

2025 April 10

Dear Ones,

I watched the snow fall yesterday and had to laugh to myself. Easter may be late this year, but there's still a chance there will patches of snow on the ground! Fortunately, the Good News is not dependent upon the weather forecast or phase of the moon. We will celebrate the Resurrection anyway.

I was looking through some photos from five years ago, when we were all deep in COVID lockdown. I remember how despondent I felt. That Holy Week was certainly different, and sometimes lonely. But I suspect Jesus had quite a few lonely moments in that last week of his life. It made me more aware of how important it was for me to walk with Jesus through those days. To come alongside him, as he as so many times come alongside me when I needed him.

I invite you to participate as fully as you can in Holy Week. Palm Sunday begins with shouts of joy, but lead us from there to the darkness of the cross and tomb. We will conclude that service with the Stripping of the Altar. There will be Zoom Compline on Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:15. Maundy Thursday will include footwashing and the Eucharist in the chapel at 7. I will lead the Good Friday liturgy at noon in the sanctuary, a service that includes the story of Jesus' passion according to the Gospel of John, and a time of deep prayer for the whole world, using the Solemn Collects.

I haven't yet decided if I once again offer the online, abbreviated version of the Easter Vigil I developed five years ago. Stay tuned!

In the meantime....*keep the faith*,
Nancy+

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

Luke 19:28-40

Isaiah 50:4-9a * Psalm 31:9-16 * Philippians 2:5-11 * Luke 22:14-23:56

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Susan Knight (4/13) Bill Gibson (4/15) William Long (4/19) Jodi Carter (4/19)
Henry and Pat Stewart (4/15) Jim and Barbi Tinder (4/19)

PARISHIONER'S NEWS

After many decades of membership here at Christ Church, our dear Sue Emerson is moving to Idaho to be closer to family. In the eleven years I have been here, the list of ways she has served the congregation and the wider community is impressive. In addition to her contributions on Sunday morning as lector, Eucharistic Minister, acolyte, coffee hour host, she has served as vestry member and warden, community outreach volunteer to the school and The Progress Center, and most recently our faithful Eucharistic Visitor, taking communion to shut-ins. I know there are more things to add from all the years before I arrived, and she will be sorely missed. But we wish her well and send her with our love. I reminded her on Wednesday that God goes before her to prepare the way, and will be there to greet her with a new church family when she arrives!

CREATION CARE TIPS

Earth Day, Every Day Part II

Have you seen how big and fat the maple buds are? I noticed two weeks ago that they were finally turning red. And the daffodils we planted over the septic tank had burst forth from the less-cold ground. Ahh, some progress toward spring! (Never mind that the calendar had already turned to spring a week earlier; this is, after all, Maine.) Now the tulips are three to five inches tall, and promising a colorful display in – let's see, how many more weeks? But, indoors is a another story.

The impatiens from last year weathered the cold in our basement, heated only by the cast-off warmth of the furnace in an adjacent room. They've grown leggy, or more to the point, spindly, but remained healthy all winter long. They even bloomed! After church on Sunday I gave them all a necessary trim, and now there are about 100 cuttings in jam jars, sitting on the windowsill, and starting to form roots. Once the plants recover and show progress, I'll trim them again and plant those rooted cuttings in our shade garden and in boxes on the deck railings. But that first batch of cuttings? Those will appear in the Guild Room on the 27th, to celebrate Earth Day, and to be given to all the parishioners at Christ Church.

Joining those impatiens plants in the Guild Room will be more spider plants. It amazes me that I've given away more than two hundred of them, and they all came from one tiny plant with four or five blades. Perhaps I'll repot some aloe plants to give to our church family. They, too, came from one tiny plant! Both of these treasured gifts were Mother's Day gifts, one from our daughter eleven years ago, the other from our daughter-in-law, seven years ago.

But taking up space in our sunroom, being rather unproductive and quite contrarian, are my cacti and amaryllis plants. The amaryllises usually display huge trumpet shaped blooms at Christmas time. If you follow the directions, they'll bloom each year, at Christmas...but mine? Two amaryllises still haven't lost last year's leaves yet, one is hibernating or dead, and three are in the very slow process of sprouting new leaves. Perhaps they will blossom for Memorial Day.

Why do I have all these plants? Some are kept from year to year because I'm so frugal. (Darn it, why should I pay each year for the same thing?) Some are kept because I'm so stubborn. (Darn it, the directions say they'll continue to grow for decades, and somehow, I expect them to do just that.) Some remain here because I refuse to give up on them. (Darn it, don't make me toss this little guy, there's still one leaf hanging on to the stem.) But this is New England, and frugality and stubbornness are revered New England traits, along with ingenuity, independence, and innate quirkiness. So I keep these plants going to clean the air, to add interest to our home, and to add flowers mid-winter. Other claimed benefits? They reduce stress levels, people work faster, have better concentration, plants can lift people's moods (unless the plants are droopy, brown, or d.e.a.d.), and plants can improve your outlook on work. Really? I don't know, but it's worth a try.

– Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

Hurt not the earth—neither the sea—nor the trees. Revelation 7:3

Editor's Note: I have some things rooting in jars as well, and will try to remember to bring them by before I go on vacation that week. If there are any spider plants left at the end of the day, you can leave them for me!

CALENDAR

TODAY: 9:15 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Silent confession and absolution
10:15 AM Eucharist/In-person and online
Dramatic Reading of the Passion
Stripping of the Altar
MON: 7:00 PM Zoom Compline
TUE: 7:00 PM Zoom Compline
WED: 9:00 AM Eucharist/Bible Study
THU: 9:00 AM Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Footwashing and
Eucharist in Chapel
FRI: 12 Noon Good Friday Liturgy in the sanctuary
12 -3 Ecumenical Walk of the Cross (see below)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Friday Walk of the Cross

Proceeds as follows: begins at Unitarian Universalist church; walk down Maine Street to The Table, back to 2nd Congregational; turn onto Paris Street to Christ Church; then St. Catherine's. Drive to 1st Congregational, walk from there to Trinity Lutheran. Carpooling encouraged, so that cars may be left at UU, St. Catherine's and Trinity.

Easter Flowers Envelopes are on the table next to the office.

Silent Prayer and Confession During Lent, join Sandy in the chapel at 10 AM for ten minutes of silent prayer, concluding with the absolution.

EASTER LUNCH: All our Christ Church friends are invited to share lunch at our home after the Easter service on Sunday, April 20th. Feel free to make your decision about coming at the last minute. If you are able, bring a food or drink to contribute, but don't not come because you don't have something to bring. There will be plenty for all. David and Nancy Mering, 114 Parsons Rd., Norway, nmering@msn.com, 978.852.1233

Eggs in a spaceship?! That odd looking thing on the table outside the bathrooms is an incubator, keeping fertilized eggs warm and cozy as they develop into chicks. Sandy has planned it so that the eggs SHOULD hatch on Easter morning! Feel free to stop and say hello to them—Nancy even sings to them occasionally.