

# THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

(PROPER 7)

SUNDAY ♦ JUNE 21, 2020 ♦ 9:45 AM



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY

[www.christchurchtomsriver.org](http://www.christchurchtomsriver.org)

## **HOW TO LISTEN IN TO THE LIVE TELE-SERVICE**

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**WELCOME! AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING US FROM YOUR HOME FOR TODAY'S SERVICE!**

**WHILE WE ARE NOT ABLE TO PHYSICALLY COME TOGETHER TODAY FOR WORSHIP, WE APPRECIATE YOUR SPIRITUAL PRESENCE AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS SERVICE.**

**WE THEREFORE INVITE YOU TO REPLICATE MANY OF THE SAME PRACTICES THAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY DO IN A SUNDAY WORSHIP. FOR EXAMPLE, WE INVITE YOU TO SPEND SOME TIME IN QUIET PRAYER TO PLACE YOURSELF BEFORE THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD BEFORE THE SERVICE BEGINS.**

**DURING THE SERVICE, WE INVITE YOU TO PERFORM THE SAME GESTURES THAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY DO IN CHURCH (SIGN OF THE CROSS, BOWING, ETC.).**

**ALSO, IN THOSE PLACES IN THE SERVICE WHERE THE PEOPLE WOULD NORMALLY SAY A PRAYER (SUCH AS, THE COLLECT OF WELCOMING) OR RESPONSE (SUCH AS, "AND ALSO WITH YOU"), PLEASE SAY IT ALOUD.**

**YOUR PHONE IS MUTED BUT OUR VOICES WILL RISE TOGETHER IN AFFIRMING OUR FAITH. THANK YOU.**

### **TODAY'S MINISTERS**

**CALL HOST:** Joanne Gwin

**BISHOP:** The Rt. Rev. William "Chip" Stokes

**DEACON:** The Rev. Ted Foley

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Polly Moore

**ORGAN/PIANO:** Andrew Van Buskirk

**CHOIR PARTICIPANTS:** Cathy O'Neill, David Corbitt

**LECTOR:** Melissa Briggs

**INTERCESSOR:** Cathy O'Neill

## **PRELUDE**

*Table of Plenty*

Dan Schutte

## **OPENING HYMN**

*I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord*

Hymnal 524

- 1. I love thy kingdom, Lord, the house of thine abode,  
the Church our blest Redeemed saved with his own precious blood.*
- 2. For her my tears shall fall; for her my prayers ascend;  
to her my cares and toils be given, till toils and cares shall end.*
- 3. Beyond my highest joy I prize her heavenly ways,  
her sweet communion, solemn vows, her hymns of love and praise.*
- 4. Jesus, thou friend divine, our Savior and our King,  
thy hand from every snare and foe shall great deliverance bring.*
- 5. Sure as thy truth shall last, to Zion shall be given  
the brightest glories earth can yield, and brighter bliss of heaven.*

## **THE WORD OF GOD**

*The people standing, as able, the Bishop says*

*Bishop* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People* And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

*Bishop* Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

*People* Amen

*The following is read by the Lector; said by all*

## **GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

*All* Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## **THE COLLECT OF THE DAY**

*Bishop* The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Bishop* Let us pray. O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*The following is read by the Intercessor; said by all*

## **THE COLLECT OF WELCOMING**

*All* Almighty and gracious God, we are your church, serving your mission. Lead us forth beyond our walls to seek out all people in our community, to invite and love them as Jesus would. Empower us to welcome to Christ Church all who are hurting or in need, all who are searching for you or for answers to life. Open our eyes to recognize each person as an individual sent by you who will enrich our lives. Transform us all into disciples of Christ. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

*The following is read by the Lector; said by all*

## **PRAYER FOR THE SELECTION OF A RECTOR**

*All* Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for Christ Church that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The people sit as the lessons are read.*

## **THE FIRST READING**

*Genesis 21:8-21*

A Reading from the book of Genesis.

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.' The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.' So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, 'Do not let me look on the death of the child.' And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.' Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt. The Word of the Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

*The following is read by the Deacon; said by all*

**PSALM 86:1-10, 16-17**

- 1 Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.
- 2 Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;  
save your servant who trusts in you.
- 3 You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord,  
for to you do I cry all day long.
- 4 Gladden the soul of your servant,  
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,  
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.
- 6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;  
listen to my cry of supplication.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I call on you,  
for you will answer me.
- 8 There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,  
nor are there any works like yours.
- 9 All the nations you have made shall come  
and bow down before you, O Lord,  
and shall glorify your name.
- 10 For you are great and do wondrous things;  
you alone are God.
- 16 Turn to me and have mercy upon me;  
give your strength to your servant;  
and save the child of your handmaid.
- 17 Show me a sign of your favor,  
so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed;  
because you, O LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

**THE SECOND READING**

*Romans 6:1b-11*

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome.

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

*People                      Thanks be to God.*

*Please stand as able and face the Gospeler.*

## **THE HOLY GOSPEL**

*Matthew 10:24-39*

*Deacon* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People* *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

*Deacon* ‘A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

‘So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

‘Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

*Please be seated.*

## **REFLECTION**

The Rt. Rev. William “Chip” Stokes

## **HYMN**

*I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*

Lift Every Voice & Sing 136

- 1. I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back!*
- 2. Though no one join me, still I will follow, though no one join me, still I will follow,  
Though no one join me, still I will follow, no turning back, no turning back!*
- 3. The world behind me, the cross before me, the world behind me, the cross before me,  
The world behind me, the cross before me, no turning back, no turning back!*

*All stand, as able, as the Bishop says the following*

## **THE NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*\* "catholic" here means the universal Church across time and place*

*The "people" is read by the Lector*

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Deacon* Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

*Leader* As our God continues to reveal his power in our lives, let us pray to God saying, God of love, hear our prayer.  
God of power, may your Spirit give strength to all your people as they work and witness in your world. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of peace, we pray for peace and goodwill among all nations, an ending to all strife and discord.  
We pray for all the leaders of the world. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of mercy, we ask your mercy for all who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, oppressed, in prison, or in any kind of trouble. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of Creation, we thank you for the abundance and beauty of our planet earth. Grant us the wisdom, ability, and will to care for its resources and creatures wisely. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of grace, we give you thanks for the many blessings in our lives, especially for the marriage of Mr. & Mrs. Marissa & Thomas Szczerba, Jr., for those blessings we now name..... And for all blessings. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* On this Father's Day, we give thanks to God for the divine gift of Fatherhood in all its diverse forms. Let us pray for all the fathers among us today; for our own fathers, those living and those who have passed away; for the fathers who loved us, and for those who fell short of loving us fully; for all who hope to be fathers someday, and for those whose hope to have children has been frustrated; for all fathers who have lost children; for those who have been our substitute fathers, and we who have done so, for those in need. God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of Healing, we pray for those affected by natural and man-made disasters; for those who are sick and suffering; we pray for a quick end to this pandemic and for those with and exposed to the virus; for medical professionals, first responders, and emergency workers; for those who have lost their jobs or suffered financial loss; for those serving our country; for those listed on our parish prayer list especially Jean Biedzynski, Maria Younger, and for those we name at this time ..... God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Leader* God of life, we pray for those who have died from the COVID-19 virus, for those who died serving our country, for all who have died in the hope of rising again, especially Joey and for those we name at this time ..... God of love,

*People* *Hear our prayer.*

*Bishop* Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP 826)

*The Bishop may add a closing collect.*

*Please listen to the following prayer read by the Deacon*

### **PRAYER IN TIME OF PANDEMIC**

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with all essential workers. Be with all emergency responders, law enforcement, and medical professionals who seek to help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.



Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of all people, particularly those who are poor and most vulnerable. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

*Adapted from prayer written by Kerry Weber, America Magazine*

*The following is read by the Bishop; said by all*

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

*\*We use the modern translation of Lord's Prayer because it is closer to the Greek original text; particularly for the verse, Save us from the time of trial! since God does not deliberately lead us into temptation.*

### **SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER**

*A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.*

*The Bishop invites the following prayer to be said by all:*

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving as I proclaim your resurrection. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

*The ministries of Christ Church "thank you" for your continued giving during these times of uncertainty.*

*Your generous donations and pledges keep Christ Church moving forward.*

*Please continue to mail to Christ Episcopal Church (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753) or set up with your individual bank, a bill pay, to be directly submitted to Christ Church.*

*Please contact the Church Office via phone or email with any questions or concerns.*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please also read "Parish News" beginning on page 10 of this bulletin for additional information and news.*

### **THE BLESSING**

*The Bishop blesses the people*

## CLOSING HYMN

*Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said*

Hymnal 675

1. *Take up your cross, "the Savior said, If you would my disciple be;  
take up your cross with willing heart, and humbly follow after me."*
2. *Take up your cross; let not its weight fill your weak spirit with alarm;  
Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up and brace your heart and nerve your arm.*
3. *Take up your cross, heed not the shame, and let your foolish heart be still;  
the Lord for you accepted death upon a cross, on Calv'ry's hill.*
4. *Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength, and calmly ev'ry danger brave:  
it guides you to abundant life and leads to vict'ry o'er the grave.*

## THE DISMISSAL

*The Deacon dismisses the people*

*Deacon* Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.

*People* Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

## POSTLUDE

*Ode to Joy*

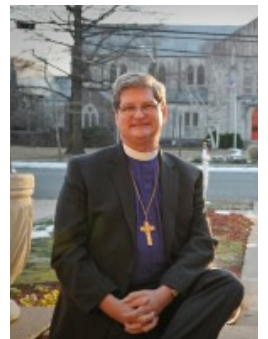
Ludwig van Beethoven

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## PARISH NEWS

(Titles in Red indicate a New or Updated Item)

**THANK YOU! BISHOP STOKES FOR JOINING US TODAY!** The Right Reverend William H. (Chip) Stokes is the twelfth Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey. Elected on May 4, 2013, he was Consecrated on November 2, 2013 and succeeded The Right Reverend George Councill. Prior to becoming the Bishop of New Jersey, he served as the Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Delray Beach, Florida, a position he held from January 1999 through July of 2013. From 1995 to 1998, he was the Associate for Christian Education at the Episcopal Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea in Palm Beach, Florida. Prior to this, he served as the School Chaplain and Curate to Grace Episcopal Church and Day School in Massapequa, Long Island, serving there from 1990 to 1994. Bishop Stokes earned a Master of Divinity Degree from the General Theological Seminary in New York in 1990 and a Bachelor of Arts from Manhattan College in 1987; he was recently awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary. He is a recognized preacher and Christian educator. He has been active in the area of anti-racism, is a certified trainer in multi-culturalism and anti-racism and was a member of the Committee on Anti-Racism for the Episcopal Church. He has served at many levels of governance in the Episcopal Church. While in Florida, he served as Chairman of the Board of Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida. He was an active leader in his community in Delray Beach serving on several Boards and Committees and working actively to see that St. Paul's was actively engaged in the life of the city. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees of General Theological Seminary. He and his wife Susan have been married for 38 years and live in Trenton. They have four grown children, one granddaughter and a grandson. (<https://dioceseofnj.org/about-bishop-stokes/>)



**THE 2020 YOUTH CONFIRMATION PROJECT PRESENTATION** As many of you know, the 2020 Confirmation and Visitation of our Bishop was originally scheduled for Sunday, April 26 (new date TBD). In order to receive this Holy Sacrament, our registered Youth were requested to attend Confirmation prep classes since September 2019 and complete certain projects and activities. Their final projects are included in this email to share with you, just as would have been done in our Church building on Confirmation Sunday. Here is a closing letter to the Parish from Confirmation Class Teacher, Dale Chant:

*Christ Church Confirmation Classes*

*Preparing our youth for confirmation is a challenging and important work of the church. I am very grateful for the leadership of the Church School Directors (Shanon Chant and Diane Zaraza), our clergy (Mother Petrina, Deacon Ted and Deacon Jose), our teachers (John Boland, Selena Garcia, Phyllis Long) and the parents of the students who created the space to make confirmation a priority in their children's lives.*

*We had 2 class times. One group met at 9:30 am and one at 12 noon. With the leadership of John Boland at the morning class and Selena Garcia and myself at the later class, the students learned about the Episcopal Church, their faith and explored what being confirmed means. We met 3 Sundays/ month and on the 4th Sunday the students participated as acolytes, ushers or lector's in the Church services. Our groups joined together for several activities throughout the year:*

*-The Diocesan Lock In. A shared Eucharist in the Cathedral followed by an outreach program where they prepared nutritional food packets that would be distributed to areas of need throughout the world.*

*-The Martin Luther King Day service at the 2nd Baptist Church where 2 of our students addressed the congregation telling of ways that they were serving their communities. After the service we joined together for lunch and shared stories and experiences of racism in their personal lives.*

*-The Christmas Pageant was an opportunity for them to share their many talents as some were narrators, actors and musicians.*

*-They came together to help decorate and run the All Parish Birthday Party.*

*-Retreat in an Envelope: this replaced a full day retreat that we had planned before the Covid19 shutdown. The people who were scheduled to present at the retreat provided thoughtful and inspiring written materials, activities, and even a YouTube guided meditation as an alternative to the day we had hoped for.*

*All students were required to complete a confirmation project.*

*They participated in an outreach program by volunteering a set number of hours and then sharing what they learned from their experience.*

*They all worked very hard to complete their projects and I am so proud of each and every one of them. Please take the time to look at each one (emailed to you on June 17). The afternoon class did a group outreach project addressing one of our Marks of Mission: Caring for the Earth. They put together new recycling bins to be placed throughout our church buildings with educational materials and posters. Unfortunately, we were not able to complete our last steps before the building was closed but we will.*

*Thank you to all who participated in the success of this year. Looking back on our time together I see that many seeds were planted in rich and fertile soil. God will surely continue the good work that has been started and these young people will walk with the love and support of Jesus and their Church as their faith journeys continue.*

*Gratefully, Dale Chant*

**STRESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP:** Have you been feeling stress these past few months? Stressed over the national news or maybe stressed over events in your personal life? If so, you are invited to attend a three week stress management virtual workshop on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:15 PM. These sessions will be facilitated by Deacon Ted and his wife Kathy. Kathy has over 30 years experience as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). In these sessions you will learn techniques that will help you identify the source of your stress and ways to help manage it. The remaining sessions will be held June 23 and June 30. Please check you email inbox for official invitation to this Workshop. If you do not receive, please contact Nicole at 732-349-5506 or email [nicolestrada@christchurchtomsriver.org](mailto:nicolestrada@christchurchtomsriver.org)

**ANOTHER WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE:** What is your understanding of God's parting the Red Sea into walls of water for the Hebrews to cross on dry land? Was it a divine act? Are you intrigued by the naturalistic explanation that a great wind created a storm surge that left a passageway? Do you think these are the only options to choose from? Or is there another way to understand the Bible and its message about God's relationship with us? Let's get together and read Marcus Borg's book *Convictions* to explore his ideas on another way to realize the truth that is Christianity. Donna Devlin will moderate the discussion. We will be "meeting" via Zoom every other week on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm, starting June 30th. If you are interested or have questions, contact Mary Lou Steed for more information: marylousted@yahoo.com or 732-408-5837 or 732-848- 9222.

**RE-OPENING CHRIST CHURCH BUILDING:** Please know that your Wardens, Vestry, Clergy and Staff are prayerfully working together to discuss and address the requirements provided to us by the RRR Task Force in order to safely Re-Open our Church doors. There are many important steps to accomplish, one being a Questionnaire Survey for the Parish to complete. Your completion of this Survey will be added guidance as we discuss when it is most safe and appropriate to Re-Open our building. Please be on the "look out" for this emailed (snail mailed to those who have not provided an email address) Survey in the next week. We appreciate your time to complete it. Please know that virtual / "stay at home" options to attend services will remain in place even after the building reopens and future in-person services resume.

**THE COVID-19 REENTERING, REOPENING, REIMAGINING (RRR) TASK FORCE** presented its preliminary report on June 4 to Clergy and Staff of the Diocese of New Jersey.

The Rev. Canon Valerie Balling, St. Peter's Medford, is chair of the Task Force. She told the meetings that the Task Force developed a report and recommendations for congregations to reenter their church buildings and reopen them for public worship and gatherings.

Congregations are urged to use this document to develop THEIR PLAN for reentering and reopening for their context, which may require some reimaging in order to offer their ministry as desired.

A questionnaire must be submitted to the Diocese and approved by the RRR Task Force and the Bishop's Office before a congregation can reopen to the public.

Reopening will be done in stages, with continued physical distancing requirements and cleaning and sanitation requirements to ensure safety. The Bishop will say what "Stage" the Diocese is in. No congregation may be in a later Stage; some congregations may be in an earlier Stage depending on local context. *(from NJ Diocesan Good News in the Garden State dated 6/5)*

A second group--the Learnings and Breakthroughs Task Force--has been formed to look at the lessons we've learned during this crisis and how we can keep the good parts happening. We've been amazed at the level of community we've been able to build online, bringing Christ's word to people who haven't been in church in years. We don't want to lose those aspects when we return to "normal."

**COVID-19 DISCRETIONARY FUND:** While everyone's life has been impacted by the coronavirus, we have become aware of several people in our parish who have already lost their jobs and income and are in dire need of emergency assistance. Also, as this disaster continues, we expect that more jobs will be affected. For this reason we are setting up a Coronavirus Discretionary Fund. This fund will provide emergency assistance to people affected by this disaster. If you are in need of emergency assistance, please contact one of the clergy (Mother Petrina, Deacon Jose, or Deacon Ted). If you are able to contribute to this fund, please send a check to Christ Church (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753) with "Coronavirus Fund" in the memo. A restricted account has been established specifically for this purpose. May God bless us all. We will get through this together. \*\* As of June 11, the COVID-19 Fund balance stands at: Contributions: \$22,555.50; Disbursements: \$5,866.80

**PLEASE LET US KNOW HOW YOU ARE DOING** — We want to hear from you! And know that you are doing "ok" amongst this pandemic. Please leave us a Voicemail or send us an Email!

**FOOD PANTRY:** Thank you for all of your donations Christ Church! The FOOD PANTRY is very well stocked. **This week (6/16) we would like to ask that you please hold off on bringing any donations** while we reorganize and deplete some of the food we have on the shelves. Please watch for announcements on our updated needs for next week. THANK YOU!!!

**WEEKLY FINANCES:** During the year 2020, we have budgeted \$5,635 to come from pledges and loose offerings each week. For the week ending June 12, we received \$4,242 in pledges. (There were no loose offerings due to there not being any services in church.)

**MONDAY EVENING VIRTUAL "COFFEE HOUR" FROM 7-8PM**

Join this Zoom Meeting Here! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/94333201452> OR

Dial by Phone (audio participation only): **1 646 558 8656**

And then enter the Meeting ID: **943 3320 1452**

For those not familiar with ZOOM, it is a video chat room/meeting space. If you have a phone or computer with video/camera functions, you will be able to join in and SEE the faces of your Church Family as well as show us your face. If you are not interested in being visible, having your video off is an option.

If you do not have or are not comfortable using a computer or internet, you can still participate by calling in on your phone. You will still be able to listen and speak to everyone else participating (but you will not have a visual). We look forward to "seeing" your faces in these virtual Coffee Hours as we take this opportunity to say "Hello!" and "How are you?" If you need any help, please let me know!

**BIRTHDAY CLUB:** We all have one day of the year that is just for us; it's our birthday. We may celebrate in grand style with family and friends singing that special song, eating cake and GETTING gifts; or we may choose to celebrate in a quiet fashion. However you choose to celebrate, it is YOUR special day. The Endowment and Stewardship Committees have come up with another way to celebrate this day. How about GIVING a gift that will KEEP ON GIVING? Each year on your birthday, we are inviting you to join the Birthday Club by writing a check in the amount of your age to Christ Church, which will be deposited into the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is invested with the diocese. By giving to this fund on your birthday, you will be contributing to the day-to-day life of the parish as well as the future of Christ Church. It is truly a gift that will keep on giving! How can you donate? Simply write out a check for the amount of your age, put Birthday Club in the memo and put it in the offering plate, mail it or drop it off to the office mailbox. So that we can all watch our gifts grow, we will update you on what we have received. We look forward to celebrating each of your birthdays! **The current total for the month of JUNE is \$212 (3 birthdays & 1 Anniversary)!**

**JEWELRY REQUESTED:** While many of us are spending more hours at home these days, now is a good time to look through that jewelry for any you would like to donate to the Women of Christ Church (WCC). The WCC are interested in all kinds of jewelry, including costume, tarnished and broken. Please set these items aside until the church doors reopen and it is again safe for you to visit the building. There will be a collection bin labeled "jewelry" on top of the mailboxes. Thank you!

**JOIN US IN DAILY PRAYER AT 8:00PM:** Pray, wherever you may be ...at home, at work, in the car...let us pray together for a resolution and end to the COVID-19 pandemic...let us pray for health care workers, first responders, law enforcement and all essential workers... let us pray for our federal and state government officials ... let us pray for those that are sick and those that have died from the virus...let us pray for the families of the victims of the virus and all those who are poor and more vulnerable to the virus...let us pray for New Jersey, the United States of America and the World. There is no right, wrong or specific way one should pray ... pray the "Our Father", the "Prayer in Time of Pandemic" from our Sunday bulletins, or pray using words expressing how your heart feels.

**JOIN US FOR “SERVICE” FROM THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME!** During this time of “public service suspension” through at least the month of May, your Clergy and Staff are providing multiple times a week live and recorded services via phone and email. The current weekly schedule of live services via phone are:

**Sundays, 9:45am — Wednesdays, 10:00am — Fridays, 7:00am**

We plan to have many of the services recorded and then posted on our website [www.christchurchtomsriver.org](http://www.christchurchtomsriver.org) for access at your convenience. To listen to the live service please: Dial: 712-770-5505 and Enter Access Code: 189853# If you have any difficulty, please email or call the church office (leave a voicemail).

**CONTRIBUTIONS & PLEDGES DURING COVID 19:** Our pews will be empty for the next several weeks, that also means our collection plate is empty. We are asking if you would please continue to send in your pledges even though our weekly worship services have been suspended. Although most of life as we know it has come to a halt, the bills continue to come in and need to be paid. You can help us keep our bills current by keeping your pledge up to date. You can do this by mailing a check to the office (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753), or you can set up online bill pay through your bank (see your bank for details). Please consider doing this, so that once we are back in church, we can continue moving forward without the worry of how we are going to “catch up”. Thank you!

**IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO YOU, WOULD WE KNOW ABOUT IT?** Do the people who care about you know to notify the church right away in case of your hospitalization, or an accident, or an extended illness, etc.? Please give them the church's contact information with clear instructions to contact us right away. We hope to be praying for you during any incidents rather than after the fact. Thank you!!

**THE CHURCH OFFICE IS RECEIVING VOICEMAILS, EMAILS & MAIL:** If you need to reach us for any reason, please 1) Call the church office at 732-349-5506 and leave a voicemail. Voicemails are being immediately received offsite and we are calling you back as soon as possible. Or 2) Email [NicoleStrada@ChristChurchTomsRiver.org](mailto:NicoleStrada@ChristChurchTomsRiver.org) and she will reply as soon as possible. We are also receiving our USPS mail.

**CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
415 Washington Street Toms River, New Jersey 08753  
[www.ChristChurchTomsRiver.org](http://www.ChristChurchTomsRiver.org)**