

The Carpenter's Helper

This Week...

Good Neighbors

We are all
God's Family

Weekly Parish Schedule

Add your group's event to
the calendar: email
stthomassooffice
@googlegroups.com

The Anglican Way

NEW class
beginning this Sunday
10.6.19

Tree of Life to hold High Holiday services at Calvary Episcopal in the heart of Mr. Rogers' real life neighborhood, church exemplifies what it means to be a good neighbor.

The Jewish New Year has begun and with it comes a time of reflection, forgiveness, and new beginnings. It comes nearly one year after the mass shootings that took place at the Tree of Life. Mr. Rogers would be *kvelling*. The Calvary Episcopal Church, a paragon of good neighborliness, will serve as host to Tree of Life*Or L'Simcha Congregation for all of its 5780 High Holiday services.

Calvary is located on Shady Avenue, less than a mile from the Tree of Life synagogue building, in the heart of Mr. Rogers' neighborhood. On Saturday, Oct. 27, the church happened to be filled with parishioners attending its annual fundraiser to help the underserved. The news of the mass shooting targeting people down the street hit them hard, said the Rev. Jonathon Jensen, rector. "So, right afterward, the next day, I preached about the shooting and what that might mean, short-term and long-term, and how does a person of faith respond," Jensen said. "In my experience, I have found that often what happens is people will say, 'Is there anything we can do to help you?' and it puts the burden on the person who's hurt," he said. "I've found it is much more helpful to make specific offers of things people might actually need, so the burden is on you to do it rather than the person who is hurting to think of something for you to do."

Jensen recently had been counseling a parishioner on this topic, and "I thought this is just a bigger and more awful situation," he said. Calvary decided to make a specific offer to TOL*OLS. In a card signed by members of the church, they offered to "share space with you for anything you need because you won't likely have yours for a while," Jensen said. They sent the card along with money collected over the next two weeks to TOL*OLS. Jensen knew it was unlikely that the grieving congregation would read the card immediately because of the sheer volume of mail it would be receiving, as well as being forced to address countless other necessary and more pressing tasks in the aftermath of the attack. "I didn't hear a thing for months, and then one day I got an email that said, 'Hey I'm from Tree, and we'd like to talk to you about possibly using space for High Holidays,'" said Jensen. Jensen is focused on providing an environment of hospitality and comfort to TOL*OLS. Calvary is not asking for any rental or use fee, but is opening its doors to the congregation free of charge. "It's the right thing to do, to offer space to our neighbors," Jensen said. "And people would do that for us, I am convinced." "Thoughts and prayer are powerful," the rector said in his sermon the day after the massacre, he recalled. "Prayer and action from enough people who work for good can stop a bullet." "This event of sharing space is putting prayer into action," he said.

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