



THE ST. MARK'S MESSAGE

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Britain

THE LION'S PAUSE with ALLISON PENICK, VESTRY CLERK

VOLUME XCVIII
ISSUE 6

JUNE 2022
ISSUE

Moving Fences

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Yes, it is June and Pentecost is just around the corner, but I'm still basking in the glow of Easter. And we need to celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ every day. St. Mark's Easter Day this year was extraordinary. After 2 years of the Covid pandemic, selling our building and having Father Shaw complete his time with us, I felt bereft and ambivalent about our future. Yet, the day dawned with sunshine and we were blessed with a service in a flower-filled Erwin Chapel, an organist and Bishop Laura as our celebrant! I could not have asked for more.....and, yet, there was! Bishop Laura's sermon touched my heart. She spoke of several World War II soldiers who wanted to give their friend who had been killed an honorable burial. They asked a priest at a local church if that was possible. He said, "No, one had to be a member of the church to be buried in its cemetery." He did bury the soldier just *outside* the cemetery's fence. After the war ended, the soldiers returned to visit the grave and could not find it. They asked the priest and he said that the grave was there *in* the cemetery. How could that be? The priest said, "I moved the fence."

Listening to Bishop Laura, (God bless her!), my heart melted. That is what Jesus would have done. That is what the world needs now. We need to move the fences we have built to exclude "the other". St. Mark's Church has been and continues to welcome everyone. "Open to God's Love-Serving our Neighbor." We are participating in ECCT's efforts for racial healing, justice and reconciliation. Our Community Ministries group is actively seeking ways to administer our Smith Fund to help those in need in New Britain. Not only do we have a food pantry, but we are contributing to the Friendship Center's new Day Center which will have a multitude of services from laundry and showers to a computer room and job search assistance. It is exciting! Our Easter celebration was the result of a talented team of organizers. In our outreach, we are part of a team in our community--working together without fences. Jesus Christ is at work everywhere inside us.

God bless everyone!
Allison

Special points of interest:

- *The Lion's Pause - Allison Penick, Vestry Clerk*
- *Episcopal Peace Fellowship - Juneteenth Prayer*
- *In-Person and Hybrid Services - Broadcast Instructions*
- *Mailing List Information*
- *Save The Date*
- *ADA Celebration*
- *June 12 - Parish Meeting on St. Mark's Future*
- *Introducing Rev. Jeffrey Mello, our new Bishop Diocesan-elect of CT*
- *Parish Clerk's Corner*
- *June Calendar*
- *Food Pantry Statistics*

Episcopal Peace Fellowship - Juneteenth Prayer (from Muddled Prayers)

Almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – we praise your name, for you alone are God. There is none like you, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding with covenantal faithfulness. You care for the orphans and widows and look upon the immigrant with affection. Your love is not threatened by the ways we diminish, marginalize, and destroy each other. There is no one like you.

You have made your faithfulness known from generation to generation. Throughout the biblical story, we hear again and again how you have continued to rescue your people, releasing them from bondage in order that they might live fully and freely as your children. We remember Moses and the Exodus. We remember the cycles of deliverance and repentance under the Judges. We remember the prophets and the returns from exile. And we remember how all of these have made known your generous love for the least of these. We recall most of all how you entered this story in the flesh, releasing us from our sins through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection. You reconciled us with your self and in doing so you call us to be reconciled with one another. Through the Holy Spirit, you continue to tear down the dividing walls of hostility that separate us from each other and distort your gospel.

We add our voices to the generations that have gone before us in giving thanks for the freedom you brought in the United States when you brought slavery to a legal end. Over two hundred years of European-Americans shipping and trading African peoples as if they were disposable goods distorted our experience of your image both in those enslaved and in those who enslaved others. The abuses against aboriginal peoples, Asian immigrants, and countless others at the hands of European-Americans have deformed our cultures and diminished the flourishing life you intended for us to experience together. Yet, you have a history of overcoming our most dehumanizing abuses of each other, even when we legalize our abuses through our words of law and government sanctioned violence. Thank you for raising up faithful servants of your kingdom who boldly and prophetically embodied your gospel, spending themselves on behalf of those enslaved. Thank you for not abandoning us to our destructive ways. Thank you for releasing us from the legalized injustices we have inflicted upon each other. Thank you for your mercy and compassion, Lord.

In giving you thanks, we also remember with sad sobriety just how deep our lust for power, our hatred of those who are different than us, and our selfish desire for economic and material prosperity runs. Before you and with the testimony of those who have gone before us, we admit that our hearts are still bent toward our own comforts, especially when others bear the cost of our selfishness. While we have made slavery illegal, we continue to participate in systems, structures, and cultural patterns that provide advantages to those of us from European descent in ways that consistently diminish, distort, and destroy the lives of persons of color. Forgive us, Lord. Release us from the deceptive corruption that is in our hearts and in the patterns that we continue to pass along from generation to generation. In your compassion transform us that we might desire the flourishing of all people in the fullness of your grace.

In remembering the day in which the slaves in Texas finally heard of their emancipation, we cry out to you to bring all slavery to end. Bring an end to the enslavement of children as soldiers. Bring an end to the trafficking of women and children as objects for sexual abuse. Bring an end to enslavement and transportation of people across borders to work in factories, fields, and construction sites. While the visible slavery of centuries past has been dismantled, our enslavement and abuse of others continues. Open our eyes to these injustices and to the ways we contribute to them. Search us, O Lord, and call us into action to bring an end to the injustices that we continue to perpetrate against each other.

Jesus, as you intercede with the Father on our behalf, please remember those who are caught up in the entanglements of slavery – whether as victim or perpetrator. Teach us to pray with you. May you make us into one people who embody the Father's love in the ways we work for the mutual flourishing of each other. Holy Spirit, teach us to groan with you in longing for the fullness of your coming kingdom. May you equip us in your humble power to tangibly anticipate the day when Jesus Christ will complete his work of making all things new. Grant us the strength to spend ourselves on behalf of those who are still entangled in slavery so that together we might experience the full reconciliation and new life that you desire for all peoples.

We offer this prayer because our salvation comes from you alone, because you are already at work among us, releasing us from our sins, and because you are faithful. That your glory and honor might be made known through the freedom of all people. Amen.



ZOOM & IN-PERSON SERVICE INFORMATION

Broadcast Instructions

Our service will always be available on Zoom with Meeting ID 500-865-037. You can enter via the parish Web link at <http://www.stmarksnewbritain.org>. Please either print or have the bulletin open on a separate browser tab to participate fully in the service. (For more information on the Zoom service, please go to the back page of the bulletin.)

If there is a significant negative change in the trajectory of the Covid-19 pandemic, we will switch to Zoom-only worship. An email will be sent out to the parish to alert everyone if the service is to be Zoom only.

In-person services at 90 Main Street continue to require that everyone wear a mask and maintain a safe distance inside the buildings of South Church. Masks will be available for those who need them. Thank you.

You can enter the Zoom service via the parish Web link at <http://www.stmarksnewbritain.org>.

There is also a telephone number that can be used to join the Zoom service:

1-646-558-8656

(phone charges may apply for the telephone call if you do not have unlimited calling).

If you are using a telephone to dial into the service: dial the zoom phone number, and then wait to be prompted by the voice to enter the meeting number. Then, enter the meeting number, and as part of the meeting number, please add the "pound" sign (#) at the end of the meeting number (as the verbal instructions direct).

The Zoom broadcast opens at 9:45 am when remote participants can be admitted and will be greeted by the e-verger.

Remote participants are encouraged to stay connected after the service and greet and be greeted during the coffee hour.

Issues that have come to our attention:

Issue: "my screen goes back and forth between speakers."

Response: you may be in "speaker" view. If so, change to "gallery view".

Please contact Cheryl in the Parish Office if you have any questions.

The St. Mark's Message Mailing List

If, at any time, you would like to receive the Message by email instead of USPS mail, please contact Cheryl in the parish office.

By phone: 860-225-7634

By email: parishoffice@stmarksnewbritain.org

Thank you.



SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, June 8 - 5:45 p.m. Executive Committee Zoom Meeting
Wednesday, June 8 - 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, June 14 - 6:45 p.m. Vestry Zoom Meeting
Wednesday, July 20 - ADA Celebration - Summer Music Series -
St. Mark's will provide ice cream sundaes! Watch for more info.



ADA Celebration Walk & Roll Wednesday, July 20 - 5:00 p.m. Walnut Hill Park

Fun & Ice Cream are happening again this year. St. Mark's will have its iconic ice cream sundae/prayer request booth at New Britain's ADA Walk & Roll on July 20th, 5 p.m. in Walnut Hill Park.

Volunteers needed! Contact Cheryl at the office or see Allison.

ST. MARK'S FUTURE

DO YOU:

Want to know our options?

Have some favorite goals?

Please join your vestry to share ideas.



June 12th Trinity Sunday
During Coffee hour in Cooper Hall
following the service

WE HAVE A NEW BISHOP DIOCESAN-ELECT!

Barbara Campbell, Treasurer

The Rev. Jeffrey Mello was elected on the 6th ballot Saturday, May 21, 2022. Now the rest of the dioceses in the Episcopal Church in the United States and Province 9 (like Honduras, and Europe where we have a Cathedral in Paris) have 120 days to concur with our vote. If that happens, the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry and at least 2 other bishops will consecrate Jeffrey Mello as the 16th Bishop Diocesan of Connecticut on October 15, 2022.

Now how did this happen? You remember about Sam Seabury sailing back to England after the Revolutionary War, telling the Archbishop of Canterbury the church in America needed its own bishop. The English bishops said, "No!" to that impudent colony of America, so Sam Seabury went up to Scotland. There the bishops listened, said "Yes" and three of them consecrated Seabury, with the agreement that the American Book of Common Prayer would more closely resemble the Scottish BCP than the English one.

But in the here and now, when Bishop Ian Douglas announced his retirement, a Bishop Transition Committee was formed, followed the prescribed application process and became very nimble at it as a week's worth of Meet and Greets were supposed to be in person around the diocese. Covid prevailed so they were on YouTube and handled very nicely. Combined with listening to sermons by the candidates, hearing their responses to different questions at 3 Meet and Greets, and reading their applications, I felt I knew quite a bit about each candidate.

How did they do? Stephen Hard went to the Hartford Convention Center to vote in person for St. Mark's with 405 other people. Voting is by order so a successful candidate needs 50% plus one of the clergy vote and 50% plus one of the lay vote. On the first ballot, Whitney Altopp, a petition candidate and rector of St. Stephen's Church in Ridgefield, CT received only 3% of the total vote and withdrew. On the second ballot, Glenna Huber from Washington D.C. received only 8% of the total vote and she withdrew. On the third ballot, none of the 3 candidates received one plus the majority by order. On the fourth ballot, Kate Moorehead from Jacksonville, FL did receive 2 more than she needed from the lay vote. On the fifth ballot, Jeffrey Mello received enough clergy ballots but not enough lay votes and Tanya Wallace from South Hadley, MA withdrew. On the sixth ballot, both clergy and lay voter gather around Jeff Mello, the winner!

Our Bishop Elect Jeffrey Mello has been Rector of St. Paul's in Brookline, MA for 13 years. He is a person of joy who sees life through a pastoral lens. He grew up with 4 brothers knowing he wanted to be a priest, a husband and a Dad. In college he saw himself as gay, met Paul in 1992 and in 1995, they had a commitment service. In 2000, they brought their now 21 year old son home from Guatemala. Jeff never thought he would be a hockey Dad and now he is!

At St. Paul's, he has focused on outreach, social action and lay leadership. He has served as a Clinical Social Worker at Mass. General Hospital and taught as an adjunct at Episcopal Divinity School. He is Chaplain to the Brookline Fire Department.

Put Jeffrey Mello in your prayers and October 15th on your calendars!

Allison's Parish Clerk News Corner

JUNE 2022

Welcome to Pentecost 2022!

The Holy Spirit is moving among us as we discern St. Mark's future and reach out to our New Britain community. Your vestry has met with Amber Page-Gehr, our diocesan transition minister, and, then again, with her and Bishop Laura. They outlined our basic options. It is St. Mark's choice what direction to take. Our options include:

1. Continue as we are with supply priests and lay worship leaders while we search for a priest-in-charge (1/4-time, the most we could afford).
2. Merge with a neighboring Episcopal church. Our first step would be to do Sunday visits. Since "merging" is a lengthy process, we could search for a priest -in-charge to guide us in the interim.
3. Become an Intentional Episcopal Community. This type of organization has a governing board chaired by the Bishop. We would not have a vestry with voting power or control over our funds (endowment). Bishop Laura did not see advantages for us, and, at the moment, your vestry agrees.

Two factors emerge that are leading us most often to the "merger" path. First, our membership is dwindling rapidly and we don't have young people or newcomers seeking us out. We won't be viable for much longer. This would be sad for many reasons, but, also, St. Mark's has been gifted the Smith Fund to use to help the disenfranchised in New Britain. Over the years, we have used it to help individuals, to support a recovery house and to aid the Friendship Center on Arch St. In the event of a merger, your vestry wants to maintain an Episcopal presence in New Britain as followers of Christ and continue to administer the Smith Fund. We feel we could do so *and* participate within our new partner's church.

Are you following me so far? Or is your mind as boggled as mine is?! **Your vestry needs your help!** After all, it is our decision to make **together**. Please join us for a special coffee hour to brainstorm about our future! We are not having a formal vote or making a definite decision. This is for a free-style exchange of ideas. Anything goes!

TRINITY SUNDAY JUNE 12TH
10:45 A.M. COOPER HALL




News Flash!! Fun & Ice Cream are happening again this year. St. Mark's will have its iconic ice cream sundae/prayer request booth at New Britain's ADA Walk & Roll on July 20th, 5 p.m. in Walnut Hill Park. Volunteers needed! Contact Cheryl at the office or see Allison.

"Open to God's Love, Serving Our Neighbor"

May the Holy Spirit continue to support and guide us in God's way, in God's time.

Peace,
Allison

JUNE 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
5 In-Person/Hybrid Holy Eucharist Service 10:00 a.m. Erwin Chapel Pentecost	6 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	7	8 5:45 p.m. Exec. Committee Mtg 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Mtg	9 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	10	11
12 In-Person/Hybrid Service 10:00 a.m. Erwin Chapel Trinity Sunday	13 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	14 6:45 p.m. Vestry Zoom Meeting 	15	16 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	17	18 Poor People's Campaign March in Washington, DC
19 In-Person/Hybrid Service 10:00 a.m. Erwin Chapel Juneteenth	20 Juneteenth Observed Office Closed	21  First Day of Summer	22	23 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	24	25
26 In-Person/Hybrid Service 10:00 a.m. Erwin Chapel	27 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	28	29	30 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	Our services will be in-person unless otherwise required by a change in the pandemic trajectory.	An email only will be sent on Fridays if we need to go to Zoom only services.

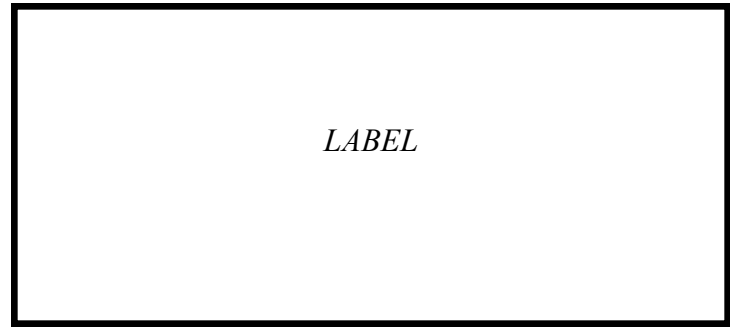
**St. Mark's Episcopal
Church, New Britain**

**PO Box 1538
90 Main Street
New Britain, CT 06051**

**Phone: 860-225-7634
Email: parishoffice@stmarksnewbritain.org
Website: www.stmarksnewbritain.org**

**PRAYER CHAIN: to activate the chain call
Barbara Campbell 860-673-7607,
Campbellba24@gmail.com**

**If you or someone you know is hospitalized,
please inform the parish office.**



***Open to God's Love -
Serving Our Neighbor***

**Due date for all articles for the July Issue
of the St. Mark's Message is June 22, 2022**

Parish Office Hours.

Monday through Friday
from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Food Pantry

Monday: 9 - 12 & 12:30 - 2:00
Thursday: 9 - 12 & 12:30 - 2:00
(Closed for lunch from 12 - 12:30)



Weekly Parish Services:

**Sundays: In-Person and Zoom - 10:00 a.m. -
Erwin Chapel at 90 Main St.**

**To attend on Zoom, go to our website—
www.saintmarksnewbritain.org for the
bulletin and information on joining the service.**

Pledges and Offerings

Please remember to keep sending in your
pledges and offerings to the parish. Mail in our P.O.
Box is picked up several times a week. Your pledge
payments are compiled at least once a month and
deposited.

The parish ministries to the community and worship
services adapt and continue, even in these most
challenging times.

Mailing address: St. Mark's Episcopal Church
PO Box 1538 New Britain, CT 06050-1538 or to
electronically send checks to the Church via your
bank.

St. Marks keeps going in God's way, God's time, and
to God's glory.

St. Mark's Food Pantry

Monthly Statistics: April 2022
Unduplicated households - 189
Children - 150
Adults - 216
Seniors - 54
Total Food Donated to St. Mark's - 660 lbs.
Total food from Food Share - 2693 lbs.



**We are currently receiving 2 deliveries a
month from Food Share. One the 2nd and 4th
Wednesdays of the month. The deliveries are in
the morning. If you can help us bring a delivery
in, please call Cheryl in the parish office and she
will let you know when to be here for the delivery.
Thank you!**