

March 8, 2020

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

weekly newsletter

The Carpenter's Helper

This Week...

**A Response
to COVID-19
from
Bishop Brown**

**Weekly Parish
Schedule**

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

**Inquirers'
Class**

Wednesdays in Lent
7pm in the parlor

Offering a common-sense response to a very uncommon threat

Hello all, We are all well aware now of the increased coverage of the COVID-19 'coronavirus' that is dominating our news and newsfeeds from every direction. Medical professionals continue to stress that while much about this disease is still unknown, there is a great deal that is known about COVID-19. It is most often compared to a new strain of influenza - a disease to be taken very seriously and yet one countered every year by sound medicine, good hygiene, and wise decision-making. Still, I understand how words like 'pandemic' and 'quarantine' can frighten anyone into forgetting what we have learned from decades of combating the flu.

I encourage us all to approach this very uncommon moment in our history with common sense and reasoned calm. I ask us to focus on our preparedness, precaution, and prayer. Delaware has not yet, as of this writing, seen confirmed cases of the coronavirus. We should, however, expect to see cases in our state in the weeks or months to come. Our smart decisions can help our community-wide response and limit the opportunity for this or any communicable disease to spread.

What specifically can our churches and parishioners do?

First, be **prepared**. Churches should make hand sanitizer widely available throughout the church, especially for the Eucharistic ministers who will handle the bread or wine in worship. (Many parishes have been doing this for years.) Sanitizers that are a minimum 60% alcohol-based are recommended. Keep a close eye on home-bound parishioners, and plan as a parish how to reach out to those who stay home sick.

Second, take **precautions**. Most importantly, if you are sick or think you might be, stay home! Stay home until you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducers. Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly, following the Center for Disease Control's guidelines. Cover those coughs and sneezes! And again, wash your hands!

Third, remember to **pray**. Add those who have contracted COVID-19 and any communicable disease to your prayer life, as well as those who have died. Pray for us all who live in a time of a pandemic and heightened anxiety. Pray for our medical professionals who work to keep us well, for researchers developing vaccines, and for our vestries and clergy for calm leadership.

... I encourage you to remember that for centuries the faithful have gathered for prayer, breaking of the bread, learning, and fellowship. Through wars, epidemics, market crashes, disasters, and [every] manner of calamity. No matter what, God seems to meet us just where we are physically, mentally, and spiritually."

My brothers and sisters, please do not be fearful, but do take care and prayerful precautions. I hope that you have a blessed, healthy, and Holy Lent.

Bishop Brown

*this is an excerpt from Bishop Brown's letter. The full letter has been emailed to our congregation, and is available on our Delaware diocese website: delaware.church

Got questions?



Are you curious about Saint Thomas and the Episcopal Church?

Looking for answers?

Have you attended Saint Thomas for a while and want to learn more about the Church? Have you attended the Episcopal Church for a while and now want to “make it official?” Were you never confirmed in the Church and now want to take that step?

If you answered “yes” to any of those questions, **please join us on Wednesday evenings during Lent. This class meets in the parlor at 7pm, March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1, 2020.**

This will be a wonderful opportunity if you are new to the Episcopal Church. For those who would like a refresher in what it means to be a Christian in the Episcopal Church, you are welcome to attend as well!

This class prepares individuals for Confirmation, Reception into the Episcopal Church, or the Reaffirmation of their Baptismal Vows.

Confirmation is a sacrament for individuals who have been baptized but have not made a mature profession of faith before the bishop.

Reception into the Episcopal Church is for those who have been confirmed into another tradition, but would like to officially make the Episcopal Church their spiritual home.

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows can be done by anybody who has been baptized and confirmed, but would like to strengthen their faith and publicly reaffirm their commitment to Christ and his Church.

Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation will be celebrated by The Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown during his visitation on May 10th. There is no requirement to be confirmed or received after attending classes, but if you have any desire to be confirmed or received, you must attend these classes first. Please email Fr. Howie with any questions at howell.sasser.jr@gmail.com.

PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday, March 8

8:00am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00am (U) Youth Confirmation
9:15am (P) 6-week series
History of Christianity
9:15am (U) Nursery
10:30am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite II
11:45am (GH) Coffee, Fellowship
12:30pm (P) Vestry Meeting
2:00pm (U) Girl Scout Troop 513
5:30pm (N) Evening Prayer
with Gregorian Chanting
6:00pm (GH) UD Ballroom Dance

Monday, March 9

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

Tuesday, March 10

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
6:00pm (GH) UD Ballroom Dancing
6:30pm (P) Finance Meeting
8:00pm (U) KIS AA

Wednesday, March 11

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
10:30am (C) Lectionary Bible Study
12:00pm (N) Intercessory Prayer
with Holy Eucharist
5:00pm (K, C) ECM
5:45pm (P) Centering Prayer
7:00pm (P) Inquirers' Class
8:30pm (GH,K) S College Speakers AA

Thursday, March 12

6:30am (C) Sunrise Serenity AA
3:00pm (C) Blue Hen Bounty
7:30pm (MR) St Gregory's Choir

Friday, March 13

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

Saturday, March 14

10:00am (U) Kindermusik

Sunday, March 15...ANNUAL MEETING

8:00am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00am (U) Youth Confirmation
9:15am (P) 6-week series
History of Christianity
9:15am (U) Nursery
9:30am (U) Children's Worship
10:30am (N) Holy Eucharist Rite II
11:45am (GH) Coffee, Fellowship
12:00pm (C) LUNCHEON AND
ANNUAL MEETING
12:30pm (P) Vestry Meeting
2:00pm (U) Girl Scout Troop 513
5:30pm (N) Evening Prayer
with Gregorian Chanting
6:00pm (GH) UD Ballroom Dance