



Building Bridges of Caring, Compassion, and Civility

MAY 2019 NEWSLETTER



EASTER MIRACLE

There are lots of miracles in the Bible, but none as hard to explain as the miracle of faith. Easter is a mystery in more than one sense. It's not just the resurrection of Jesus that is hard to understand, but the resurrection of faith in the hearts of the disciples.

On Holy Thursday we saw the followers of Jesus scatter, abandoning their Lord and Master in his hour of need. Judas betrayed him. Peter denied him. Everyone else ran away. Except for a handful of women who stood at a distance, Jesus died without a friend to console or comfort him.

And yet, only two days later, faith is reborn, and the feckless band of disciples becomes the twelve apostles, the beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ. How is that possible?

The answer may be found in John's Gospel, in the story of "doubting Thomas". This story is read every year on the Second Sunday of Easter. But there is a key element of the story that we might easily miss: When Jesus appears to the disciples in the upper room, he breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit".

That is a turning point in the history of faith. When the story begins, the disciples have not yet received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Without it, they are lost, frightened, anxious and in despair. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon them, faith is reborn.

Martin Luther, in the Small Catechism, said this about the Spirit: "I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith."

In a very real sense, you and I are better off than those first believers. God has already given us the gift of the Spirit. It was given to us in baptism, reaffirmed in confirmation, and strengthened over the years in the Sacrament of the altar. Unlike "doubting Thomas", we don't need a face-to face-encounter with Jesus. We already have the Spirit of Christ in our hearts.

Pr. Russ

WHAT IS CIVILITY?

It has become routine to complain about the lack of civility today in our country and our world. From the dysfunctionality of our government, to the way we talk to each other, to our lack of respect for those who disagree with us – the absence of civility is so pervasive that it is pointless to assign blame. As Christians, we have a responsibility to change the game; to treat each other better, especially when we disagree.

The Christian faith has much to teach us about civility. We start with the principle that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26) and has a God-given dignity, worth, and equality as a child of the God who created us all. Add to that the words of Jesus that we are to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, and it is easy to see how our faith in God leads us to treat each other with respect.

That was the thinking that guided our Church Council, when we adopted a new mission statement for Joy in Christ: We are called to build bridges of compassion, caring and civility. For the past year we have focused on the first two “legs” of this three legged stool: Compassion and caring. And we have accomplished a lot, culminating with the packaging of more than 100,000 meals for the needy citizens of Plymouth County and beyond!

But in the process, we have neglected the third “leg” of our mission: Building bridges of civility in our town, our state, our nation. At its April meeting, the Church Council decided it is time to tackle the “elephant in the living room”: How can we create a new model of civility for our time? How can we “change the game” in the way we treat each other, as friends, as neighbors and as fellow citizens?

It may seem impossible that a small congregation like Joy in Christ could make a difference in the lack of civility in our world today. But we need to remember that the Church began with just eleven men and a few women, who received the Holy Spirit and changed the world. God is not interested in how big or small we are, only in how faithful we are!

So the Church Council has adopted a plan for addressing the crisis of civility today. This month, Pastor Russ will devote one Sunday to a sermon on “faith and civility”. That will be followed by a “conversation” during coffee hour on what civility means to us. We need to learn how to really listen to one another, for listening is the foundation of constructive dialogue. To help us with the mechanics of all this, LeeAnn Trigler will offer a class on “active listening” – which is not as easy as it sounds!

In the fall, under the leadership of a new pastor, the Council is exploring a series of monthly discussions on issues confronting us as citizens. Civility is a practice we learn by doing. Watch for more information in upcoming issues of our church newsletter.

Notes from the Worship & Parish Life meeting April 10, 2019

Present: Vicki Burke, Pat Gladbach, Pat Hoey, Roswitha O’Hara, Audrey McNevin, Carol Porter, Candy Stone, Lee-Ann Trigler, Pastor Norris

Meeting began with an opening prayer and assignment of Audrey as note taker.

Pr. Norris will confirm Alyssa Burke and Brooklynn Stone on June 9th. They all had a fulfilling weekend at Camp Calumet.

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We recapped the events to take place through Easter Sunday and discussed the merits of holding the Easter service downstairs as opposed to upstairs. Because of the problem of moving the keyboard, printing and folding the bulletin, etc. we all agreed on downstairs.

Bible study will resume Wednesday following Easter Sunday.

June 16th will be Pr. Norris' last day. There will be a special coffee hour so we can express our thanks and wishing farewell.

Pr. Tim starts his ministry with us on June 23rd.

Next meeting: May 15th at 10:00 a.m.



Brief update from the April 25, 2019 Council Meeting

Present: Pam Borgeson, Vicki Burke, Pat Gladbach, Audrey McNevin, Kathy Remes, Jeff Stone, Lee-Ann Trigler, Pastor Russ.

Council Meeting Minutes from March 17 and 31st were unanimously approved. March Treasurer and Financial Secretary Notes were approved. Jeff noted that the budget is \$5400 under budget for the First Quarter as 60% of the property budget is normally spent on snow plowing but Dennis Olson did the plowing, sanding and salting of the driveway at no charge. Jeff also noted that although we have taken \$6,500 from the Fidelity Account, the account is still up \$3,717 due to the good market return.

Pastor Russ and Lee-Ann discussed plans for Worship/Sermon series and Coffee Hour Discussion on “Civility” specifically, “What does it mean to be civil in an uncivil world?” There was discussion on whether to hold this program during the week or at Coffee Hour. The initial plan was for a series of 3 classes on “Active Listening.” We questioned if midweek or Sunday Coffee Hour would gather more participation and if we needed 3 classes. Pastor Russ suggested that Pastor Tim may be able to moderate this discussion but Russ will start with the sermon series and coffee hour discussion.

Vicki noted that a regular attendee at worship was missing for a period of time and not contacted. This person returned but the question was raised if there are other people who are missing and should be contacted. Jeff suggested that we review the Church Directory at least quarterly and we will decide who may need a note or call. This discussion evolved into names on the prayer list and if anyone knows why the names are there and if the pastor should be made aware so that he could contact the person or family. As Pam is in charge of the prayer list, she will ask if the member would like pastor to be aware of their need.

Report on Mission Projects for 2019

- A. Lenten Soup and Service—very well attended by JIC and All Saints, and even 3 members of St. John’s Episcopal, Holbrook. This was noted to be a safe environment to share and should be used as a model for other programs. We need to start planning for next year’s program in January as Abington UCC stated they would like to be involved and there will be new clergy at All Saints.
- B. June Luncheon to honor seniors—Lee-Ann and Jeri Screnci met with Suzanne at the Senior Center. This luncheon already happens and this need seems to be filled. We will hold off on this for now and work on the Yard Sale in June.
- C. Summer/Backpacks for kids—Kathy and Pat have not met but will have a report in May.
- D. November-Major Food Packaging Event. Jeff has met with area clergy and the Baptist, UCC and St. Bridget churches would like to be involved. Jeff has met with the Superintendent and Principal at Abington High School and the school gymnasium will be used to hold this event. He will meet with the Rotary Club on May 8 and they will be asked to coordinate all of the other civic groups. Holy Ghost Whitman has 250 scouts meeting there and this group will be asked to coordinate the scouts. Pam is the JIC coordinator and each church will be asked to have a coordinator

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for their members. Jeff spoke of having a Marketing Strategy with a 3 year commitment and will meet this area banks and businesses regarding fundraising.

- E. December/Gift Collection for families in need. Lisa and Audrey are coordinating and will have more details at a later date

Confirmation—June 9, Pentecost. Final Retreat at church May 25th.

Parish Life will assist Pastor Tim on Lutheran themes in the worship service and Lisa has created a Power Point of his first service. Jeff has provided him links to the ELCA, New England Synod and Sunday's and Seasons. Vicki suggested giving him a copy of Luther's Catechism. Pastor Russ will reach out and plan an afternoon to meet with Tim. Jeff stressed that we want to set Tim up to be successful.

Jeff reviewed the Covenant of Agreement and Cooperation between Joy in Christ and St. Paul's Episcopal that was provided by Kim Bergstrand of the ELCA. It was noted that this Covenant will be reviewed and amended as mutually agreed upon as part of each congregation's annual meeting process. The Covenant was unanimously approved by Council. Jeff added that Pastor Tim will attend The Synod Assembly in June as a guest and Kim Bergstrand will introduce him to other Southeast Conference member pastors. Pastor Russ stated that he will not be attending as his term ends in June. We are still looking for a second delegate to attend.

Worship times discussion—Jeff reported feedback on the potential change of the service to 11:00 am. Some members stated they would not come in the summer. We all agreed that ending the service at noon makes it the middle of the day by the time we get home. Other questions arose about the time of Coffee Hour. Jeff asked us what we thought about the possibility of changing the service to Saturday or Sunday afternoon. As Jeff Williams has gigs on most Saturdays, that time was ruled out. Sunday afternoons at 4 or 5 pm was suggested as a possible time. This would test our premise that millennials would not come on Sunday mornings but do attend the afternoon worship at St. Mary's in Hanover and Sanctuary In Marshfield. Football Sunday's in the fall would be a problem. Also questioned was time for Coffee Hour. However, this plan would give Tim time to visit his members on Sunday afternoons and our working members to schedule time with him before service. We could also use the model of Lenten services and have soup or potlucks before service. Jeff will present this possibility to Tim and Council members were asked to discuss this idea at Coffee Hour to gauge member's opinions.

Lee-Ann announced that a new group to Abington, the Brook Retreat Clinic will be using the building on Monday mornings from 8:30-10:30 am.

**Next meetings: May 16 at 6:00-8:00 pm, Lisa has devotions
June 20 at 6:00-8:00 pm, Audrey has devotions**



Thank You!! Thank You!!

With sincere thanks and gratitude, the Church Council wants to acknowledge Dennis Olson's efforts in taking care of our church parking lot snow removal and salt/sanding needs this past winter. Dennis donated his time and his truck/plow which resulted in the church incurring NO costs for snow removal - saving us hundreds if not thousands of dollars. Thank You Dennis!



MAY

- 1st: Frank Turner
- 2nd: Ryan Burke
- 2nd: Theresa Sabol
- 4th: Dennis Olson
- 6th: Bill O'Hara
- 10th: Mike Burke
- 13th: Jacob Rogers
- 23rd: Bob Clairmont
- 26th: Dale Olson
- 27th: Gail Hussey

JUNE

- 6th: Pam Borgeson
- 8th: Cameron Rogers
- 9th: Reidar Tryggestad
- 16th: Logan Anderson Kim
- 17th: Marlene McGrath
- 22nd: Audrey McNevin
- 22nd: Brooklyn Tupa
- 26th: Wendy Corkren



NOVEMBER 2019 FOOD PACKAGING EVENT - Jeff has been working closely with several members of the Abington School System to arrange to have our Food Packaging Event for 2019 at Abington High School. Last year JIC did amazing work and packaged 102,000 meals for many residents in Plymouth County and beyond. This year we are going to double down on our efforts and we plan to package 250,000 meals. So far, Jeff has gotten 'buy-in' from Abington High School & students, Abington United Church of Christ, and Abington Baptist Church.

I will be coordinating Joy in Christ's participation and it's not too early to start thinking about volunteers and fund-raising. The entire event will require approximately 575 volunteers and we need to raise \$62,500 to accomplish our goal. Please put your thinking caps on for ways to accomplish JIC's contribution to this worthy project and by all means share your best ideas with me. Thanks!

God's Work, Our Hands

Pam B.

SUNDAY DISCIPLES

DATE	ASSISTING	READER	TECH	GRUSHER	WORSHIP SET-UP	COFFEE HOUR
5/5	EMILY CLAIRMONT	PAT HOEY	STEPHANIE BURKE	JOY FRANNEY	GEORGE PORTER	JEAN PETERSON & KATHY REMES
5/12	PAT GLADBACH	JEFF STONE	JEFF STONE	KIM NICHOLS	BOB FEHL	GEORGE SULLICAN & GEORGE PORTER
5/19	LEE-ANN TRIGLER	KATHY REMES	LEE-ANN TRIGLER	GEORGE PORTER	MIKE REMES	LEE-ANN TRIGLER & VICKI BURKE
5/26	LISA CLAIRMONT	PAM BORGESON	STEPHANIE BURKE	KATHY REMES	JEFF STONE	BOB & PHYLLIS FEHL

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

April 28th – May 4th

Kathy calls Anita S; Audrey sends Frank a card; Anita B calls Helen & Harold; Ingrid calls Martha

May 5th – May 11th

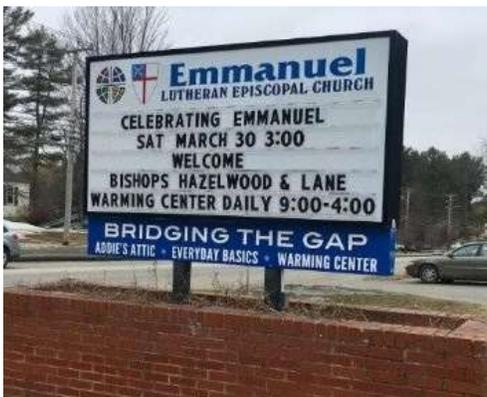
Vicki calls Helen & Harold; Pat calls Martha; Candy calls Anita S; Lee-Ann sends Frank a card

May 12th – May 18th

Ingrid calls Anita S; Kathy sends Frank a card; Audrey calls Helen & Harold; Anita B calls Martha

May 19th – May 25th

Lee-Ann calls Martha; Vicki calls Anita S; Pat sends Frank a card; Candy calls Helen & Harold



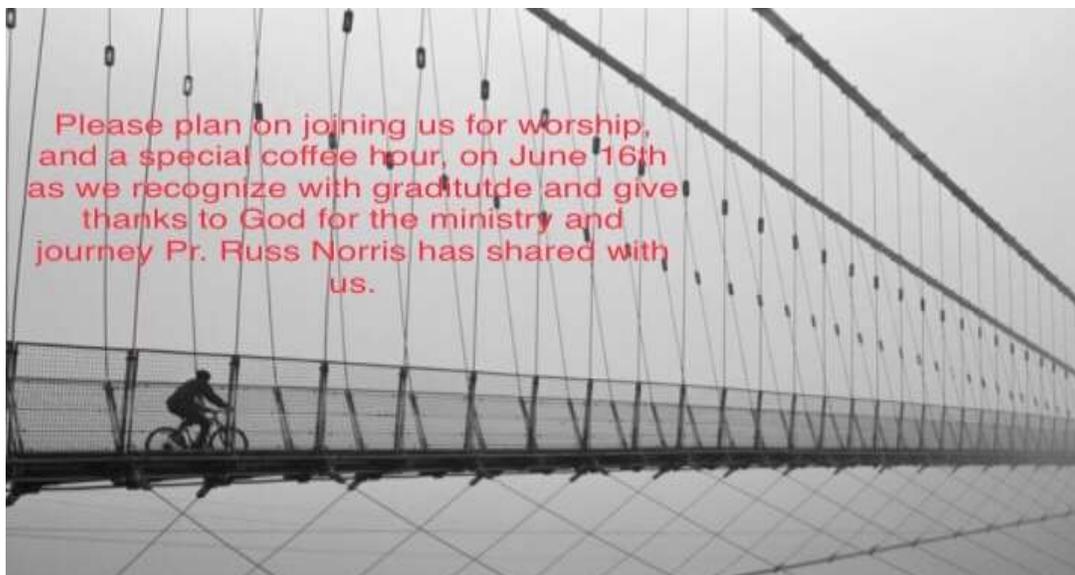
Blessings upon Emmanuel Lutheran Episcopal Church who formally celebrated their life as a federated church at a service on Saturday, March 30, 2019. The service was presided over jointly by **Bishop James Hazelwood**, New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and **Bishop Stephen Lane**, Episcopal Diocese of Maine and began with the renewal of baptismal vows.

The focus of the service was the unity we find in Christ, and we celebrated the unity between Episcopalians and Lutherans as a sign of the unity God intends for all people. The service was marked by joyful singing, supported by a joint choir from Emmanuel and from the **Episcopal Church of Saints Matthew & Barnabas**, and

wonderful instrumental music. Emmanuel's leadership, **Betty Balderston**, **Connie Macdonald**, and interim priest in charge, **Rev. Suzanne Colburn**, offered warm remembrances and thanksgivings for God's grace along the way and for all the folks who had important roles in the process of federation. Tours were offered of Bridging the Gap, the continuing ministries that are an essential part of Emmanuel's life. It was a wonderful celebration. God is good, all the time.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Please plan on joining us for worship,
and a special coffee hour, on June 16th
as we recognize with gratitude and give
thanks to God for the ministry and
journey Pr. Russ Norris has shared with
us.



And, on June 23rd, join us as we welcome
Pr. Tim Rogers for his first Sunday
leading us into our future.

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Joy in Christ Lutheran Church
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jicchurch@outlook.com

Pr. Russ Norris is usually in the office on Wednesday and by appointment. It is always best to call first, as visits and meetings sometime alter the schedule. Pr. Norris is available at 774.487.8734(cell) or 508.534.9307 (home) or at rbnorrisjr@gmail.com

MAY 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3 CLEANERS	4
5 <i>THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER</i> 10:00 a.m. WORSHIP	6 Brook Retreat Center 8:30-10:30a.m. TROOP 66027 4:00-5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. YOGA	7 6:00 p.m. TOPS	8 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	9	10	11
12 <i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</i> 10:00 a.m. WORSHIP MOTHER'S DAY	13 Brook Retreat Center 8:30-10:30a.m. 7:00 p.m. YOGA	14 6:00 p.m. TOPS	15 WORSHIP & PARISH LIFE 10:30 a.m. BIBLE STUDY 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	16	17 CLEANERS	18
19 <i>FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</i> 10:00 a.m. WORSHIP	20 Brook Retreat Center 8:30-10:30a.m. 7:00 p.m. YOGA	21 6:00 p.m. TOPS	22 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	23	24	25
26 <i>SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</i> 10:00 a.m. WORSHIP	27 Brook Retreat Center 8:30-10:30a.m. 7:00 p.m. YOGA	28 6:00 p.m. TOPS	29 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	30	31 CLEANERS	