

THE ANCHOR

Newsletter



Episcopal Church of the Advent

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Volume 42 Number 7 July/August 2021

Dear Friends,

We are social beings and need to be in community. The isolation of the pandemic was very hard on many people. Genesis tells us that in the beginning, God created man and woman, because it was not good for man to be alone. Jesus called disciples to help him with his ministry - even Jesus needed community! As a church, it is important for us to be together in community through worship and other fellowship activities. Fortunately, we are at the point where this is now possible.

People often tell me they can worship God anywhere. While this is certainly true, worshipping in community means that we are supporting each other in our faith. We receive encouragement and support from fellow Christians when we gather together and we provide support to others. The church is meant to be the gathered community of God's faithful people. And personally, I love having all of you back in the pews. Church is much better with a congregation!

Medical experts tell us that if a person is fully vaccinated, they are safe to be with people in any situation, although we are still required to wear masks at medical providers and a few other places. Outdoor activities are very low risk, even for people who have not been vaccinated. (And of course, it is acceptable to wear a mask anywhere if it makes you more comfortable.) The important thing is to get out and about in the world again. Being with other people is good for us emotionally and spiritually.

At Advent, we have our two Sunday services as well as a Thursday noon Eucharist. Our committees are mostly meeting in-person. Groups have returned to using our parish hall during the week. I am offering a monthly Rector's Ramble so we can get together for fun and fellowship. Things are getting back to normal. Please, come back to the activities of your church community!

Faithfully,
Alan+

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR TOM HAND

A memorial service for Tom Hand will be held on Monday, July 5, 2021, at 10:30 AM at Church of the Advent. Visitation is from 10:00 to 10:30 AM.

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EfM) STIRRING DISCERNMENT

This past year the theme underlying our *EfM* studies was “Journeying to/into God.” Even though our group broke down into OT, NT, and Theology/Ethics/Interfaith year groups of specific studies for most of our weekly time together, time-and-again our curriculum called us back to this theme and the important role of *discernment* in that journey towards God and faithful ministry.

For me, I came away with three important insights from this 36-week exploration.

First—and this is a very Anglican concept—is the importance of the group, community, fellowship in this journey. Christianity is a socially-minded faith in God who dwells among us. Our sharing of time and space with each other engenders, nurtures, and sustains individual formation, faith, and the discipline. To be about the business of “loving” our neighbor, near and far, requires God-inspired assistance, encouragement, and, yes, sometimes the correction, of our faith community. This is a reality of an “incarnate” faith.

Second, the ability to perceive and respond to the will of God (which, in effect, is ministry), is developed by the habits (fr. L. *Habitus*) of intentional worship, prayer, study, and reflection. Like our various daily physical, mental, or emotional fitness regimens, the spiritual fitness and reflexes to discern how to respond in faith to the various challenges of life—our own and of those around us—develops from the discipline of setting aside time to focus on and draw near to God, individually and collectively. From this, we learn to listen, to allow the Holy Spirit to enter into our thoughts, hearts, and responses. This enables us to speak and act with confidence and the promise that God finds ways to use us in the step-by-step building of the Kingdom of God. If we get still long enough, routinely, we perceive the call to a place and space to pray, talk, read, or just simply listen for God to speak; God is always present.

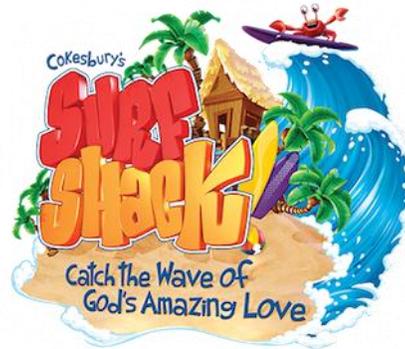
Third, the important gift of discernment—i.e., perception in the absence of judgment . . . to obtain spiritual guidance and understanding—begins with God’s own mysterious initiative, not ours. As Jesus reminds Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), “No one knows from whence the wind comes and goes,” but if you, Nicodemus, Jesus seems to say, allow the Spirit to come and live in you, that knowledge is no longer important. What is important is that you recognize the stirring of God in you to discern the call to God’s will, which is to love. Jesus was giving the truth-seeking Pharisee—a man of earnest faith—radically, important insight.

How do I know this?

When the announcement was made in church this past Sunday of the impending deadline for *The Anchor* news and articles for the rest of the summer, I felt that definite, undeniable stirring to come home, sit down, reflect, and to share with you these simple thoughts distilled from my time with *EfM* this past year.

—Sam Wilson

Church of the Advent VBS RETURNS!



Church of the Advent Education Committee along with the Sunday School Program is proud to announce the return of our summertime Vacation Bible School. **This year we will meet August 2nd through August 6th, 5:30 to 7:30 PM at the Cape May Point State Park.** Our volunteers will provide activities such as Bible Storytelling, Arts & Crafts, Recreation, and Science. Our location is still to be determined but will be outside where the children and staff can still safely practice social distancing. To register, fill out the form found at <https://forms.gle/MceAJce9wLV6KiNM7> or call the Church of the Advent office 609-884-3065. For more information, email or call Trisha Andrzejczak trishaann423@gmail.com; 609-224-3188.

We look forward to seeing everyone again in person and **Catching the Wave of God's Amazing Love!**

CAPE ISLAND BOOK CLUB

After an 18 month hiatus, the Cape Island Book Club will reconvene on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 7:00 PM at the home of Lynda and Corbin Cogswell. Bring your suggestions on books to be considered for discussion during this coming fall and winter. We are looking forward to seeing previous members and welcoming new members. Meanwhile, have a wonderful and safe summer. Happy Reading! For more information please call Lynda Cogswell at 609-884-6675.

-Lynda Cogswell

July Birthday Celebrations**July Anniversary Celebrations**

2	Sally Snyder	16	Art & Pat Bourgeau
3	David Craig		
3	Mimi Wood		
8	Katherine Trauger		
9	Bobby Andrzejczak		
12	Ivy Vasser		
14	Lynda Cogswell		
17	Georgeanna Sexton		
18	Brooklyn Bartle		
19	Scott Griffith		
19	Dale Morrison		
21	John Lukens		
23	Jack Shaw		
25	Art Bourgeau		
25	Mary Ann Coyle		
28	Dot Mitchell		
30	Lorraine Shaw		
31	Bill Holmes		

August Birthday Celebrations**August Anniversary Celebrations**

2	Gary Reed	4	Robert Bullington & Pam Kelly
13	Janzell Rodriquez	7	Lew & Jo Ann Price
14	Judy McCusker	14	Robert & Jean Horn
15	Boden Groetsch	17	John & Dot Mitchell
16	Suzanne Nardi	25	Werner & Glenda Unzelmann
18	Carol Hoffman	31	Vincent & Diane DePietro
18	Sandy Miller		
19	Sam Wilson, Jr.		
20	Greta Shepanski		
23	Lorraine Brooks		
24	Heather Turner		
24	Chris Wood		
27	Susan Murphy		
30	Steve Brownstein		