdom of God.

Within the enormous challenges, frustrations, suffering, and heartbreak of this time, God is surely planting seeds of transformation, of a new creation. Like the extravagant (or seemingly wasteful) farmer in Matthew's Parable of the Sower [Matthew 13:1-8; 13:18-23], God does not carefully poke evenly-spaced holes in the ground into which to insert a few seeds, but throws the seeds far and wide, to fall where they may and, when they fall on fertile ground, take root, grow, and bear fruit. May we be that fertile ground, may we be those seeds that sprout, may we be the plant that bears fruit, may we be the laborers whom God sends into the harvest in whatever way we can presently go – by phone, postal mail, internet or in person *observing all safety precautions*.

(See tomorrow's gospel [Matthew 9:35-10:8] in our Household Worship Resource for The Second Sunday after Pentecost on the Worship Resources page of our website.

## My Summer Reading List

In last week's letter I said I would first respond to the *call to listen* by reading – and I would add today, hearing voices that I ought to have been listening to all along. I appreciate suggestions some of you sent during the week. Here's my list as of now:

† Nickel Boys (a novel), Colson Whitehead - Read week of Trinity Sunday.

The Underground Railroad (a novel), Colson Whitehead

Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America,

Ibram X. Kendi - **Reading week of Pentecost 2**

How to Be an Anti-Racist, Ibram X. Kendi

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, Robin DiAngelo

Living into God's Dream: Dismantling Racism in America, Catherine Meeks

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, Michelle Alexander

So You Want to Talk About Race, Ijeoma Oluo

White Rage, Carol Anderson

## My Pandemic Reading List

CDC Protocols and News Releases as published

Washington State and Pierce County Public Health Advisories as published

✓Governor Inslee's "Phased Plan for Safe Start"

✓Bishop Rickel's "Phased Plan for Re-Opening"

✓"Resuming Care-Filled Worship and Sacramental Life During a Pandemic," The Ecumenical Consultation on Protocols for Worship, Fellowship and Sacraments.

✓"Thinking Again About Assembly in a Time of Pandemic," Gordon Lathrop

Revisions to the above as published; Other resources as developed

This will reading list will also ground the work of the Christ Church Reopen Advisory Team. We hope to begin our work in the week of Pentecost 3. Here is the team so far, a group of people who have responded to our invitation to bring their gifts and experience to the challenging task of creating a safe, workable Reopen plan.

## Christ Church Reopen Advisory Team as of 6/13/2020

Project Manager - Liz Johnson (*direct, coordinate, facilitate*)

Bishop's Office, Diocesan Policy - Mother Campbell (*with Leadership Team*)

Pastoral - Mother Campbell (*with Father Torvend, Kathryn Nichols*)

Worship - Mother Campbell (*with worship staff, Worship Committee*)

Communications - (TBD) (*signage, written protocols, incorporate protocol changes*)

Technical - Mark Brombaugh (*includes website, recording, livestreaming*)

Legal - Heidi Irvin (*State law, liability, liaison with Diocesan Chancellors*)

Buildings and Grounds - Joe Conklin (*screening and security assessment*); Len Johnson (*ushers, narthex and security*); Linda Johnson (*includes equipment and supplies*);

Sexton Tim Williams (*security, sanitizing*)

Medical - Lorette Meske, Nancy Gow Knudsen (*includes public health policy, data interpretation, supplies*)

HR - Employee/employer concerns, staffing - Nancy Gow Knudsen

## **A Prayer for This Time**

This past week I participated in an ecumenical Zoom conversation with Gordon Lathrop, liturgical theologian, author and retired ELCA pastor, about the incarnational, sacramental meaning of Christian assembly for worship. (Dr. Lathrop is the author “Thinking About Assembly in a Time of Pandemic” which you will find on the Online Formation Resources page of our website. At the close of the meeting, Dr. Lathrop offered the following prayer, and I right away knew I wanted to share it with you.

“The Word became flesh”

*Alan Hommerding, parish musician, senior editor World Library Publications, Chicago*

The Word became flesh  
and came to dwell among us—

Now, in our isolated,  
enfleshed dwelling-places  
we forget the God incarnate,  
disremember the Divine in flesh,  
and dis-incarnate our  
already-fearful-of-flesh-lives.

We are exiled from  
This, my Body  
This, my Blood...  
captives to fasting  
not merely from bread and cup  
but from those  
embodied, breathing sacraments  
who stood with us, knelt with us,  
prayed with us, listened with us,  
sang with us, who spoke the Risen Word  
“Peace”  
with us.

Let us see beyond  
this time of flesh  
– as contagion,  
– as crisis,  
and be invigorated,  
as Christ,  
in memory of those who will  
again one day  
join with us, repent with us,  
praise with us, thank with us,  
eat with us  
drink with us;  
their unmasked breath  
the Spirit who makes us one.

In this time of distance  
let us recall and crave  
a love that impelled  
the celestial embrace  
who fused with our flesh,  
fused us all in the font,  
and still fuses us now  
in this fasting.

Once freed from this fast,  
our self-giving,  
not self-serving  
must rouse our rising  
to go, to help, to heal,  
to lift, to live renewed.

—Word who became flesh,  
come, dwell among us:  
Now, then forever,  
Amen.

Dear embodied, breathing sacraments who stood with me, knelt with me,  
prayed with me, listened with me, sang with me,  
who spoke the Risen Word "Peace" with me,  
in what now seems another world, another time,  
I miss you as much as I miss the Bread and Cup.

In this unwelcome but necessary fast from community and Eucharist,  
when we cannot gather together in assembly,  
when we cannot share in the Body and Blood,  
    you in your safe places and I in mine,  
we are nonetheless inextricably bound together,  
united in love,  
one body in Christ.

With love for you in Christ,  
Janet+

## REMINDERS

**Wednesday Evening Conversation and Compline** via Zoom, Wednesdays at 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. Watch for the Zoom invitation and link in your email Wednesday morning.

**Read the Weekly every Friday** for the latest parish news and information about new parish events and opportunities for worship and fellowship.

**Check Our Website** for resources in this time of pandemic: for worship, formation, service opportunities and connection.

**Please remember: all our buildings are closed** until further notice. At this time, it is critical that only parish staff be in the buildings, for essential work only, with a very few office volunteers, one at a time, (as invited by Parish Coordinator Shannon Farley), for tasks requiring their presence. **For the safety of our staff and volunteers, and so that they may observe required safety precautions, do not use your key** to enter any of the buildings. Multicare staff continue to work in their Trinity House offices, observing the same required safety precautions.