

Dear Beloved in Christ,

**First some news**, which you may have seen if you perused yesterday's Weekly. The Program Staff, Father Torvend, Co-Directors of Music Ministries Kathryn Nichols and Mark Brombaugh, Deacon Gen Grewell and I have been working on designing a recorded video service of worship for Sundays, which will "debut" next Sunday, July 12. Each week, a link to the video will be provided on our website and also by an email invitation which will go out on Saturday.

Each Sunday's video will weave together in one recording the readings for that Sunday, a recorded homily or reflection, and recorded prayers, music and hymns. It's what is known as an "ante-communion" (before communion) service, or the Liturgy of the Word – the first part of the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. We hope these videos, based on the resources for Household Worship which we publish each week, will answer in an additional format the expressed need for Sunday Christ Church worship.

We won't celebrate Eucharist until we can gather again in assembly and all can partake either together or through the ministry of Eucharistic visitors. In the meantime, we fast from communion. Why? Read Father Torvend's *Keeping a Eucharistic Fast* and The Rev. Gordon Lathrop's *Thinking Again About Assembly in a Time of Pandemic* on our website at [christchurchtacoma.org](http://christchurchtacoma.org).)

I've spent much of today writing and recording the homily for that first video. So for this letter, I would like to share a passage from the daily meditations of Father Richard Rohr, OSF (Order of St. Francis). You can find the meditations on the website of the Center for Action and Contemplation: [cac.org](http://cac.org), and subscribe from there if you are interested.

### **God's Simple Pleasure**

Thursday, July 2, 2020

*The land is God's. . . . Caring for the land, every day, is my way to be close to God.  
[God's] land must be honored. – Eli, an Amish farmer [1]*

*Poet, author, and farmer Wendell Berry is a shining example of humility and simple living. He's made it his life's concern to commit to one beloved plot of land in Kentucky. He says everything he's learned has been through his faithfulness to that commitment. He reminds me of St. Francis of Assisi in that he loves nature deeply and takes the Gospel seriously. Berry writes of the profound pleasure that can come from simple things—if we can attune ourselves to them:*

It is astonishing, and of course discouraging, to see economics now elevated to the position of ultimate justifier and explainer of all the affairs of our daily life, and competition enshrined as the sovereign principle and ideal of economics. . . . It is impossible not to notice how little the proponents of the ideal of competition have to say about honesty, which is the fundamental economic virtue, and how very little they have to say about community, compassion, and mutual help. . . . For human beings, affection is the ultimate motive, because the force that powers us, as [John] Ruskin [1819–1900] also said, is not “steam, magnetism, or gravitation,” but “a Soul.” . . . [1]

Is it possible to look beyond this all-consuming “rush” of winning and losing to the possibility of countrysides, a nation of countrysides, in which use is not synonymous with defeat? It is. But in order to do so we must consider our pleasures. . . . [There are] pleasures that are free or without a permanent cost. . . . These are the pleasures that we take in our own lives, our own wakefulness in this world, and in the company of other people and other creatures—pleasures innate in the Creation and in our own good work. It is in these pleasures that we possess the likeness to God that is spoken of in Genesis. [God looked upon all that God had created and saw that it was very good (Genesis 1:31).] . . . [2]

The passage suggests . . . that our truest and profoundest religious experience may be the simple, unasking pleasure in the existence of other creatures that *is* possible to humans. It suggests that God’s pleasure in all things must be respected by us in our use of things. . . . It suggests too that we have an obligation to preserve God’s pleasure in all things. . . .

Where is our comfort but in the free, uninvolved, finally mysterious beauty and grace of this world that we did not make, that has no price? Where is our sanity but there? Where is our pleasure but in working and resting kindly in the presence of this world?

Richard Rohr Thursday, July 2 2020

[1] Quoted by Sue Bender in *Plain and Simple: A Woman’s Journey to the Amish* (HarperCollins: 1989), 63.

[2] John Ruskin, “The Roots of Honour,” *Unto This Last and Other Essays on Art and Political Economy* (E. P. Dutton and Co.: 1907), 119. Ruskin was an artist, teacher, author, social critic, and philosopher.

[3] Wendell Berry, “Economy and Pleasure” in *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry*, ed. Norman Wirzba (Counterpoint: 2002), 207, 212, 214, 215.

Dear friends, I'll just keep saying it: please be very careful right now, for yourself and for others. The number of Covid-19 cases in Pierce County, Washington State and around the country continues to rise at an alarming rate. Wash your hands, wear a mask, practice physical distancing. Protect your precious life and the precious lives of those around you.

With love for you in Christ,  
Janet+

### **See below for Opportunities, Reminders and My Summer Reading List:**

#### **Opportunity:**

**Navigating a Changing Church:** Intercultural Competency for Black People, Indigenous People and People of Color (BIPOC) in our Diocese - Saturday, July 11, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Join with other Episcopal BIPOC folk from around Western Washington to learn about how to care for ourselves while we model Jesus's ministry of transformational change. We will use developmental approaches to understanding our work as BIPOC ministers in a predominately white Episcopal Church. ***Note: In order to maintain a safe space for participants, this conversation will only be open to BIPOC individuals within the Diocese of Olympia.***

**Advance Registration Required** - go to the Diocesan website, [ecww.org](http://ecww.org); toward the right at the top, click on "news & events"; on the dropdown menu; click on "virtual and online events" and scroll down to the date of the event.

Please answer all registration questions, including racial identification and congregation. If we do not have a record of your membership on file, may we contact your priest or congregational leader to confirm that you are a member? This step will help prevent trolling and secure the safety of our conversation. If you need an interpreter when filling out this the registration form, please contact the Rev. Canon Arienne Davison at [adavison@ecww.org](mailto:adavison@ecww.org)

#### **Reminders:**

**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.

**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 ever-developing resources for worship, formation, service opportunities and connection in this time of pandemic.

### **My Summer Reading List:**

My commitment to address my own racism and the systemic racism in our country begins by first responding to the *call to listen*. Here are the voices I want especially to hear this summer:

† 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 - **still waiting for book to arrive**

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

What Does it Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy, revised edition,

Robin DiAngelo – reading week of Pentecost 4 (*and still reading*)

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 – read week of Pentecost 2

White Rage, Carol Anderson

† Another Day in the Death of America, Gary Younge – read week of Pentecost 3

Note: "What does it Mean to be White? Developing White Racial Literacy" my current read, is expensive, but I have a .pdf of it that I would be happy to send you. Just let me know: [janet@christchurchtacoma.org](mailto:janet@christchurchtacoma.org)