



REV. SUZANNE WADE, Bridge Priest
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TRINITY CHAPEL
184 CENTER RD. SHIRLEY, MA 01464
VESTRY MEMBERS
CO-WARDENS: Lyn Doran, Nan Gulliver
JUNIOR WARDEN: Stephanie Hooper
TREASURER: Chester Hooper
ASSISTANT TREASURER: Donna King
CLERK: Gaynor Bigelbach, Betty Mahon, Maureen
Panetta, Nancy Sawyer, Marge Halloran

JANUARY 2021

Slow Emergence of the Light

The birth of a child is always more promise than fulfillment. The babe's arrival may turn things upside down, but the full picture only emerges slowly, over many years. A birth is a beginning. The fullness of what God is doing is still far in the future.

I wonder if the shepherds thought about that. The gospel from Luke tells us that after the angel chorus left the sky and silence returned to the Bethlehem hillside, they looked at one another and said, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see what has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." And sure enough, they found the infant with his mother Mary, just as the angel had said.

Surely at least one of the shepherds was aware of the long road between birth and adulthood. He must have known that despite the ecstatic proclamation of the angels, the saving work of the newborn Messiah would take years and of course decades, to be completed. At least one of the shepherds must have realized that if the Good News of God's saving action in the world was the birth of a baby, he might not live to see its fulfillment.

Which makes it all the more remarkable that the shepherds left the stable praising God for all they had seen and heard. Yes, they had received a promise of salvation – but it was only a promise. There was no immediate rescue from the situation they were in, no quick reversal of fortune for an oppressed people. In that dark night, in a town overcrowded by the oppressive dictates of a foreign emperor, the birth of a baby must have seemed like a very small flicker of light indeed.

The shepherds knew that something had changed. They knew that God was working in the world, and that would, if they were patient, change everything. The timeline might be long, but they could draw strength from the sure and certain knowledge that God's Messiah was among them, and that God's salvation **was** coming. The Savior might only be an infant suckling at his mother's breast right now, but babies grow up. They were willing to trust the angel's word that his birth was the beginning of good news for God's people.

I know a lot of people had a hard time getting into the Christmas spirit this year. Maybe that's because we normally celebrate Christmas as the triumphant end to the anticipation. Four weeks of preparation give way to the excitement of the heavenly host appearing in the night sky, with trumpets and choirs and at least one rendition of Hark! The Herald Angels Sing! Normally, we sit shoulder to shoulder, waving gladly as old friends join us in the sanctuary, remarking with delight at how the children have grown. We sing out gladly with the organ and a multitude of voices fills the space. Then we gather with family and friends, food and gifts, and mark the turning of the year with merriment and joy.

But not this year. This year we are celebrated the birth of the Messiah sitting in our cars or parked in front of the computer screen. We prepared Christmas feasts for two, making phone calls to grandparents instead of spending the day at their house with all the cousins. There were no parties to spur us to put up the Christmas decorations, and crowded stores filled us with anxiety rather than excitement.

This year, Christmas is more of a promise than a fulfillment, the flicker of light in the darkness instead of a blaze of glory. We have a vaccine, but experts tell us it will be months yet before its distributed widely enough to relax the precautions that are keeping us out of the sanctuary tonight. We know that the economic impact of the pandemic will take months and maybe even years to subside, and that we will be called upon to feed the hungry and help the unemployed long after the hospitals empty of COVID patients. We know that those we have lost to COVID will not stand shoulder to shoulder with us next Christmas, no matter how loudly we sing.

But maybe that just makes this year more like the first Christmas than our usual celebrations. Christmas is the beginning, not the completion, of God's work in the world. The arrival of the Savior is a reason for hope, but there is still so much to be done before we can honestly call it good news for all people. Maybe the problem is not that we are not feeling the Christmas spirit, but that we hadn't realized that the Christmas spirit is not raucous joy but the quiet stirring of hope. It is looking out into all that is broken in the world and realizing that God is working there, that the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it. It is realizing that the angel's promise of good news for all people is still with us, still moving us toward the restoration of all creation.

So this Christmas, may we, like Mary, treasure the angels' words and ponder them in our hearts. Like the shepherds, may we praise God and go away rejoicing in the promise of a child born in a stable, even as we aware that patience will be required as we wait for the fulfillment of that promise. May we see in the flicker of our candles the first hints of the Light coming into the world, the promise that death will not have the last word and that God has not abandoned God's people, but instead sent to us a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Suzanne

MINUTES OF THE RECTORY RENOVATION "GANG"

DECEMBER 11, 2020

Meeting of the Rectory Renovation Gang- Friday, December 11, 2020

Present at the meeting were: Jean Reed; Stephanie Hooper; Chet Hooper; Nancy Shepherd; Nan Gulliver and Karla Leonard.

We thanked Jean Reed for volunteering to be in the rectory when the Burglar Alarm company recently installed a burglar alarm. We made sure that all members of the Rectory Renovation Gang committee knew the alarm code and understood how to use the system. The committee was also informed that the code for the new key box was the same as the burglar alarm code. There was a brief discussion about the type of sensors which have been installed on the doors and windows.

We mentioned that Brian Gardner, with the help of Nan Gulliver, had installed the storm windows at the church and put a cover over the exhaust fan. Brian has offered to clear the walkways at the church and the rectory steps whenever it snows this winter for \$40 a time. This proposal will be discussed at the next vestry meeting.

The main purpose of the discussion was to decide the next step in renovating the rectory. We agreed that:

First, we should find someone to install railings by the steps leading up to the front porch, as the current walkway is dangerous. Nancy Shepherd agreed to contact Steve Longley to see if he would be interested in doing the work.

We talked about the need to clean the rectory, thoroughly, keeping in mind that hiring a professional cleaning company could be expensive. Jean Reed volunteered to contact Lyn Doran to ask if her cleaning person, who also cleans the Chapel, might be available. Nancy Shepherd will also contact her cleaning person to see if she would be interested. We understand that we have limited funds to spend on cleaning, which will affect whom we hire.

We talked briefly about how we want to renovate the kitchen with our limited funds. We have already received quotes and ideas for renovating the kitchen from two different people and now would like to consult a third person about ideas and costs. Nan Gulliver will ask her landlord if he would be interested in giving us his ideas and costs for renovating the kitchen. Stephanie also volunteered to ask Robert Adam if he knows of a kitchen designer we could contact. We all agreed that we do not want the kitchen gutted.

We know that once we have decided on plans for renovating the kitchen, we will have to consult an electrician to look at the type of new electrical outlets we would need. The electrician would also inspect the current wiring in the rectory and upgrade where necessary.

Finally, Jean Reed reminded us that there are people who could lose their homes because of Covid and might need a temporary place to stay, such as the rectory. Jean Reed will find out more from Senator Eldridge.

We adjourned after 45 minutes and agreed to meet again on Friday, January 8th at 10.30.

Respectively submitted,

Stephanie Hooper

Vestry Zoom Meeting Sunday December 20 2020

Present

Reverend Suzanne Wade

Lyn Doran Chester Hooper Stephanie Hooper Nancy Sawyer NanGulliver

Gaynor Bigelbach Donna King

Absent Betty Mahon Maureen Panetta Marge Halloran

Minutes

There were two corrections to the minutes from November's meeting. Chet Hooper moved to accept the minutes as amended. Donna King seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Chet Hooper presented the Treasurer's Report. Trinity Chapel continues to operate within its budget and there are no deficits. Some pledges have been returned but the numbers are low. Rev. Suzanne Wade recommended that members of the vestry make phone calls to individuals who have not yet returned their pledges.

Lyn Doran made the motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Gaynor Bigelbach seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Rectory Committee Report

Stephanie Hooper presented the Rectory Committee Report. Shirley resident Brian Gardner has been engaged to keep the paths clear at the chapel and the rectory as well as creating a path from the Historical Society parking lot to the chapel. Runoff from the rectory roof causes the steps up to the porch to freeze. Gaynor Bigelbach requested permission to open an account with Moore Lumber so that she can purchase ice melt throughout the winter. Lyn Doran made the motion to give Gaynor authorization to approach Moore Lumber. Stephanie Hooper seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Chet and Stephanie Hooper are exploring the cost of having railings installed along the rectory steps.

Nan Gulliver is pursuing another estimate for the renovation of the rectory kitchen.

There is an issue with wages from Paycheck not being deposited into the cleaner's bank account. Chet has provided the cleaner with a statement from Paycheck showing that the money has been deposited and he has suggested that the cleaner take up this issue with her bank.

The Rectory Committee will meet again on January 8th 2021. Henceforth, minutes from the committee's meeting will be entered into chapel records separately from vestry minutes.

Priest in Charge

During a brief conversation about moving forward with a three year Priest in Charge contract, it became apparent that there were differences of opinion that will require mediation. Reverend Wade suggested that the vestry arrange a meeting with Helen Daley as mediator. The vestry agreed.

It was suggested that the vestry extend the Bridge Priest contract for another sixty days. Reverend Wade agreed to this renewal but requested that there must be a mutually agreed upon limit on how many times the Bridge Priest contract can be renewed. Reverend Wade also requested that the vestry look closely at Trinity Chapel's long term financial stability when considering how to move forward with the Priest in Charge contract. In addition, Reverend Wade stated that priest compensation could not be tied to taking occupancy of the rectory.

If, during contract deliberations, it appears that Trinity Chapel and St Mark's Church, Westford have an unequal share of clergy compensation, Reverend Wade suggested that it would be diplomatic to allow worship at St. Mark's to continue at the current time of 10:00.

Chet Hooper made the motion to extend the Bridge Priest contract for sixty days. Lyn Doran was the second. The motion passed.

Epiphany

Due to the necessity to continue social distancing, there will be no Epiphany party this year.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held **on February 7th**. Reverend Wade asked who compiled the Annual Report. Stephanie Hooper explained that, in the past, the chair of each committee wrote a report and Reverend Marsha Hoecker compiled the Annual Report.

Musings from the Pew

The Three Wisemen

From my heart but not from Scripture

This past fall I took a class entitled Medieval Africa and read about the history of peoples long ago in the remote villages in Northern Africa on the border the Sahara desert .



I can imagine these, so called, kings on camels (I don't know much about them except they were very wise.) migrating far from their homes to seek the child born under the brightest star in the heavens above them.

I imagine their quest was the most important they had ever embarked on. They left their homes carrying gifts to present to the child's parents, Mary and Joseph. They knew that this long journey would change their lives.

In some ways I think the wisemen were so driven by their belief that they were blinded by the dangers they would face traveling the across the biggest dessert of this earth.

The wisemen were brave and lived on faith and hope, which is how we, the people of the one God (whether we are Hindu, Christian, Muslim or Jewish) should approach this new year ahead of us. Our eyes open like the Wisemen. Looking ahead and not back.

I do believe in my heart that there are lessons to learn from the enormously difficult year that has just past.

I pray from my heart that the human race learns that changes need to be made to our fragile planet. (I also 2 other classes: Climate Change and Ethics of Climate Change.) We need to change how we view others that are not like us.

Faith is not easy because it takes away our centrist ego. I am going to try to set aside my own fears/ego and grow my faith and vision.

Peace and blessings in 2021.

Lyn

Musings from the Pew continued

Page 6

For January by Meredith

I enjoy playing the ukulele alone, with friends, and lately online with various groups.

When thinking of the new year ahead of us, the theme of the next Ukelele Talent Show sponsored by my teacher is "Beginnings". I looked through my collection of ukulele music trying to find something that went with the theme. I decided on the song "Let it Be."

The Beatles called on Mother Mary to help them get through what lay ahead. I have one friend who calls on her angels. I call on my daughter and my friends to help me with earthly tasks. But when things get really tough, I "let it be" and then call on God to take over.

None of us can do it all alone but sometimes we don't want to give up whatever power we think we have. We have to just let be and let God act.

We have no idea what the coming year will bring, but if we start with God in charge, we will be better able to face whatever lies ahead.

Christmas tales from Marsha and Henry

2020

We knew it was a year of change
We knew at the start we would face
Challenges
Letting go

We did not know
we would not share Eucharist
We did not know
We would preach to video
We did not know what
"refrain from embracing" meant
Or what it would be like
"the day the music died"

No Threshold Choir
No Easter Messiah
No hymns of resurrection
No lasts
For the last year

Solitude not solitude
The two of us
We hiked in the Spring
New trails, new views
Familiar paths and saying goodbye

Masked August reprieve
Eucharist in Sunshine
Flowers and birdsong
Refraining from embracing
Farewells

Crossing state lines with trailer in tow
So many times
The distance shorter and shorter
Beginning to settle

Falling into November
Hope in a ballot box
Joy
Sarah's new house
Cutting trees

Last things and a big truck
Empty
Empty garage
Empty backyard
Full house in Rockland

We are here, alive together
Busily retired making home again

From Nancy Shepherd Pastoral Care

Dear Trinity Friends. Happy January!

I am glad to tell you that JonnieLynn is doing well in her recovery from knee surgery (last fall). Some of you may even have noticed that she has read a couple of times for the Sunday services.

Mike Halloran is having a tougher time now that he is having treatment for esophageal cancer. It is difficult and painful to eat. Two things we can all do is to pray for Mike and Marge, and to send cards to them. Their address is 105 Little Turnpike, Shirley, MA 01464.

Angelo Jr has been in the hospital but is doing better now. He will be going back to his group home this week. His address is 6 Alston St., Leominster, MA. He might like a note as might his Dad, Angelo Layhe, Sr. who lives at 154 Great Rd, Lot M, Shirley MA 01464.

Although we have a Pastoral Care Team, there is something we can all help out with. Do remember especially people who are older and/or live alone. A note or a phone call always lifts the spirits. If you don't have a parish list, please call Suzanne Wade, our Priest, or me, Nancy.

Lyn Doran and Meredith both keep up with the Trinity Prayer Lists. Lyn does the Newsletter list and Meredith does the weekly Eblast list. If you know someone who need to be added or removed please let Lyn or Meredith know. If someone has died, we can offer special prayers. In these times of Covid we need to take special care to stay in touch. I hope you all are doing as well as possible.

A message from Chet Hooper—Treasurer and Donna King, Asst. Treasurer

We ended last year in the black by about \$8,200.00. We did not perform the maintenance and repairs that we should have on the Rectory. We were, however, able to spend \$13,000 on the new layer of roofing shingles on the chapel and half of Shepherd Hall. The other half of Shepherd Hall had a new layer of shingles a few years ago.

We now have a balance of \$6,388.55 in our checking account.

The 2020 pledges totaled \$54,797 and the pledge payments totaled \$58,968.

For 2021, our pledges are not as good. The amount pledged so far for 2021 is less than we have received for as far back as 2016. Currently, we have received pledges totaling \$50,836. We have lost 4 parishioners in 2020. In 2021 there are 4 parishioners that pledged in the past and will not be pledging in 2021.

Even though the pledge total is lower for 2021, it is only about \$4,000 less than last year. Hopefully, more pledges will be received and/or some parishioners may want to increase the pledges that have already submitted. There is no rule against that.

The 2021 pledge envelope boxes are in the front entrance of Trinity Chapel. Your name is written on the envelope box with your number.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87407612817?pwd=UzlleWJsVEI5OWVudTZuUWp5cjA5QT09>

Worship Planning for Holy Week & Easter: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83231494697?pwd=ZXpwenBreVk2d1puWW5PZGN1MDBDZz09>

Holiday Food Drives: St. Mark's and Trinity Chapel are both organizing separate drives to benefit local food pantries this Thanksgiving. At the request of Loaves & Fishes in Ayer, Trinity Chapel is focusing its Thanksgiving drive efforts on hearty soups. Donations may be dropped off in the entrance way. Announcements

Worship Planning Meetings: Members of St. Mark's & Trinity Chapel are invited to join Rev. Suzanne for worship planning meetings on Sunday, Jan. 24, and Sunday, Feb. 21, at 1 p.m. Come and talk about how we will observe Lent on Jan. 24, and Holy Week & Easter on Feb. 21.

Worship Planning for Lent:

St. Mark's parishioners are encouraged to drop-off donations in the plastic bin outside of the administrative wing entrance. Items the pantry particularly needs are: Canned potatoes, green beans, carrots, peas, and corn; SPAM; gravy; jelly; ketchup, mayonnaise, oil, mustard, salad dressing, toilet paper, mac & cheese, instant mashed potatoes, stuffing mix, pasta, coffee, sugar, flour, cake and cookie mixes, box cereal, oatmeal, and hearty soups such as Progresso, Campbell's Chunky, and Campbell's Healthy Choice.

Friday Bible Study. St. Mark's Friday Bible study meets every other week via Zoom and discusses the lectionary readings for the week. New members are welcome! Next meeting Jan. 8. If you'd like to join, e-mail Herb Elliott at herb.elliott@cheza.com to request the Zoom link and the readings for the week.

Sunday Worship

Join us online each week at 10 a.m. on our church Facebook Page or at Rev. Suzanne's YouTube channel at <https://youtube.com/channel/UCEcL-R4RICNJs0MsDmsJppQ>

Help with Worship!

Lectors & Intercessors: Read the lessons for the week or the Prayers of the People via video for incorporation into recorded worship.

Singers: Join us on Sunday for recorded worship, or pre-record a solo!

Altar Guild: Prepare the altar for worship, including packaging wafers, setting and clearing the altar, and cleaning linens. Can be done when no one else is in the building.

Worship Scheduling: Coordinate lectors, intercessors, singers, and Altar Guild members for recorded worship.

Technical Support: We're looking for people willing to assist with set-up, video recording, and sound. Help us take our video worship to the next level by providing behind-the-camera support!

Deliver communion wafers & bulletins. Deliver communion wafers and printed bulletins for upcoming services for homebound members.

Contact Rev. Suzanne if you are able to help out in any of these capacities: revsuzanne@cheza.com, phone/text 508-472-9656



THOSE IN OUR MILITARY

JONATHAN OAKES, ALEX CORMIER, ANDREW CULLEN, DENNIS HARD, DUNCAN SCHAF, BRANDON HARSCH, TOM STRICKLER

ANGIE

ANN

Anderson, Ross (Marsha's step -uncle)

Blackwell, Branden (Donna's grandson)

Bonnacolta, Patricia

Boyd, Jane

Burnett, Sarah (Janice's niece)

Carter, Mickie

Carter, Mikel

Conners, Margaret

Christy, Ann (Sharron)

Currier, Alan (Marsha's friend)

Dean, Susan

Desler, Ray (Sharron)

Donna, (mother of a friend of Mary Ellen's)

Fratoni, Elena (friend of Jean & Carol)

Glazer, Pam (friend of Lyn)

Gole, Bob

Gracey, Ariana (Jean Reed's granddaughter)

Gray, Martin (son of Fran Gray)

Gray, Kiki (daughter of Fran Gray)

Gregoire, Mike

Guadalupe, Mellisa

Hoff, Chris (cancer friend of Stephanie's)

Halloran, Mike & Marge

Hamilton, Katie

Harron, Robin

Hooper, Chet

Hooper, Richard (Chet's brother)

Holly

Jefferson-Tate, Rene

Landry, Ed

Layhe, Angelo, Jr

Leonard, Charlie

Leonard, Jim (Karla's son)

Mattila, Melanie

Meyer, Maureen

Moss, Bob

Matthew, (Mary Ellen's son who is an ER nurse in Rockland ME)

Panetta Paul (Maureen's brother)

Panetta Mary (Maureen's niece)

Panetta, Maureen

Patton, Bob (Karen's brother-in-law)

Pellerin, Kerry (friend of Amy's who has M.S.)

Pothier, Mark (Sharron and Vince's son)

Reed, Austin

Requa, Mike (friend of Lyn)

Richardson, Elaine

Rollins, Barbara (cousin of Karla & Karen)

Sarah, (grandchild of a friend of Jean's mother)

Schmidt, Keara (chorus member with Maureen)

Scott, Flora (Karen and Karla's aunt)

Sanft, Judy (friend of Karen)

S, Joe

Vita, Marie (friend of Jean and Anita)

Z., Pat

JANUARY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
3 FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY	4	5	6 Recording @ Trinity Soup Kitchen	7 Finance Committee	8 10:30 Rectory Meeting	9
10 BAPTISM OF JESUS	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 2nd Sunday Epiphany Vestry Meeting 6:00 PM	18	19	20 Recording @ Trinity Soup Kitchen	21	22	23
24 3rd Sunday Epiphany	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 4th Sunday Epiphany	FEB 1	2	3 Recording @ Trinity Soup Kitchen	4		

Lyn Doran—Newsletter editor

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Please write if you do not want
to receive or you have ideas for
changes