

St. Philip's Weekly Newsletter

January 6, 2021

Happy, happy New Year everyone! I pray that 2022 turns into the best year ever for you, your loved ones and for all of us at St. Philip's. Things are so busy right now – at church and in my personal life. Most of it is “good-busy” but still, I may have missed updates some of you have given me and they may not make it into the list this week. If so, I am sorry. It's so easy for folks to just whisper a bit of news during “the peace” or at coffee hour but it's not always easy for me to remember and write it down. So please feel free to email me or text me. And if I do forget, please forgive me.

So here are our concerns and praises at the moment...

Prayer Requests and Notes of Thanksgiving

- Join me in praising God for the near-complete recovery and healing of our beloved deacon, Dan Hughes. Dan is walking unaided and feeling & looking better than ever. He wants me to thank all of you for the many notes, cards, emails, texts, calls and visits. But above all, he thanks you for your prayers. Dan will probably be back at church sometime this month!
- And I give thanks for Ginger Knowles and Mona Diaz, who drove all the way to Evanston to visit with Dan and Karen and who brought back this amazing news. (And many wonderful pictures! Bless you both!)

- Please pray for the repose of the soul of Angelo LaTropa, the next-door neighbor of Bev Harrell. We have prayed for the LaTropa's in the past through illnesses and a house fire. Angelo died this week of bladder cancer. May he rest in the peace of Christ and rise in the glory of Christ's resurrection. And may his wife, family and friends know God's comforting love.
- Please pray for families grieving the loss of loved ones from Covid-19. I've talked with four different people who have either lost a relative or have lost a dear friend.
- Give thanks that my fiance will finally return from Florida on the 13th; thanks be to God that Lisa's Dad is doing much better after surgery; and praise God that Lisa has expressed an interest in coming to church with me when possible! She does travel a lot for work but this is most welcome news. You will all love her.
- Give thanks for the beautiful digital clock Jack Notzen donated to the church. Now, Fr. Jim doesn't have to make noise in the vestibule asking, "Is it time to start, yet?" Jack, you are a blessing in many, many ways!
- Please pray for the victims of a deadly row-house fire in Philadelphia. We remember the 13 who died, their families and all the firefighters and other responders who must be hurting over this tragedy.
- Pray for the dozens who died in a funeral boat accident off the coast of Tanzania.
- Please pray for peace, justice and freedom in these trouble spots: Kazakhstan; Yemen; Haiti; Ukraine and Russia; China and Taiwan; North and South Korea; Sudan and South Sudan; Ethiopia; and throughout the Middle East.
- Give thanks for the relative security, freedom and peace we enjoy in our country.

- Give thanks for _____. Yep - I left it blank intentionally. I invite you to name one person at church for whom you thank God. Then offer a prayer of blessing for them.
- And let's keep praying for those with ongoing health or other concerns. They include Kim McDonald; A.J. Glickauf and his friends; Jeanne Svendson's niece and nephew; Janie and Ken Jenssen; Marge; Jill Hill; Roberta Butler; Tracey Grummer; Bill Peterson; Dan Hughes; Linda Purcell; Carrol Hercules; Ann Fischer; Andreas Kistner; Lian Thian; Molly and her parents, David and Laura; Peggy and Don; Toni and Joe Saladino; Christina Guzman; Bruce Fichte; Steve Francois; Scott Garske; Chris Trotti; The Bergman family; and Levi Tsu and his family.

In the wider church, please pray for...

- Episcopal Relief and Development and especially for the work they are doing helping victims of recent storms.
- St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Park Ridge and the Very Rev. Patrick Skutch, rector; and the Revs. Laurie Michaels and David Grauer, deacons.
- Bethel Lutheran Church of Palatine

This Week's Quiz...

...is about 2021 –

1. Wall Street investors joined forces to squeeze hedge funds by sending what company's stock value up by over ten billion (B) dollars? (Kentucky Fried Chicken; Bitcoin; eBay; Gamestop; Regal Cinemas)
2. Chloe Zhao became the first woman of color and only the second woman ever to win the Academy Award for Best Director. What picture did she direct? (Moonlight; Nomadland; Green Book; The Lost Daughter; Spiderman: No Way Home)
3. The President and First Lady of what North American country were the target of an assassination attempt in July? (Haiti; Canada; Guatemala; Trinidad & Tobago; Mexico)
4. The World Health Organization gave its official blessing to a new vaccine for what disease? (Covid-19; HIV; Leprosy; Smallpox; Malaria)
5. Which pro won the 2021 Masters? (Jordan Speith; John Rahm; Hideki Matsuyama; Marvin Hill; Mike Livingston)

How'd you do? Answers at the end of the newsletter....

This Week in Church History...

- On January 2nd, 1921: KDKA, a Pittsburgh radio station, broadcasts a service from Calvary Episcopal Church to test its ability to make remote broadcasts; this is the first religious broadcast in human history.
- On January 3rd, 1521: Pope Leo X excommunicates Martin Luther in the bull *Decret Romanum Pontificum* for having challenged practices of the Roman Catholic Church and refusing to recant as required in *Exsurge Domine*, an earlier bull.
- On January 4th, 1965: Death in London, England, of T. S. Eliot, the most influential English poet of the twentieth century, who had converted to Christianity and joined the Church of England.
- On January 5th, 1971: The Jewish organization Yad Vashem recognizes the Reverend André Trocmé of the Reformed Church as Righteous among the Nations because of his efforts to rescue Jews in France during Nazi occupation. He and his wife Magda will be remembered with other Righteous Gentiles in the Episcopal Church calendar on July 19. In May 1984, Yad Vashem will recognize Magda for her role. André's second cousin Daniel will also be recognized as Righteous among the Nations, having died in a concentration camp for his role protecting Jews.
- On January 6th, 1948: Janani Luwum converts to Christianity in Uganda. He immediately asks his family to pray that he won't backslide, but rather lead a godly life. Eventually he will become an archbishop and will be executed by the brutal dictator Idi Amin.
- On January 7th, 1450: Pope Nicholas V issues a papal bull acceding to a request from King James II to establish a university in Glasgow.

- On January 8th, 1956: Missionaries Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Jim Elliot, Peter Fleming, and Roger Youderian are massacred by Woadani Indians (Auca) in Ecuador. Several of the men's wives would return to Woadani people with food, clothing and medical aid. They forgave the murderers of their husbands and saw the former killers baptized as followers of Jesus. Today, over 40% of the Waodani profess faith in Christ.

With thanks to the Christian History Institute

News Briefs...

(CHICAGO) – A formal announcement in the form of a pastoral letter has not been published yet, but the Assisting Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is calling for a tightening of Covid restrictions. The Right Rev. Chilton Knudsen said - in a Zoom call with clergy - after consulting with Episcopal clergy who also work as physicians, epidemiologists and clinicians, she believes churches should cease using the common cup and require masks until at least mid-February. The good news, Knudsen says, is that the same experts advise her that most models project a substantial decline in infections by February's end. She has also recommended that congregations postpone their annual meetings until mid-late February.

(BOULDER, CO.) – Episcopalians in Boulder County, Colorado, are beginning the long task of recovering from a devastating wildfire that destroyed about 1,000 homes and burned over 6,000 acres in Superior and Louisville, suburbs northwest of Denver, on Dec. 30 and 31. Mike Orr, canon for communications and evangelism for the Diocese of Colorado, said that the Episcopal churches in the area had not been damaged but some parishioners had lost their homes. No deaths or major injuries were reported as of Jan. 2, though two people were missing, The New York Times reported. “The rectors and priests in charge are coordinating some of those efforts on the ground to assess the immediate needs of those families right now, as well as the needs of people who don’t call themselves Episcopalians,” Orr told Episcopal News Service. “This week we’re going to be putting out a request for people who want to give to that cause and we’ll be coordinating that through the Office of the Bishop, setting up a way for people to apply for funds to meet their needs.” Orr added that the Rev. Carl Andrews, the diocese’s disaster coordinator, is working with Episcopal Relief & Development, which has already provided an initial grant to the diocese. The area affected by the wildfire, which had been suffering from a severe drought, was hit by high winds last week, including gusts of 108 miles per hour, which fanned the flames. Two days later, about a foot of snow blanketed the area, putting out the fire but hampering recovery efforts. Investigators continue to look for the cause of the wildfire.

Episcopal News Service

(VATICAN CITY) – In his New Year’s wishes to the world, Pope Francis encouraged people to focus on the good which unites them and decried violence against women while acknowledging that the coronavirus pandemic has left many scared and struggling amid economic inequality. “We are still living in uncertain and difficult times due to the pandemic,” Francis said. “Many are frightened about the future and burdened by social problems, personal problems, dangers stemming from the ecological crisis, injustices and by global economic imbalances.”

According to the Associated Press, thousands of Rome residents and tourists, wearing face masks as protection against the spread of the coronavirus, gathered in St. Peter’s Square on a sunny, mild day to hear Francis lay out his recipe for world peace, cheering his appearance. Peace, the pope said, “demands concrete actions. It is built by being attentive to the least, by promoting justice, with the courage to forgive, thus extinguishing the fire of hatred.” Francis also championed embracing a positive attitude, “one that always sees, in the Church as well as in society, not the evil which divides us, but the good that unites us.” Earlier Saturday, in his homily during a Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica, Francis publicly ushered in 2022 by praising the skills which women bring to promoting peace in the world, and he equated violence against women to an offense against God.

Associated Press

(MALINDI, KENYA) – The Dakatcha Woodland is home to Africa’s tiniest owl; a long-legged shrew with golden fur found nowhere else on earth; and weaver birds so rare it took Kenyan ornithologist Colin Jackson 13 years to track down their breeding grounds. The East African habitat, which stretch over about 465,000 acres north of the coastal town of Malindi, Kenya, are under constant threat from climate change, expanding farms, and charcoal production. “We’re fighting against a huge wave of destruction,” Jackson, who is also head of A Rocha Kenya, told Christianity Today magazine. There are only so many things you can do to save a forest. You can lobby for environmental laws. Buy land and place it in a trust. Raise money. Raise awareness. Promote scientific research on the importance of the habitat for biodiversity. And, according to Jackson, you can pray. “There have been times when things have looked pretty desperate and yet we’ve managed to break through and things have improved,” he said. A Rocha Kenya, the local branch of the international network of environmental organizations with Christian ethos, has set up a “wall of prayer” to protect the Dakatcha Woodland and other key sites. It consists of a WhatsApp group of about 80 or so Christian conservationists around the world that A Rocha Kenya can call on for intercession when faced with a crisis. Many people are skeptical of the power of prayer, and there is an especially fierce criticism of those who invoke “thoughts and prayers” as a way not to take action on pressing social issues. But Christians who care about the environment have been increasingly turning to intercession as a spiritual tool commensurate with great need.

Believers from Asia, Europe, and North America gathered monthly ahead of the United Nations climate change conference in Scotland to intercede for the governments negotiating emissions targets. At the conference, Christian observers prayed for “a godly outcome.” And the

Christian conservation group in Kenya is organizing believers who will pray for the protection of the forest that is home to many rare creatures. Christian environmentalists argue that the first obligation given to humans was caring for the creation.

Christianity Today

Well, that's it for another week my friends. My prayer is that God will bless, protect and shelter you in His endless love.

Fr. Jim

QUIZ ANSWERS...

1. Gamestop
2. Nomadland
3. Haiti
4. Malaria
5. Hideki Matsuyama