

August Tidings

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A Reflection from Mother Judith

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed.

1 John 3:2

Holy Trinity Church
446 Hamilton Street
Southbridge, MA 01550
508-765-9559
holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com
www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org

The Rev. Dan Purtell
Priest-in-Charge
Lynn Garland-Senior Warden
(508-801-4638)

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In her most recent online weekly newsletter [*The Corners*, 7/28/2024], Nadia Bolz-Weber reflects on a friend's definition of prayer: "Prayer is the sloughing off of who we are not."

These words resonated with me: At this particular moment in my own personal journey, in your beginning of new ministry, and in our national questioning of our aspirations, it is helpful to remember that in true prayer we confront and let go of what is inauthentic about ourselves. Rather than being fearful or frustrated at the cacophony of voices telling us who we should be or what we are not, in prayer we let ourselves be guided by the trust expressed in this passage from the First Letter of John: *what we will be has not yet been revealed*. Living with what is unfinished—in ourselves and in each other—is a source of great freedom and deep peace.

I'm very grateful to be with you again, as you continue to grow into your new mission and ministry with Pastor Dan and as you welcome Food Share into the building. I look forward to beginning the new program year with you. I look forward to praying and planning together, eating and laughing together, finding joy in the surprising ways that God's mysterious purpose unfolds in and through us.

As you know, I often turn to Steven Charleston in my daily reflections, and I find this meditation from his book *Spirit Wheel* a good starting point for the coming months:

"Curious" by Steven Charleston [*Spirit Wheel*, p. 214]

I am not as certain as I am curious.

There are some things I feel certain about.

But there are many more things about which I am curious.

That's a good balance.

I want my faith to be an exploration.

I want to stretch my mind as much as comfort my soul.

I like wondering about the how and why of creation.

I have learned a lot from people

With whom I thought I disagreed.

I have discovered new realms of faith

I never even knew were there.

So I pray that I may be forgiven for what I get wrong

But never stop searching for what might be right.

Mother Judith+



August

Faith Formation



Confirmation and Reception into the Episcopal Church: May 18, 2025

While Pastor Dan is on sabbatical in August, September & October, Mother Judith will guide us in learning about the Episcopal Church

- a). Beliefs and practices, including the Book of Common Prayer and our beliefs about baptism & the Eucharist
- b). Governance and history--How is the Episcopal Church as an institution organized, and what is our relationship to the Anglican Communion?

When Pastor Dan returns, our youth will join with the youth at Bethlehem who are preparing for Confirmation to focus on questions about living our faith, service to the church and the community, and a youth retreat (date to be determined).

What does this involve?

1. Youth Confirmation:

- a) For youth in 8th grade & above - we will meet as a group 3 times before the end of October, times TBD. ***No one needs to make the firm commitment to be confirmed before taking part in these groups***, but this part of formation is required, so our approach will be to explore what it means to be an Episcopalian.
- b) In consultation with parents and Mother Judith, each youth will choose a mentor - an adult in the congregation--to have regular informal conversations about faith throughout the year. (We'll talk in more detail about what this involves.)
- c) We will provide the journal and study materials for the preparation.

2. Adults seeking Reception into the Episcopal Church or Confirmation:

Please see Mother Judith if you are thinking about being confirmed or being received into the Episcopal church. We'll set aside some time to talk, and to discuss the book *Walk in Love*--which we will provide—and each person will choose a mentor in the congregation..

3. 2 Sundays: August 25th & October 6th: 9:30am - 1 pm: Mini Intergenerational Retreats & Family Worship

On these 2 Sundays we gather for the morning to learn more about the Episcopal church. Plans are very preliminary now but the idea is that we would gather at 9:30 for prayer and an overview of the day's topic, divide into different groups based on age and interest, re-gather for an abbreviated instructed Eucharist, and end with coffee hour.

Individuals may take part in all or some of these segments.

August 25th - Blessing of Backpacks and school supplies

Episcopal Church 101: *Walk in Love*: Practices & Beliefs, Baptism & Eucharist

October 6th: Blessing of Pets

Episcopal Church 102: Structure, governance, the Anglican Communion

Youth Group:

The Combined Youth Group Families Kickoff Potluck Dinner :

Friday, August 23rd 6:30– 8:30 PM

Families from Holy Trinity & Bethlehem Lutheran will gather in the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall

We will celebrate the beginning of our joint venture with excellent food, information, planning, games and fellowship.

Watch for more information.

Formation for Adults:

The Chosen: Wednesday August 28th 5:30-8:30 pm @ Bethlehem Lutheran
Our discussion continues with Season Two, Episodes 5 & 6

We will gather for a light potluck supper, viewing, and discussion



3—Jace Reith-Lowery
8—Robin Yates
11—Emily Bousquet
11—Linda Spooner
14—Jared Burns
17—Suzanne Sharp
17—David Monroe
20—Colleen DeMings
20—Lucy Burns
25—Braden Bullard

Mission Plate for August**Cradles to Crayons:****Boston & the Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive – at home, at school and at play. Cradles to Crayons supplies these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities.

Cradle to Crayons is located in Newtonville, MA and provides to children across the state.

In the United States, 2 in 5 children live at or below 200% of the federal poverty, a level that ranges from deep poverty (50%) to low income (200%). These families struggle to pay for rent and groceries and often can't afford anything else. Basic items for their children include clothes and shoes that fit, a coat for cold weather, are simply not possible.

Please give generously to our mission plate at Holy Trinity Church, especially as back-to-school items will be needed by many families very soon.

Hi everyone, I am writing to share after participating in one of the Diocesan classes offered back in the first half of the year. *Sacred Ground*, the Episcopal Church's curriculum designed to help people work toward racial reconciliation, healing and justice, "is a film- and readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith [... during which] small groups [of participants] are invited to walk through chapters of America's history of race and racism, while weaving in . . . family stories [related to] economic class, . . . political and regional identity." Over the course of 12 class meetings, the Sacred Ground curriculum invites participants to consider the following topics in order "to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope and love."

- Stepping onto Sacred Ground: Becoming Beloved Community
- The Roots of Whiteness, and Deeper Roots
- Whose Land? Exploring Indigenous History
- Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: Exploring Black History
- Whose Land? More Layers: Exploring Latino History
- Americans, Not Foreigners: Exploring Asian/Pacific American History
- Selective Access to the Melting Pot and the American Dream: 1830s-1960s
- Divisions in Present-Day White America
- Legacies: Racism's Long Life
- Grief, Reckoning and Repentance
- Walk On: The Journey After Sacred Ground

I will confess that going in I thought I already knew quite a bit about these topics because teaching at Worcester State has provided me with opportunities to hear from students from many different backgrounds, as well as speakers brought in throughout the school year specifically to encourage communication about issues related to what Sacred Ground wants people to talk about.

Other than wholeheartedly wanting to encourage everyone to consider joining a Sacred Ground group when next the opportunity arises, I want to mention the two texts that are required reading for the course.

One of these core books, *Waking Up White, And Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving, is a very informative narrative of the many ways white privilege exists even when we are not aware of it or of how it has impacted all our lives – whether we are aware or are not, it actually does affect ALL of us. The second book is Howard Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited*. With only 5 chapters, Thurman's text provides remarkable insights into how understanding Jesus's life can help all of us become participants in the beloved community. Thurman's chapter titles alone provide insight into his thesis: Chapter 1 is "Jesus an Interpretation." Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are "Fear," "Deception," and "Hate," and the final chapter is "Love." The back cover of my edition (Beacon Press, 1996) explains, "Thurman suggests a reading of the Gospel that recovers a manual of resistance for the poor and disenfranchised. He argues that within Jesus's life of suffering, pain, and overwhelming love is the solution that will prevent our descent into moral nihilism. Thurman's work reaches past anger and distrust toward a vision of unity..."

I am not sure when the next offering of Sacred Ground will be, but I do encourage anyone who is interested to take a look at the information that can be found on the church website, <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/invitation/>. From this link it is also possible to get a preview of some of the other materials used in the course: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/syllabus-preview/>. Take a look at them when you have a chance; I think you will find quite a few things to think about! And, if you have the time and internet access when it is next offered, I recommend signing up – it was an infinitely valuable, thought-provoking experience. I learned far more than I realized I did not know.

Rose Reith

Spotlight on Our Senior Warden



Lynn Garland, our senior warden, has many gifts and talents. From singing to landscaping to making repairs, she shares her caring presence with us week to week. Lynn is also a clinical psychotherapist with a visionary and compassionate history.

Lynn recently shared with me her story of starting a small non-profit organization, *On the Move, Inc.*, that made a walker designed for blind children: "*The Walkalone.*"

In the 1990's, Lynn was neighbor to a family with a blind toddler, Tim. Over the years she watched Tim become "tethered" to his mother and saw the toll this was taking on the whole family. Lynn began wondering how she could help make their lives less stressful. One day when she was installing some light-weight PVC plumbing pipe in her home, she had the idea of using PVC piping to create a walker-type device with wheels. After several attempts, a practical child-size model was created

that gives feedback like a cane, and it was just what the doctor ordered. Not only did it bring Tim independence, it gave him hours of entertainment, made walking fun and not a chore, and helped him to make new friends. All the kids in the neighborhood wanted one to stand on and to roll down the hill.

Lynn took her invention to the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown where she sold three to the school and subsequently five more.

Lynn's non-profit no longer exists, but her original invention helped Tim and others.

Postscript: I looked up Tim (read more about Tim here: <https://www.poluscenter.org/polus-us/trades-win/timothy-vernon>) and found he was profiled in the news. Tim graduated from high school and went on to graduate from Fitchburg State University. After graduating he submitted 75 job applications, all of which were turned down! Finally, Eversource Energy hired Tim in their customer service department making accommodation for a successful work environment. Tim surpassed expectations and is now their Senior Customer Service Representative, doing one-on-one training and deescalating customer calls that other representatives couldn't resolve. I can't help thinking that Lynn's care and concern helped Tim "see ahead" and had an impact on Tim's life.

Susan Howland, Jr. Warden

Praying Hands Ministry

Our Praying Hands Ministry makes prayer shawls and lap blankets for anyone in need of prayer and comfort. Our prayers are "woven" into the shawl/ blanket.

There is a basket with blessed prayer shawls at the back of the church. Shawls can be taken for anyone in need of prayer, love, and comfort. A card is attached on which to write the person's name.

Pastor Dan blessed another 6 shawls in July. There are patterns and information on our website www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org under the Parish Ministries tab. For more information contact Susan Howland at howlands@charter.net or 508.612.3198

We are launching a new project to collaborate with the UMass Memorial Medical Center maternity for bereaved families. They are in desperate need of lightweight blankets for swaddling these precious babies. All colors are welcome, especially pink and blue. 20- to 24- inch blankets are preferred, but all sizes and materials will be accepted.

Robin will be collecting the blankets. We will have them blessed and Robin will bring them to UMass Medical Center.

Susan Howland and Robin Yates, coordinators



Food Share, Inc. Comes to Holy Trinity

On Sunday, June 2nd Dave Monroe announced that Food Share would need to leave their current “home” and relocate. During 2019-2020 Holy Trinity offered Food Share space in our classroom wing, but plans fell through. We quickly re-opened negotiations with the Food Share Board in June and offered the space once again. On June 26th Dave let us know Food Share would like to operate out of Holy Trinity.

In July, a license agreement was drawn up, approved by both the Holy Trinity vestry and the Food Share board, and signed on July 18th. Food Share will be using 5 of the 8 classrooms, restrooms in the undercroft, with use of the Undercroft for clients when open to the public. Entrance will be through the undercroft exterior door.

Food Share is currently open on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 to 11:15. They bring in the bulk of their food on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Food Share, a Southbridge Food Pantry, was started in 1975 by a small group of volunteers. The organization is run entirely by volunteers. They operate through generous donations of money and food, and monthly donations (5-6,000 pounds) of food from the Worcester County Food Bank in Shrewsbury, MA. They have been located in the basement of the Catholic Charities building on Elm Street for most of their years. They will move into Holy Trinity beginning August 1, with a projected opening date of Wednesday, August 21st.

Food Share’s mission is to provide food for area residents who are in need, advocating to end hunger in our community, while providing volunteer opportunities for those interested in giving back to their community.

We look at this partnership as a wonderful opportunity for both Holy Trinity and Food Share, becoming an even brighter light on Hamilton in the service of the Gospel.

Susan Howland,
for the Food Share working committee.



Sundays in August

Mother Judith will preside on every Sunday during Pastor Dan's sabbatical
(August 4th through October 27th)

- August 4th** **11th Sunday after Pentecost**
9 a.m. Mother Judith will be at Bethlehem Lutheran for the 9 a.m. service
11 a.m. Family Worship
 Blessing of Prayer Shawls

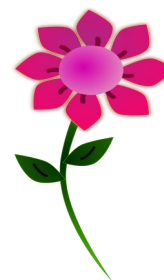
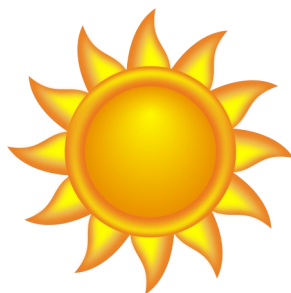
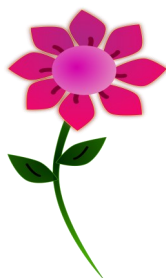
- August 11th** **12th Sunday after Pentecost**
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

- August 18th** **13th Sunday after Pentecost**
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 Prayers for blessing of our new ministry with Food Share

- August 25th** **14th Sunday after Pentecost**
Blessing of Backpacks and donated school supplies
Intergenerational Mini-Retreat
9:30 a.m., Gather in the Parish Hall: Opening Prayer & Overview
9:45-10:45 a.m. *Walk in Love:*
 An Introduction to Episcopal Beliefs and Practices
 Small Groups: Children, Teens, Adults
10:45 a.m. Gathering and Review
11:00 a.m. Instructed Eucharist in the sanctuary
Noon Coffee Hour

School Supplies

During August we will collect school supplies for the Southbridge schools. This year they particularly need multi-subject and single subject notebooks, 1-1/2" binders, loose leaf paper, composition books, graph paper, graphing notebooks, index cards, pencil boxes/pouches, pencil sharpeners, and rulers. We will bless these donations along with our Backpack blessing on **August 25th**.



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Southbridge, MA 01550

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446 Hamilton Street
Southbridge, MA 01550

Office Phone: (508) 765-9559

E-mail: holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com

Web site: holytrinitysouthbridge.org
(trinity)

Office Hours:

Tuesday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

unless otherwise noted

**The Episcopal Diocese of Western
Massachusetts**

The Rt. Reverend Douglas Fisher

Sunday Service

11:00 a.m. Rite II Holy Eucharist

**The Rev. Dan Purtell
Priest-in-Charge**



Website



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Tithely—Giving