

December 15, 2019

St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish
276 S. College Ave Newark, DE
302.368.4644

weekly newsletter

The Carpenter's Helper

This Week...

**They will
know we are
Christians by
our LOVE**

Weekly Parish Schedule

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

Today, we (along with Bishop Curry) got on buses again...this time for a much longer ride, about 40 minutes. In all, we filled 16 buses...that's about 800 people. We went to the T. Don Hutto Residential Center, which is a "guarded, fenced-in, multi-purpose center currently used to detain non-US citizens awaiting the outcome of their immigration status," according to Wikipedia. Once a place that housed families, this center now houses only women. We gathered in vigil, giving witness to the plight of women who have been detained and, often, been separated from their children. Some vigil attendees brought signs and posters with them, but all of us carried compassionate hearts.

Again, we sang and we prayed, faithfully believing that simply showing up makes a difference. The signs contained loving and life-giving messages. "The Episcopal Church is here" and "The Episcopal Church cares." Several police cars arrived, but they seemed intent only on ensuring order (despite jokes going up and down the line about how much money it would take to make bail for such a large swathe of the church). The building was imposing and stark. The parking lot was nearly deserted (since it is a Sunday). We gathered near the entrance... and I felt so helpless. It's such a big place. It was so forbidding with its walls and fences and tall narrow windows. We sang many decades old songs sung by protesters: "We shall over come" and "Amazing grace." In a way, being there was heartbreaking...because it was so clear that there was so little that we could do. Could these women see us through the narrow windows or hear us through the thick walls? Was there any way that our witness could turn the hearts of those in power?

And then we saw it.... tiny hands waving at the windows...and a white cloth being slid up and down the window pane like a signal flag. The women knew we were there! Together, we shouted even louder over and over again:

"We see you!!! God loves you!" "We see you!!! God loves you!"

“WE SEE YOU!!
 GOD LOVES YOU!”
 And then: “You are not alone!”
 “You are not alone!”
 “YOU ARE NOT ALONE!”
 And we waved back wildly.
 And I cried.

These people, who we call “refugees” and “immigrants” are part of our human family. They are people who want freedom, family, and peace. These people who are called “guards” and “officers” are part of our human family. They are doing a hard job the best they know how.

I know that our country is afraid. We are afraid of those we believe are “the other”. I know that we instinctually fear that there is not enough to go around. We can make political arguments. We can create laws. We can arrest people in crisis. None of it changes the truth: This is not the behavior that God wants from us. We have to do better.

One song that we sang both last night (at the pre-trip revival) and today is one that I’ve known for my whole life **“They will know we are Christian’s by our love.”** I think this is the measuring stick we must apply to ourselves. As a great preacher said to me yesterday, *love is what brings us life and God wants us to be alive.* We have to love each other.

This is an excerpt from an article by Hailey McKeefry Delmas, General Convention Deputy. For the full read, go to www.diocal.org



PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday, December 15

8:00am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite I
 9:00am (U) Youth Confirmation
 9:15am (P) Adult Education
 9:15am (U) Nursery
 9:30am (U) Children's Worship
 10:30am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite II
 11:45am (GH) Coffee Hour Speaker
 Dorothy Thayne- Windows to Heaven
 2:00pm (C) Girl Scout Troop 513
 6:00pm (N) Advent Evening Prayers
 7:00pm (GH) UD Ballroom Dance

Monday, December 16

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
 7:30pm (GH) Scottish Dance

Tuesday, December 17

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
 4:30pm (U) Girl Scout Troop 719
 5:00pm (CO) AIDS Delaware
 6:00pm (U) Girl Scout Troop 513
 7:00pm (GH) UD Ballroom Dance
 8:00pm (U) KIS AA meeting

Wednesday, December 18

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
 10:30am (C) Bible Study
 4:00pm (C) Blue Hen Bounty
 5:45pm (P) Centering Prayer
 8:30pm (GH) South College Speakers AA

Thursday, December 19

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
 10:00am (U) Newark Music Makers
 7:30pm (MR) St Gregory's Choir

Friday, December 20

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
 12:00pm (P) Al-Anon
 5:00pm (U) Girl Scouts 778
 6:30pm (P) Women's AA

Saturday, December 21

-available-

Sunday, December 22

8:00am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite I
 9:00am (U) Youth Confirmation
 9:15am (P) Adult Education
 9:15am (U) Nursery
 9:30am (C, U) Children's Worship
 10:30am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite II
 12:00pm (GH) Coffee and Fellowship
 2:00pm (C) Girl Scout Troop 513
 5:30pm (GH) Children's Advent Pageant
 6:00pm (N) Advent Evening Prayers

location key:

(C) Classroom	(MR) Music Room
(GH) Great Hall	(U) Undercroft
(N) Nave	(BO) Business Office
(P) Parlor	(RO) Rector's Office