

## Sharing God's Love in Our Community Through Prayer, Study and Action

**St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Afton, NY**  
(Member of the Chenango District)

### *The Parish News*

[www.stannsaftonny.org](http://www.stannsaftonny.org)

The Newsletter of St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Afton, NY

**Clergy: The Reverend Fr. David A. Hanselman Cell: 761-4601 Office: 656-9502**

If you desire Father David to visit you or give you a call, please contact him at one of the numbers above.

**In an emergency and Fr. David can't be reached, please contact one of the wardens.**

**Wardens: Dan Vail: 607-240-9264 Tracey Tallmadge: 607-343-1301**



So, how are you doing?

Everyone I talk to says pretty much the same basic thing – it's tough but I'm making it through. That great Central NY grit is showing through! But, seriously, how are you doing? This isn't an easy time.

Have you been "white-knuckling" your way through these days? Or have you found a way to maintain some spiritual centeredness that brings peace and has helped you through? Or, quite possibly, have you experienced some spiritual growth?

If you're anything like me, most days you're somewhere between these extremes. It's

not easy. Even in the best of times.

And yet, even when we're in "the best of times", we can still easily lose our way.

Good times or bad times, and all the "in between" times, it's all too easy to forget to keep Jesus at our center.

Fortunately, Jesus is always ready to help guide us again and again and again (and again and again...) - we've just got to realize that he's there, always reaching out his hand in friendship, understanding and healing... reaching out his hand to lead us away from something; and in leading us away from something, necessarily leading us toward something else. Sometimes (oftentimes?) what Jesus leads us toward may be just as troubling as what he leads us away from. So how do we tell the difference? Well, we're led away from the things that harm our souls and we're led toward the things that heal our souls; and not just our own souls, but the souls of those around us as well.

What I picture in my mind is the story about the lawyer Bryan Stevenson. There's a movie out now about his work called Just Mercy. Please take the time to see it. And of all the many lessons we can learn from it, I ask you to consider how Bryan allowed himself to be led by Jesus (maybe not explicitly, but he is most definitely doing the work of Christ) – led into a very difficult situation, a very troubled situation – that also led to the healing of the spirits of Bryan and those around him.

Justice isn't always peaceful and easy, sometimes our bodies will suffer terribly, but if it's the justice that Jesus demonstrates to us, then it's the work of the spirit and it will bring a peace beyond comprehension. A peace which surpasses understanding. It will also bring energy, direction and purpose.

I've said it before and I'll keep on saying it – St Paul's list of the Fruits of the Spirit isn't usually given nearly enough credit as spiritual guideposts. Work that is done with the spirit of God behind it will show these characteristics: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

God is no stranger to troubled times. When we can focus ourselves on keeping Jesus at the center of our lives, God's work will be done. Sometimes that means we have to stop something that we're doing and turn back towards what Jesus invites us to do. Sometimes we have to take on something new because that's what Jesus is inviting us to do. But at all times we need to remember that our very existence comes from our loving creator God. Amen.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO SERVE

**The SERVICE SCHEDULE is not available due to the COVID-19 and absence of parishioners in June to fill it in. Once regular services begin again, Lay Readers in attendance will be asked to read the lessons for that particular Sunday. The readings for each Sunday in July are listed below. Please take the time to read the lessons and Gospel for each Sunday.**

The corona virus is causing more than its share of problems but it hasn't stopped us from having a Sunday worship service. Holding a service via the "zoom" software is a little strange but seems to be working okay.

If you haven't tried tuning in for a "zoom" service, why not try it next Sunday.

Everyone who has their E-mail address on file should be receiving a forward of Fr. David's instruction letter for each service. If you have not been receiving that letter, please advise Tom Vail of your E-mail address and you will be added to the parish listing. [Bottom415@aol.com](mailto:Bottom415@aol.com)

Yes, the "zoom" service is different, but change is what life is all about. Services are also available through the Diocese via their website.

Service Schedule						
Date	Service	OT Reader	Epistle Reader	CS	EM	Acolytes
Lectionary (Year C)						
Date	Service	OT Reading	Psalm	Epistle Reading	Gospel Reading	
July 5		Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67	Psalm 45: 11-18	Romans 7:15-25a	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30	
July 12		Genesis 25:19-34	Psalm 119:105-112	Romans 8:1-11	Matthew 13:1-9,18-23	
July 19		Genesis 28:10-19a	Psalm 139: 1-11, 22-23	Romans 8:12-25	Matthew 13:24-30,36-43	
July 26		Genesis 29:15-28	Psalm 105:1-11, 45b	Romans 8:26-39	Matthew 13:31-33,44-52	
Aug 2		Genesis 32:22-31	Psalm 17:1-7,16	Romans 9:1-5	Matthew 14:13-21	



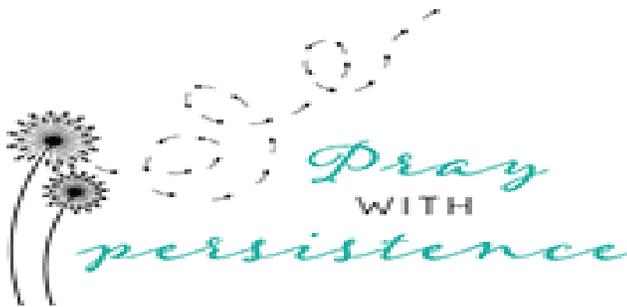
Altar Duty for the month of July is Judy Rettberg 208-4023. If you are giving flowers in memory of a loved one, please notify Peter Vail, 607-639-1444 no later than the Thursday before the designated Sunday so that he can include a notice in the bulletin.

St. Ann’s Prayer List for July 2020

It has been suggested that the names of individuals on the parish prayer list be included in the newsletter. A current listing follows. The names listed are not necessarily members of the parish and may include individuals or other requests for which we have been asked to pray. The clergy persons of the Chenango District are included. Please remember these individuals in your personal prayers. Send or give any additions or changes to Tom Vail, 639-1201. Please note: Long term names will be left on the list indefinitely, short term names for two months unless updated.

<u>Short Term</u>
Raevin
Robert
Jody
Thomas
Burdette
George
Eileen

<u>Long Term</u>	
Fr. David Hanselman	
Fr. Steven White	
Deacon Kay	
Pastor Becky	
Rev. Elizabeth Gillett	
Fr. Geoff Doolittle	
Very Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe	
Bishop Michael Curry	
The Revs. Ralph & Liz Groskoph	
Emmanuel Church	
Epiphany Church	
Zion Church	
St. Paul’s Church	
St. Andrew’s Church	
St. Matthew’s Church	
St. Peter’s Church	
Carol	Peter
Joyce	Dakota
Mya	Nate
Holly	Marion
Cindy	Amaya
Clifford	Rachel
Richard	Hailey



The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Divinity School. The Learning Communities Initiative of the Diocese. The following prayer is from the Evening Prayer service in the Book of Common Prayer:

*Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous: and all for your love’s sake. Amen.*

**CHURCH TERMS:** John, The Apostle and Evangelist – An Apostle and brother of James, sons of Zebedee. Probably the youngest, he is known as “The Beloved Disciple.” He is the only one of the twelve to have died a natural death. The Gospel of John; three Epistles, First, Second, and Third John; and Revelation are ascribed to him. His symbol is the eagle, for his gospel fairly soars. He is commemorated on December 27. Liturgical color; white



### *Birthdays*

7/7 LOGAN TALLMADGE  
 7/11 MADO CIMINI  
 7/12 SONJA & NOAH HANSELMAN  
 7/17 GARRETT VAIL & CAROL VAIL  
 7/23 MARISSA HARDING  
 7/28 DAVID HANSELMAN  
 7/29 GINA GIURASTANTE



### *Anniversaries*

NONE ON FILE PLEASE ADVISE ME IF  
 I AM MISSING SOMEONE

*Please let me know if I am missing a Birthday or Anniversary. Call or email  
 607-343-1301 [cttallmadg@aol.com](mailto:cttallmadg@aol.com)*



### *St. Ann's Vestry Synopsis* The Vestry met in a "zoom" format

1. Outreach was divided evenly between the Bainbridge Soup Kitchen and Mom's Place in Broome County.
2. Fr. David gave an update on the status of reopening churches, describing the Bishop's guidelines. A copy of the format is included with this newsletter. There was considerable discussion. The restoration of a Communion Service is very important to the Vestry. Fr. David suggested that we consider a midweek Communion Service. He is looking into some options for doing that. It was decided to continue with the Sunday "zoom" services for the next few weeks until we see what other Churches are doing and how it is working. Several people volunteered to do some work on getting additional information for consideration.
3. The driveway paving has been completed.
4. The pay for our sexton was discussed and a motion passed to increase the weekly stipend.
5. Our LED sign will be seven years old this July. The manufacturer is discontinuing their support of this model. Options will be obtained for vestry consideration.
6. Treasurer's report was presented and accepted. We are solvent, thanks be to God.

The below is long but we thought we would add so that all can read the entire message without having to go online and open each step. Also, we know that not everyone has internet. So please read below what is all entailed in going forward.

Should you have any concerns or ideas please free to contact Father David or one of the wardens •

# Steps on the Journey to Gathering Anew

A COVID-19 Response Plan for Central New York Episcopalians

## Recent Updates

This plan will be regularly updated as new medical and policy information informs decisions. The last update was **June 16, 2020**:

- *Expansion of allowances for in-person gatherings in Step 2 including:*
  - *Communion permitted (bread only) with safety protocols around distribution;*
  - *Baptisms permitted;*
  - *Outdoor gatherings of up to 25 individuals permitted;*
  - *Modified version of Covenant for Gathering Anew available to congregations wishing to offer outdoor gatherings only.*
- *Requirement to complete the New York State Business Affirmation and creation of a Safety Plan prior to returning to use of church buildings in Step 2.*

## Overview

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, God is calling Central New York Episcopalians to live into our shared vision of a **world healed by love**. The following plan outlines how we will care for our communities and one another through our faithful response to the pandemic.

The goals of Episcopalians in Central New York include:

- Sharing God's love and hope with our communities in this uncertain time.
- Keeping Jesus' command to "remember the least of these"—the most vulnerable members of our community--by limiting physical contact and initiating practices to slow the spread of infectious disease.
- Continuing to provide people with the very best pastoral care now and in the months to come.
- Continuing prayer, worship, and formation, whether gathered in-person or online.
- Continuing community outreach ministry where this is safe and feasible.

What the way forward looks like:

- **Careful and cautious:** The population of the Episcopal Church in Central New York has a higher median age than the general population of Central New York and therefore a higher proportion of people who are especially vulnerable to Covid-19. Therefore, the churches of the Diocese of CNY will return to in-person gatherings and re-open our buildings for use more slowly and cautiously than required by the government.

- **Inclusive:** Throughout the “gathering anew” process, to ensure the safety and inclusion of people who may not be able to return to in-person worship and gatherings, we strongly encourage the continuation of online worship and pastoral care.
- **One step at a time:** We will return to in-person worship and gatherings in a series of steps. These steps may vary in length and our movement through these steps may not be linear. We will be prepared
- to move to an earlier step if circumstances change. There will be times where the way forward is not clear, and we will trust in God’s constant presence.
- **Transformative:** We do not expect a “return to normal,” but rather that God is already doing a new thing in the midst of this crisis. As we learn to love God, one another, and all creation in these changing circumstances, our churches will be transformed.

## Steps

- [Step 1](#): Stay at home
- [Step 2](#): Early re-gathering
- [Future steps](#)
- [Appendix A](#): Covenants for Gathering Anew
- [Appendix B](#): Questions for the Vestry
- [Appendix C](#): Resources

## Step 1: Stay at home

### Worship, formation, and connection

- In-person gatherings for worship and formation are suspended.
- Online worship and formation is strongly encouraged (including Sunday services, the Daily Office, bible studies, children’s programming, and small group formation and fellowship). Holy Eucharist is not to be celebrated.
- The safest way to record or live stream worship services is to do so from home. Church staff are permitted to gather in churches for the purpose of recording or live streaming services, provided that masks are worn, physical distance is maintained, and appropriate hygiene is followed.
- Vestries should continue to meet by phone or online conference.

### Pastoral offices

- In-person pastoral visits are prohibited, with the exception of the administration of last rites.
- Small graveside funeral services for family only are permitted, provided that masks are worn, physical distance is maintained, and appropriate hygiene is followed.
- Baptisms are permitted only in the case of a pastoral emergency, with parents and godparents only, provided that masks are worn, physical distance is maintained, and appropriate hygiene is followed.
- Weddings are permitted only in the case of a pastoral emergency, with spouses and witnesses only, provided that masks are worn, physical distance is maintained, and appropriate hygiene is followed.

### Community Outreach Ministries

- Twelve-step ministries should be moved to remote alternatives wherever possible. Should your church continue to host in-person twelve-step groups, please direct them to wear masks, maintain physical distance, and follow appropriate hygiene practices. All surfaces should be disinfected before and after meetings.
- Food pantries and community meal programs are encouraged to continue operations wherever possible, maintaining appropriate safeguards as directed by state and local governments. In most cases, moving to a “to-go” distribution model will be appropriate.

## Building and Office Use Guidelines

- Parish and diocesan staff should work from home, as appropriate for their duties.
- Presence in buildings must be minimal and drop-in to maintain essential operations (deposits, mail processing, etc.). Staff and volunteers must communicate to ensure that there is only one person in the building at a time and common surfaces, including counter tops, door knobs, and office electronics should be disinfected before and after use.

## • Step 2: Early re-gathering

In this step, small, limited in-person gatherings, including Eucharist conveyed in Bread only with safety precautions, are permitted within the guidelines outlined below. Prevention of the spread of infectious disease continues to be a priority.

***Until a vaccine or cure is developed, there will be a risk associated with in-person gatherings, no matter the precautions taken.***

***Many Episcopal congregations have a higher proportion of individuals who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Entry into Step 2 may not be appropriate for every congregation.***

## Criteria for Step 2:

Clergy and vestries of individual congregations must submit the [Covenant for Gathering Anew \(see Appendix A\)](#) to the bishop’s office to request permission for in-person gatherings. There are two versions of the Covenant available:

1. Covenant for Gathering Anew: Outdoor Gatherings Only
2. Covenant for Gathering Anew: Building Use

Covenants must be approved in writing by the bishop or her designee prior to in-person gatherings of any kind. Note that church buildings may not be opened to the congregation or the public unless the “Covenant for Gathering Anew: Building Use” is completed and approved by the bishop or her designee.

Congregations with approved Covenants may commence in-person gatherings on or after July 5, 2020.

## Preparing the church building and the congregation for re-entry

- Before any re-entry, congregations must deep clean the entire church building, including pews, bathrooms, doorknobs, light switches, stair railings, and microphones. Please see [Appendix C](#) for current cleaning guidelines from the CDC and New York State.
- Consider removing all non-essential items from rooms so that there are fewer surfaces to touch.
- Consider posting signs and making announcements about non-contact greetings and reminders to refrain from physical contact, including shaking hands and hugging (see [Appendix C](#) for printable resources).
- Communicate with your congregation before they arrive about the preparations you have done for their re-entry and to reiterate that, if they are sick or are of a vulnerable population, they should stay home and join online, if available through your congregation or another.

## Requirements for in-person worship and other gatherings:

### Size of Groups:

- **Gatherings indoors:** The number present for worship and other gatherings will be limited to the number of individuals who can be seated in the sanctuary or meeting room at least six feet apart (in all directions) **to a maximum of 15 individuals**.
- **Gatherings outdoors:** The number present for worship and other gatherings will be limited **to a maximum of 25 individuals**. At least six feet of distance (in all directions) will be maintained between household groups at all times.

### Physical Distancing:

- At least six feet of distance (in all directions) will be maintained between household groups at all times.
- In worship spaces, cordoning off of alternate pews and marking pews with one-foot marks may assist in maintaining this distance.
- Ushers shall be trained to assist individuals in maintaining six feet of distance at entry/exit points.
- Physical contact, including hugs or handshakes, is prohibited.
- To comply with distancing requirements, nursery and childcare will not be provided for in-person gatherings.
- Where possible, continue to offer online worship and formation opportunities for individuals who will not join in-person gatherings.
- Advance sign-up (with space for visitors who may drop in) may be helpful to ensure compliance with limits on size of worship gatherings.

### Masks and hygiene:

- All individuals, including clergy, must wear masks covering the nose and mouth at all times during in-person gatherings and when in the church building or on church property.
- All individuals must observe hand-washing and must use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the worship space.
- Where possible, keep doors open to minimize contact with door handles.
- Door handles, pews, and other common surfaces will be disinfected before and after each gathering.

### Liturgy:

- Because physical contact and proximity are prohibited, all individuals should remain in place for the passing of the peace. Parish leaders can model safe greetings from their places including bows and waves.
- The Eucharist may be celebrated and Communion may be distributed in one kind only, the Bread.
  - The celebrant will use hand sanitizer immediately before and after celebrating the Eucharist and immediately before and after distributing the Bread to the congregation.

- The celebrant will maintain physical distance from parishioners to the extent possible during the distribution of Communion. We recommend considerations to reduce physical contact during the distribution of Communion including use of tongs or disposable cups or plates.
- Communicants will keep masks on when receiving Communion. Each communicant should return to their seat/place before removing their mask briefly to consume the Host.
- Communicants will use hand sanitizer immediately before and after receiving Communion.
- Singing is prohibited.
- No offering plate may be passed. Gifts may be collected online or in containers placed at entry points.
- Printed materials should be eliminated where possible or distributed in a manner that minimizes contact, for instance, by having a welcome table upon which bulletins are presented. Participants should take worship materials home for recycling rather than materials being re-used.
- Consider removing prayer books, hymnals, and other materials from the pews.
- Consider offering digital worship materials that can be viewed on personal devices.

**Coffee hours and fellowship:**

- In-person gatherings following worship services are prohibited.
- Online coffee hours are encouraged.

**Outdoor services:**

- Outdoor worship services and gatherings are strongly encouraged over indoor worship services and gatherings. All diocesan guidelines, including hygiene, wearing masks over the nose and mouth, and physical distancing, apply to outdoor services and gatherings.

## Pastoral offices

- In-person pastoral visits are permitted, but online or phone visits are still preferred. All individuals will wear masks, follow appropriate hygiene, and maintain at least six feet of distance. Outdoor meetings are encouraged.
- In-person funerals, baptisms, and weddings are permitted, following the requirements of other in-person worship services outlined above and minimizing physical contact.

## Community Outreach Ministries

- Twelve-step ministries may continue to meet in churches, following the same requirements as in-person gatherings for worship.
- Food pantries and community meal programs are encouraged to continue operations wherever possible, maintaining appropriate safeguards as directed by state and local governments. In most cases, continuing a “to-go” distribution model will be appropriate.

## Building and Office Use Guidelines

### Covenant for Gathering Anew, New York State Business Affirmation and Safety Plan:

- Prior to returning to use of the parish building or parish office, in addition to completing the diocesan [Covenant for Gathering Anew: Building Use \(see Appendix A\)](#), clergy and vestries will:
  - Review the [New York State Interim Guidance for Religious & Funeral Services During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
  - Complete the Business Affirmation at <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/ny-forward-affirmation>

- Complete and conspicuously post on the church premises a Safety Plan (view the [NY Forward Safety Plan Template](#))

#### In the parish office:

- We encourage clergy and vestries to make allowances for staff to work from home wherever possible, as appropriate for their duties.
- Parish offices may open following all state guidelines, including:
  - Wear masks covering the nose and mouth at all times;
  - Maintain six feet of physical distance between individuals;
  - Wash and sanitize hands regularly;
  - Regularly disinfect common surfaces such as countertops, door knobs, and office electronics.

#### General building use:

- All individuals must follow all physical distancing and hygiene guidelines including wearing masks covering the nose and mouth at all times. Consider having a supply of masks for those who arrive at your building without one.
- Buildings must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected regularly and between user groups, paying extra attention to high-touch surfaces.

### Humor for Hard Times

Coronavirus has turned us all into dogs. We wander around the house looking for food. We get told “No” if we get too close to strangers and we get really excited about going for walks and car rides.

The Final Word 

**Advice: 1 Samuel 3:19** – *“As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him, and everything Samuel said was wise and helpful”*

The degree to which people will listen to us is determined by the degree to which we have wise counsel for them. If you want people to listen to you, you yourself must listen to the right adviser. Like Samuel, listen to the Lord’s counsel—read his Word and hear what he says. There is no wiser counsel than he who knows every moment of every tomorrow and knows how you fit into those moments. NLT-GEZ

**St. Ann’s Episcopal Church**  
**P. O. Box 22**  
**Afton, New York 13730**

SHARING GOD’S LOVE IN OUR  
COMMUNITY THROUGH PRAYER, STUDY  
AND ACTION

**Clergy:** The Rev. David A. Hanselman

Worship Service: Sunday 9:15 am

Address Label Here

