

Wednesday Information - December 9, 2020

With effect from Monday, December 14, 2020, In-person worship is suspended

Dear friends,

I trust you are staying warm and enjoying the Advent season as much as possible. Last week Governor John Carney announced a new Stay-at-Home advisory, strongly advising all Delawareans to avoid gathering indoors from December 14, 2020 through January 11, 2021 with anyone outside their household. This was in response to the recent surge of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Delaware.

On his return from vacation this week, Bishop Brown announced that the Episcopal Church in Delaware will suspend all in-person worship, in accordance with the dates recommended by the Governor. That means that St Martha's will gather for in-person worship for the last time this coming Sunday, December 13, but from Monday, December 14 our doors will be closed until next year.

This is disappointing news, especially for those of you who were looking forward to attending our Christmas Eve services. However we will continue to live-stream services on Sunday mornings with a small crew, for the benefit of those who can watch online. Lately there have been encouraging signs of growth in the church, with new people visiting St Martha's on Sunday mornings and finding a warm welcome here. I pray that when we re-gather next year, those folk will return.

I want to remind you of our coming Sunday program. In the morning at 9 am, there is Holy Eucharist, with our Bell Choir, the Seashell Ringers, playing the prelude. In the afternoon at 4 pm there is an in-person service - our last for the year - of Lessons and Carols. I very much hope you can join us in person or online for either or both of these two services.

With prayers and blessings

Father David

Seashell Ringers

Did you know that hand bells have been traced as far back as the 5th Century B.C. in China? The oldest existing bells with handles found in China dated from 1600 B.C. Hand bells as they are known in Europe and the United States are descendants from the tower bells in England. Around the 16th Century, the art of tower bell ringing was becoming established in Europe. (Remember Quasimodo?) Neighbors complained of the loud noise during the rehearsals!

English handbells are thought to have been introduced to America by the Peake Family Ringers in the 1830's and in 1840 by P.T. Barnum. In 1954 the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers was founded, and the popularity of handbell choirs increased around the country. The English hand bells come in various sizes. The smaller ones have a higher pitch, and the larger bells have the lower bass notes.

St. Martha's is fortunate to have 3 ½ octaves of handbells. The bell choir rehearses weekly to prepare pieces to be played during church services. All COVID requirements are met during rehearsals. The Seashell Ringers will be ringing the prelude at this Sunday's worship service. I hope that you will find the pieces to be peaceful as we continue through this season of Advent. If you are interested in becoming a member of the handbell choir, please contact Dave Kemper.

Upcoming events at St. Martha's

Watch and Pray

Wednesday, **December 9 at 7 pm**. Session Two: "A Message of Love" - an evening Advent Course. This will be conducted by Zoom. To join the group, please contact Father David at davidberesford@gmail.com. The link for this evening's session is here:

SMVBC

Thursday, **December 10th**, 3:00 – 4:00 PM. The book club is discussing chapter nine, "A Second Simplicity" and chapter ten, "A Bright Sadness" of "Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life", by Richard Rohr. If you would like to join the discussion please contact Rick Legeer at rlegeer@comcast.net by Thursday at 9:00 AM so you can be added to the zoom invitation.

Preparing for Christmas

Friday, **December 11**, 1 - 2 pm. Advent meditations and Bible readings, from the book by Richard Rohr. This will be conducted by Zoom. Please use the link below to join.

Holy Eucharist

Sunday, **December 13 at 9 am**. Prelude played by the Seashell Ringers.

Coffee Hour

Sunday, **December 13 at 11 am**. Join Father David for coffee and conversation. A link will be sent in the Saturday email.

Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, **December 13 at 4 pm**. Come and join us in a joyful service of lessons and carols, telling the story of salvation through scripture and well loved carols, played by Dave Kemper and sung by Kristin Jones.

To receive regular news updates, including links to events from St Martha's online, please contact admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org.

Details of all our Advent services and events can be found here: <https://www.stmarthasbethanybeach.org/the-season-of-advent/>

or you can visit the individual links below.

For Watch and Pray: <https://www.stmarthasbethanybeach.org/event/watch-and-pray-an-advent-course/2020-12-02/>

For the Richard Rohr Study Group: <https://www.stmarthasbethanybeach.org/event/small-group-advent-study/2020-12-04/>

Maggie's 4th Annual Coat Drive

Mimi Dupont's granddaughter has begun her annual coat drive. The economic challenges brought on by the pandemic have increased needs. All coats donated will go to local charities as they have in the past. New and gently used. Adults and children of all ages. Hats, gloves, and scarves are welcome, too. Drop off locations are Selbyville Middle School, where Maggie is now a sixth grader, Next Step Learning Center in Selbyville, Coldwell Banker in Ocean View, Milton Police Department, and the Frankford Town Hall. Mimi will be glad to pick up coats from St. Martha's, if that is more convenient for donors, or call Mimi at 302-228-2755. See Maggie's flyer [here](#).

United Thank Offering

We are currently receiving our ingathering for the year to support next year's grants for our United Thank Offering period. 100 % of our contributions are used for programs in the United States and abroad. e.g. a daycare facility in Georgetown, and a community vehicle in Tanzania. Any administrative costs or other fees are supplied by funds from other accounts. Thank you for your support.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: ST. MARTHA'S CHURCH AND NOTE ON THE MEMO LINE "UTO".

UTO Coordinator
Bette Wade

Committee Updates

Outreach

The Outreach committee thanks St. Martha's generous parishioners for their contributions to the Angel Tree gifts this year. Outreach members were able to purchase lap blankets, hats, gloves, scarves, games or art supplies for 34 students in three schools. Becky Kelly and Carolyn Smith delivered all the gifts to the school counselors who will distribute the gifts to the students. Any extra donations will be used by the schools for other needy students.

Community Food Pantry, located at Salem United Methodist Church, is looking for volunteers to help with their monthly Friday food preparation and Saturday drive thru distribution. If you can help December 18th or 19th, please contact Joyce Dennis (302-732-6565) or Myra Bare (302-732-9402).

Search

The Search Committee met on December 7. The Parish Profile will be sent this week to the Vestry for review and approval. The Committee is now working on the Narrative part the Community Ministry Portfolio, the next step in the self study and an important tool in attracting Rector candidates.

Stewardship

As 2020 is winding down, so is our Stewardship Campaign for 2021. Thank you to all those who have returned pledges for 2021. If you have forgotten to return your pledge card ,can't remember receiving one or can't find it, let Jaclyn know. There is still time! It's never to late to pledge!

Flower Guild

IMPORTANT ADVENT NEWS

As you all are aware, Christmas is just around the corner and the announcement has been made that the church will be closed after the 14th of December. We will NOT have the Greening of the Church this year. I still encourage you to donate flowers in the name of a loved one as we will decorate the altar for the taped services. A form will be sent to you this week. The cost is \$25.00 or whatever you would like to give. You may return the form to the church by December 18th or you may call Jaclyn at 302-539-7444 or email her at admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org with the information.

Three more reminders:

- If you donate Christmas flowers, they will remain in the church until after the taping for the January 3rd service. They can be delivered to you after that.
- We still have December 20 available for remembering a person or occasion with altar flowers. Call Alice Anne Freud 301-229-0799 or aafreund@verizon.net

- It is now time to sign up for altar flower donations for 2021. Please call or email Jaclyn with your chosen dates and notations - 302-539-7444 or admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org.
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Capital Ringers

Will be presenting their concert, “**Tidings of Comfort and Joy**,” virtually this season. Capital Ringers currently owns the largest set of handbells and handchimes on the Delmarva Peninsula. The concert includes 10 songs that will be sure to bring you holiday cheer. St. Martha’s Episcopal Church has purchased the video link to the concert. This allows all members to log in and experience the concert as many times as they would like from Dec 6th through February 2021. The link to the concert site is shown below. There are also directions for viewing the concert on your tablet, laptop, or smart tv. There is also information about donating to the Capital Ringers so that they can continue to provide high quality concerts for the residents of Delaware. If you have any questions, please contact Dave Kemper. We look forward to seeing them in person next year!

<https://www.capitalringers.org/capital-ringers-productions/> Please contact the office for the password.

Please give by mail or website donate button

Please continue to support our mission work by submitting your pledge to St. Martha’s Episcopal Church, PO Box 1478, Bethany Beach DE 19930 or give via the donate button on the website where there is a box to note your contribution purpose: <https://www.stmarthasbethanybeach.org/make-donation-or-pledge/>.

Prayer List

Bob Bauer, Ruth Simone, Ron Sutton, Martha, Wayne Argo, Paul Stutts, Justin Bence, James Moore, Jr., Evan Ballard, Cameron Vlassis, Charmaine Zoller, Tara Sprouse, Don Louk, Joey, Sara Suerose, Nancy Moore & family, Bill Ensor, Katherine Hobbs, Joe, Nancy Reed, Leigh Alexander Loeber, Ron Pickup, William L Brintnall, Laura N. Brintnall, Cuthie Family, Janice Fritsch, Cassandra Riddle, Pauline Wise, Becky Warlow, Jean Bunker, Carolyn Clarke, August Goeller, Bev and Jack Shubert, Margaret Duval, Marilyn Hoffman, Clari Hernandez, AJ Evans, Robert Hicks, Noel Tuck, Joanne Grant, Mimi Drew, John Conway, Keith Smith, Jim Lucas, Christine Mains, Lois Allen, Tony Combas, Catherine Jordan, Leo Mozzoni and Chris Riccardi

For Our Serving Military: Quinn Barber, HM3 Kevin Murphy, Conner Warlow, Daniel Olnick

Prayer LIST – If you would like to add someone to the Prayer List please contact the office at (302) 539-7444 or email admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org. The Prayer List is a way to ask for prayer from the whole congregation for a loved one who is dealing with a stressful issue such as chronic illness, job problem, or other personal problem. Only the person’s name is listed. Names stay on the list for two months unless and until renewed.

Prayer CIRCLE – These volunteer prayer warriors pray for a person who has asked for urgently needed short-term prayer for a specific purpose like surgery or an upcoming medical test. These requests are confidential. You can email prayercircle@stmarthasbethanybeach.org for Prayer Circle intercessions. You can also contact Jaclyn at admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org or 539-7444. Voicemail messages are being monitored and you will receive a return call during normal office hours (Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm).

Pastoral CARE –If you have a pastoral care need, please call Elsa or Carol at (732) 216-6875 or contact the office using the email address or phone number listed above.

Pastoral Care EMERGENCY – Please contact Father David Beresford at (302) 468 9062.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us
from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.
