

**The Belfry**

**Christ Episcopal Church**

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| **The Belfry** | **Christ Episcopal Church** | **October 2020** |

***Senior Warden Report***

I am writing this report on the first day of Fall, where did the summer go?

La Crosse is struggling with the C19 pandemic and our positive numbers are rising quickly due to the influx of college students, to the point Winona is asking their students and residents to not travel to La Crosse as it is a hot spot for contracting C19. When will it be safe to open the church for worship? Tim Donahue and the pandemic committee have developed a plan that will allow parishioners to social distance and once the numbers have leveled off steadily, we are hoping to open the church.

We are working on a few options to supplement the services throughout the week and Sunday. Greg Parmeter has agreed to take Ingri’s place and will be working with the lay readers to do morning, evening and compline prayer services virtually during the week. For Sunday worship, Jennifer Williams is coordinating with the Nashotah House Seminarians to incorporate sermons for inclusion in the service. We hope to do this soon. We approached Father Granger and he has provided us with a link to his sermons and that link has been sent out. Let the office know is you did not receive the links.

Bishop Jay Lambert will be in La Crosse on October 4th and will celebrate (without communion) an outdoor service to Confirm those candidates who have been so patiently waiting through this pandemic. We have a location that is internet capable and will record this service and with any luck, be able to broadcast live. More information will be forthcoming. The families have asked there not be an open attendance invitation to the Congregation at this time due to the pandemic.

We are working on the ability to do a blessing of the Pets service that usually takes place on October 3rd. This year we are honored to have this event still take place on October 4th, after the Confirmation service. Bishop Jay has graciously agreed to perform the Blessing of the Pets at the front steps of Christ Church (weather permitting). In the event of weather issues, we would ask parishioners to attend by Zoom and either hold onto their pet (if this is possible) or present on their screen a photo of their pet. Either way, we are working on getting this finalized. More information will be communicated.

The Search Committee has begun accepting applications for the Rector position. We are currently reviewing candidates and have posted the position for 45 days. The position will remain open until it is filled. This will allow the Committee to review applications right away and schedule interviews. We are hoping to have a new Rector hired in time for the Advent Season, God and the Holy Spirit willing.

We have postponed the hiring of a new Choir Director and Organist until the new Rector is in place and again thank those who are keeping the services and music going for our very private worship services.

Our Treasurer has included a summary of our financial position. We are grateful to those who have continued to give and honor their pledge as it has helped us to keep the bills paid. Having less expenses due to the open positions and the church being closed, the income needed to pay the normal bills is lower. We are currently seeing the trend in giving, decline and are hoping it was an end of summer occurrence as is customary. If you have not been maintaining your pledge to the church, please consider doing that now and going forward, we do need to have the funds to hire for the two positions. The mailing address to send checks is Christ Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 2908, La Crosse, WI 54602. Also, keep in mind the Stewardship committee for 2021 has begun preparing and will be making their approach as well this fall.

I understand the frustration and concern that is keeping us from worshipping in our beautiful church. Is there a better way for the evil one to keep a world away from conventional worship and taking communion? I have not lived through such an event, but worshipping via electronic media has resolved many or our worship needs, there are many opportunities to stay connected to church and services, most are utilizing in addition to the local offerings, other churches such as the National Cathedral in Washington DC, local churches attended in the past and those that are new. It is good to see that although we are not able to sit across from each other yet, enjoy communion or social coffee hour, we are steadfast in maintaining the needs of nourishing our souls through virtual worship.

Stay safe and healthy and blessed by the Lord,

Carla Corbin, Senior Warden

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***2020 Vestry Members***

Below you will find the current Vestry Members and their phone numbers. Please feel free to contact any one of them with your questions and concerns in the upcoming months as we transition.

Carla Corbin, Sr. Warden: 608-792-3630 Tim Donahue, Jr. Warden: 608-783-7418 or 608-769-8232

Bob Weathers, Treasurer: 608-799-9777 Lora Stefanski, Clerk: 608-386-8329

Jane Domroese: 608-792-3068 Michelle Elliott: 217-412-4121 Carole E.: 608-852-8352 Julie Markos: 608-317-8324 Greg Parmeter: 605-216-3671 Edd Storey: 608-675-4805 Jennifer Williams: 608-792-3819 Kurt Weaver: 608-787-6484 Rachel Heiss: 608-784-0991

**UNDERCROFT GALLERY at CHRIST CHURCH**

**Presents:**

**A POST-PANDEMIC ART EXHIBITION**

**“See? I am making all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)**

Members of the parish are invited to part of the next Undercroft Gallery exhibition, **“See? I am making all things new.”** Here is an explanation:

**Who?** Members of the parish create art to share with each other. The goal of this project is to connect with each and every member of the parish by sharing art, sent and received through U.S. mail. Please read on.

**What?** A work of art any 2D medium, and can include photography, up-cycled/collage materials, drawing, painting, print, etc. You can include scripture verses as part of the work, or on the reverse side. The artwork need not be religious in nature, and may be realistic, abstract, or a combination. Ideally the artwork is sized to fit the envelope, or could be folded to fit, then unfolded to reveal a larger work. Keep in mind the artwork is for a general audience. Please sign your artwork legibly on front or back.

**Where?** As the recipient, display the art in your home or tuck it away in a safe place until it can be part of the post-pandemic art exhibition/reopening of the Undercroft Gallery at Christ Church (date TBA)

**How?** Anyone can be creative! You can participate in two ways: 1) keep any artwork you receive in a safe place, then bring it to church to the Undercroft Gallery once we have reopened. 2) create a work of art that can fit into an envelope with standard postage (55 cent stamp) and mail it to a member of the church. Please keep track of whom you sent it to – we want to make sure every member receives at least one artwork.

**When?** Enjoy the art now, keep it in a safe place. When we are able to reopen the church with COVID restrictions lifted, bring the art to the Undercroft Gallery and place it in the basket labeled “See? I am making all things new,” (date TBA). At the end of the exhibition, you may take your artwork with you, or offer it as a gift.

**Why?** Making art and sharing it with others is a way of caring for each other and sharing hope during this prolonged period of physical distancing. This project allows us to connect with one another through creativity. We are individuals with unique, creative voices but we are also part of a vibrant community of faith. This project is offered in thanksgiving for God’s gift of the creative spirit.

**Questions?** Email Jennifer Williams at [annejennx@gmail.com](mailto:annejennx@gmail.com)

**UNDERCROFT GALLERY**

***“God be in mine eyes and in my looking” – from an Old English prayer***

**Gallery Committee:** Jake Delwiche, Carole Ewald, Roger Grant, Joan Gundersen, Mindy McConnell, and Jennifer Williams

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***The Tomah Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center*** seeks letters and cards for veterans who live at the VA Community Living Center. They need uplifting and positive messages, children's artwork, etc. To ensure each veteran receives a card or letter, they need at least 200 each week. Thanks! Lee

Address letters to: Tomah VA Medical Center ATTN: Mail Call (135) 500 East Veterans Street Tomah, WI, 54660

***From the Treasurer***

Before COVID, the church received about 30 checks in P&P offerings each week. When the virus forced in‐person services to be suspended last March, that number immediately dropped to about 20 weekly checks.  Even though the church received fewer checks each week, parishioners accelerated their giving and that allowed the church to withstand the financial impact of COVID unscathed.  However, in late July, the number of checks received each week started to decline and so did donations. The church is now receiving fewer than 10 checks each week and offerings are averaging a thousand dollars less each week compared to pre‐COVID amounts.  Because expenses are also less while the building is closed and we are without a Rector and Music Director, we are in no immediate financial danger.  But there are still bills to pay and the church continues to need your financial support.

Third quarter Pledge Statements were mailed Oct 1. Please let me know if there are errors.  Bob Weathers, Treasurer\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  ***October*** ***Birthdays and Anniversaries* Birthdays:** Julie McGarry (1); Peter Hammond (2); Rick Stefanski, Caroline Morris (4); Marilyn Williams (5); Andrew Elliott (6); Chris Frye, Melanie Weathers-Pendleton (7); Alana Seddon (10); Mary Shaw, Nick Charles (11); Mike Conway, Joseph Theisen (13); Lee Donahue, Tom Johnson (14); Jennifer Williams, Katie Wine (15); Vivian Andresen, Bill Simmons, Sharon Sweeney (16); Lincoln Gundersen (23); Tim Hammes, Pam Claussen (24); Benjamin Parmeter (25); Pat Vinson (27); Riley Powell (28); Cindy Hood, Nadia Younis (31). **Anniversaries:** Rick and Lora Stefanski (4); Judson and Harley Beck (5); Rich and Karen Peterson, Kurt and Laurie Kartman, David and Sherry McNamara (8); Lucy and Dennis Webb (9); Gordon and Theresa Edwards (12); Patrick and Myra Augustine, Dick and Julie McGarry (24); Aneel and Nadia Younis (25). ***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Prayers for Discernment Process*** O God of patient and gentle strength, who knows our needs even before we ask, may your loving presence guide us as we seek the next Rector for our parish and Bishop for our Diocese. Give us an open spirit, discerning hearts, and clear minds, that we may trust your will for us and become ever more united in your son our Savior, Jesus Christ. Inspire our conversation, deepen our prayer, and make us a community of humility and grace. Raise up for us, we pray, a priest and shepherd who will boldly proclaim your Gospel, faithfully administer your sacraments, and serve your people with love and compassion. All this we ask through Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***August/September Plate and Pledge***

August 23 $3,930 September 6 $3,290 September 20 $3,860

August 30 $2,760 September 13 $3,745 September 27 $3,460 **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***New Horizons Shelter Drive*** We are having a drive to collect needed items for the New Horizons Shelter on October 17th.  Masks are required for helpers and people who are dropping off their donations.   We will be in the Vinter Hall Drive up from 10 am until Noon to get the items out of your backseat or trunk.  Please like and share our Facebook event, as that helps us get the word out as parishioners and community members can donate!!! Tell all your friends and neighbors!!

Here are the shelters current needs: Paper Towels/Toilet Paper; Hairbrushes; New Teen clothing;  New Adult pajamas, robes, and sweatpants (XL – 4X); New Women’s plus-size clothing (summer only);Digital oral thermometers; Cellphone chargers; Hand sanitizer; Face masks for adults & children with headbands; Disposable gowns; Disinfecting wipes/Disinfecting spray; Food service gloves; Dishwashing gloves; Isopropyl alcohol (90%); Distilled water. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ***Congregational Sympathy*** Congregational sympathies to the family of Robert (Bob) Schroeder. May he rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.