

# The Shepherd's Staff

April 2022

Church of the Good Shepherd  
*Our story inside these pages*

## We're Baaack! We are open fully open on April 1st!

April 3 at 8 & 10 am - Holy Eucharist w/lifted Covid  
Restrictions — Coffee Hour Resumes

April 10 at 8 & 10 am - **Palm Sunday** with procession at 10 am  
Church School, Deadline for Towels for Animal Shelter

April 14 at 6:30 & 7:30 pm - Holy Thursday meal w/Eucharist and  
service

April 15 at noon-3pm - Church will be open for reflection  
7:30 pm - Journey with Christ to the Cross liturgy

April 16 at 7:30 pm - Journey with Christ to a New  
Creation liturgy

April 17 at 8 & 10 am - **Easter Sunday Celebration Eucharist**  
7:30 pm - Fireside celebration of Christ's Up-rising

April 20 at 7:30-9 pm - Hop, Skip Jump Bible Study:  
Reconciliation and Forgiveness

April 18-23 - Office will be closed, contact Wardens in an emergency

April 23 at 4 pm - NOTA Benefit Concert supporting  
Afghan Refugees

April 24 - Shepherd Staff article deadline

April 25-27 - Diocesan Clergy Conference

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Church of the Good Shep-  
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164 Newtown Road  
Acton, MA 01720  
(978) 263-5782

Website:

<https://goodshepherdacton.org>

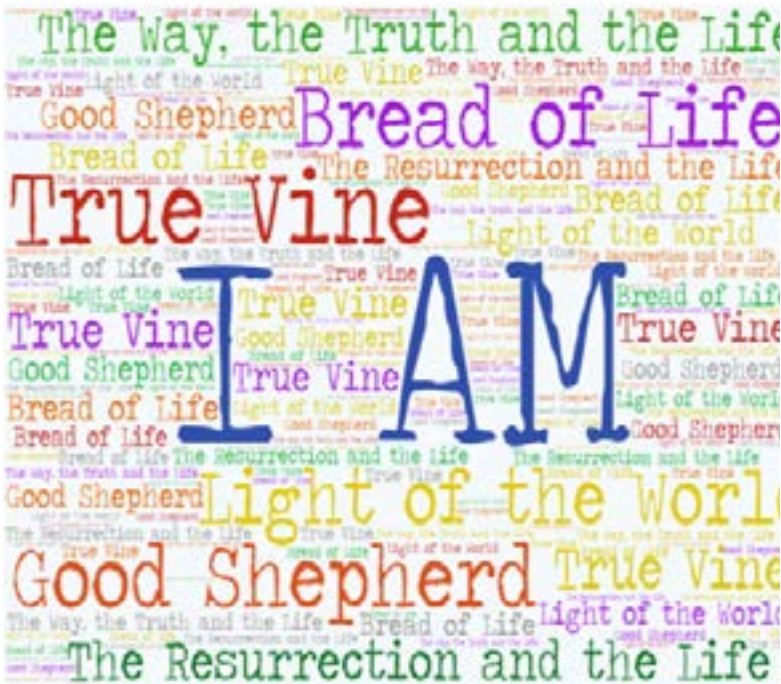
[FB: Church of the Good Shepherd, Acton](#)

Episcopal Diocese of

Some people may want to reconnect at this time with CGS, but may feel it is difficult to return. Please reach out by phone or email to friends you may not have seen in a while letting them know you miss them and you hope to see them soon.

# A Word from the Fold

In a sermon a few Sundays ago, I shared this poem, which reflects on the revelation of God's divine name to Moses in *Exodus* 3:13-15.



“I was regretting the past  
And fearing the future.  
Suddenly God was speaking.  
“My name is **‘I AM.’**” I waited.  
God continued,  
“When you live in the past,  
with its mistakes and regrets,  
It is hard. I am not there.  
My name is not ‘I Was.’  
When you live in the future,  
with its problems and fears,  
It is hard. I am not there.  
My name is not ‘I will be.’  
When you live in this moment,  
It is not hard. I am here.  
My name is **‘I AM.’**”

Helen Mallicot

This poem is great reminder that God is in relationship with us in the present tense. Here. Now. God is not a figment of past imagination. God is not limited to Biblical story or ancient revelation. God is present to us in our very lives. In our prayers. In our liturgy.

Pastoral Associate Ellen, Deacon Ken and I have had liturgy on our minds a lot recently as we prepare for the upcoming services of Holy Week and Easter. Liturgy is sometimes defined as “the work of the people”—meaning that worship is meant to be active and engaging for all who attend. It is not a performance. Members of the congregation are not spectators, not consumers. It is not entertainment.

Liturgy is a holy endeavor, inviting and gathering the Body of Christ into an experience of God, in the present moment. Liturgy is capable of challenging us, comforting us, moving us, uniting us, growing us—much as God challenges, comforts, moves, unites and grows us.

As we draw near to Holy Week, we invite you to join us for the liturgies that take us from Palm Sunday, to Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve, Easter morn, and Easter night. Taken as a whole, these worship experiences help us discover, in one week, what Christianity is all about. If God is ‘I AM’, Holy Week helps us discover who we are.

Each of the liturgies in Holy Week are designed to flow into one another. They tell a collective story, which unfolds day by day into the revelation of God's love. Christ is with us in vulnerability, in suffering, in death, and in the surprising, joyous discovery of new life, even after the worst has happened. Together, as we walk through the liturgies of Holy Week together, we'll discover Christ at table with us, in service and prayer. We'll experience Christ in fear, heartache and silence— in fire and light and the waters of baptism— Christ made known to us in Word and sacrament and song.

We hope you'll journey with us into the heart of Holy Week this year. We'll gather for four evenings, in addition to Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Holy Thursday will include a simple meal at 6:30pm— a fitting opportunity for our first parish supper together since the pandemic. The other evenings, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve, and Easter night all begin at 7:30 pm and are expected to last no more than an hour. Come. It is Christ who invites us to meet him here.

+Rev. Ellie

# Holy Week Worship Services

The sacred services of Holy Week remind us who we are. They invite us deeper into the mystery of our baptism, immersed with Christ in vulnerability, pain, and death; and delivered by the power and mercy of God into new and more abundant life.

## **Sunday April 10 - Palm Sunday**

Services with festive procession of the palms, followed by Eucharist.

The **8 am** service will begin in the narthex.

The **10 am** service will begin (weather permitting) in the back of the parking lot where the congregation will assemble for the blessing of the palms and a festive procession into the church with drums and singing.

The liturgy will take us from Jesus' festive entry into Jerusalem through the story of his arrest and death. The Passion Gospel this year will be proclaimed with three readers and musical interludes.

## **Thursday April 14 - Holy Thursday**

We'll gather (in-person!) at **6:30 pm** for a simple meal with Eucharist and optional foot washing in the Parish Hall followed by a short contemplative prayer service in the church at **7:30 pm**. All are invited to continue to watch and pray in the church following the liturgy.

Please RSVP for the supper portion, and let us know what you're bringing to share.

## **Friday April 15 - Good Friday**

From **12 noon to 3 pm**, The Church will be open for meditation and prayer. Stop by anytime for as long as you would like.

At **7:30 pm** Journey with Christ to the Cross liturgy for Good Friday. A service which is built around the Stations of the Cross.

## **Saturday April 16 - Easter Eve**

At **7:30 pm** Journey with Christ to a New Creation liturgy for Easter Eve. A simplified Vigil service of fire and water celebrating God's saving, life-giving love.

## **Sunday April 17 - Easter**

At **8 am and 10 am** join us for Joyful Easter Morning services with Holy Eucharist.

Later, at **7:30 pm**, an Outdoor, Candlelight Service with Easter Egg hunt. Gather around the new fire for a short, simple service in celebration of Christ's Up-rising. An Easter version of our popular Christmas Eve candlelight vigils.

## Jr. Warden's Message



Dear Friends,

Every now and then I receive appreciation from one of you. Someone will extend an acknowledgement after a service.

That feels so good. Thank you.

Saint Paul advises us to

encourage one another. That's how I perceive these interactions. You are holding me up. Giving me strength. I claim that's one of the wonderful things we do for each other. We provide encouragement. We are continually engaged. I can tell by our atten-

dance at services, the passing of the peace, serving as a LEM, acolyte or as a member of the alter guild. Every month we bring forward the shawl ministry, sharing inspirational music, shoveling, cooking, cleaning, decorating, landscaping, ushering, welcoming, smiling, studying, reading, praying. Offering a caring sentiment. Offering our money and time to our shared ministries, missions, and outreach.

I appreciate all the things that you do for the body of Christ. I'm so glad that we have this together. It's working. I am encouraged. We are doing a great job. Well, not really a job. More like a calling, a choice. Physically centered around our spiritual oasis in the woods. Spiritually centered in our common practice and belief.

May the peace of the Lord be with you.

Harry Peebles

**Do not look with fear on the changes and chances of this life; rather look at them with full faith as they arise. God — whose you are — will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hitherto.**

**Do not but hold fast to His dear hand, and He will lead you safely through all things: and when you cannot stand, He will bear you in His arms.**

**Do not anticipate what will happen tomorrow. The same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.**

**Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.**

**- Saint Francis De Sales arms.**

## Deacon's Corner



The Clergy and leadership of CGS recently received approval from the Diocese to do away with most of the COVID requirements and restrictions. Since we are still in the Season of Lent, I won't say "Alle\_lia"! But I will offer a heartfelt "HUZZAH"! The timing is great as we look forward to spending contemplative, prayerful time together during Holy Week, and a true CGSA-style celebration of Easter!

But let's not forget what we've learned through these times of restrictions. We've learned to be more intentional in our lives. More intentional in our love for God, and more intentional in our love for each other. We've learned different ways of being community, of being Church, of being the Body of Christ. We've learned what is important to hold onto in our lives and in our worship. I hope we've learned how our love of God, and God's Creation, ties us together so that our lives may become our worship.

The Kingdom of God is always very near! May God's Peace be with us always!

Rev. Ken Schmidt, Deacon

## Worship

### Regathering Update

Beginning April 1, the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts has approved a number of new gathering guidelines for congregations. To read their full announcement, please visit [DioMass](https://www.dio.mass.gov).

I am very grateful to the members of our Regathering Team, who have been such great stewards of our own Good Shepherd community throughout the pandemic. Their careful, loving application of regathering guidelines has provided for us well, despite the challenges and frustrations of this long ordeal.

We are now happy to share with you the following updates, all of which will go into effect beginning April 1.

**Masks:** Beginning April 1 masks will become optional at Good Shepherd. The Diocese "strongly encourages that all persons continue to wear masks at indoor services and events" and we will fully support any who continue to choose to do so. All those serving at the altar will wear masks during the Eucharistic prayer and distribution of Communion.

**Physical Distancing:** Capacity limits and seating restrictions at church services and events will be lifted. We will continue to provide socially distanced seating in the church for those who prefer it (with ~ 5-6ft of distance between households). Please ask an usher if you would like to sit in this area, located toward the rear of the church.

**Ventilation:** Windows will be open and the ceiling fans on during church services to increase

### Service Schedule

#### Sunday

8:00 am Holy Eucharist  
10:00 am Holy Eucharist, also live-streamed on Zoom

#### Wednesday

7:30 am Morning Prayer via Zoom

#### Thursday

8:00 pm Compline via Zoom

air flow.

**Holy Communion:** The chalice will once again be available for those who wish to receive the consecrated wine from the common cup. Individuals at higher risk from COVID infection are discouraged from receiving in this manner. Intinction, or dipping the wafer into the wine, will not be available, to avoid finger tips from coming into contact with the wine. Those who prefer to receive only the bread are welcome to do so. Theologically, receiving in one kind (that is either the bread or the wine) is considered full Communion.



**Coffee Hour:** Food and drinks may again be served indoors. We look forward to resuming Coffee Hour in April and enjoying our first parish meal together on Maundy Thursday during Holy Week.



Please feel free to reach out to [me](#), or any other members of our Regathering Team ([Jessie Panek](#), [Gail Lyons](#), [Marilyn Fedele](#), [Tony Geanisis](#)) or any Vestry member with any questions or concerns.

We know that for many people these less-restrictive practices are welcomed. We also know that there are others who may not yet be comfortable with the lessening of safety measures and who may find these new guidelines concerning. Some members of our own Good Shepherd community continue to be at higher risk from COVID infection, or care for loved ones who are, and none of our children under the age of five have been vaccinated yet. Our 10 am service will continue to be available on Zoom for those unable

or uncomfortable with being in the sanctuary. While we are hopeful that the worst is behind us, additional safety practices may become necessary again if there is another resurgence of COVID infections in our area.

Thank you again for your patience and care of one another throughout these challenging times.  
Faithfully, Rev. Ellie+

## Musical Leadership During Holy Week

Our amazing and dedicated choir will be supporting the congregation's sung prayer at all the evening services of Holy Week. Music for these services is designed to amplify and illuminate the liturgical action in which we are engaged at each step of our baptismal journey with Christ, deeper and deeper into the saving, transforming love of God.



Many thanks to the five people so far who have stepped up to add their musical gifts to the Easter morning festivities—cello, drums, bass guitar, dulcimer and voice. The organ will be fired up again in full glory. It's not too late to join in. Please contact Ellen Oak. All levels of musical skill and experience are welcome.

Ellen Oak



## Welcoming Matters: Newcomers/Greeter Ministry

**“We shall not cease from exploration — and the end of all exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time”**

TS Eliot, *The Four Quartets*



As we gather back to more live worship we are looking to return and know our church in a new way “for the first time.” To help this welcome back transition we are expanding the Newcomer/Greeting Ministry. This is a low pay but high reward way to meet and greet old friends and welcome newer folks to the sanctuary. We offer “on the job training.” Prerequisite skills include:

- A warm smile
- Convivial eyes
- Arrival at church 20 minutes before the service

Welcome Aboard the CGS Welcome Wagon!

Please contact Andy Platt, or Karen Pupo .

**But Wait!!!!!!**

**We are all Greeters!**

Really all of us at CGS should be Greeters in the larger sense. As you see new people during coffee hour please reach out and introduce yourself. But in addition, please reach out to folks you have not seen — some for 2 years! No question we have lost some parishioners due to Covid or other reasons. *Some people may want to reconnect but may feel it is difficult to return. Please reach out by phone or email to friends you may not have seen in a while telling them you hope to*

*see them soon.* They will feel the love even if they do not return!

Andy Platt and Karen Pupo

## Liturgical Arts

The Liturgical Arts Team theme for Lent is rebirth and resurrection which is an ancient and common theme for Lent. We felt that it meets the moment as our Covid-driven isolation has been like a two year Lenten experience for many of us. And, now that it is abating, we are looking forward to fully opening the Church. In many ways, we have all spent our 40 days in a desert of some kind. Now it's time to return to praising God and worshipping together, having been released from almost all worship restrictions.

The area around the Altar has been reconfigured for this season. There is a small side chapel to the left of the Altar for personal reflection, and to the right of the Altar the baptismal font and Paschal candle are front and center (rather than a pile of



chairs which we pushed against the back wall). The font and paschal candle will be used during Easter to celebrate our rebirth.

The Stations of the Cross have been installed along the pilasters in the Sanctuary; under each one is a quote from Bishop Curry's book: “Love Is The Way”. The Stations will be up throughout Lent in the hope that you will take some time for personal reflection during this Holy season.

Thank-you to Ellie Terry, and Ellen Oak, for reimagining our Worship space for this important season; to Tony and Margaret Geanisis for creating the placards with Bishop Curry's quotes, to the

Altar Guild for hanging the Stations, and to Jessie Panek and Margaret for hanging the quotes and adding the final touches.

Gail Lyons



## Christian Formation

### Hop, Skip & Jump Through the Bible

**Wed. April 20, 7:30 pm-9 pm**

#### **Exploring the Scriptures: Reconciliation and Forgiveness**

The collect for the Thursday of Easter week prays that we will respond in our lives to the new covenant of reconciliation established by God in the Paschal mystery. What do we mean by the reconciliation we experienced Easter Sunday? How do we reconcile ourselves to God and others? Is accepting God's forgiveness and our forgiveness of others the way to receive and offer reconciliation? Come and join us for a discussion of these foundational tenets of our Christian faith.

#### **Readings:**

Reconciliation: *Rom.* 5:10-11; *2 Cor.* 5:18-20; *Eph.* 2:16; *Col.* 1:20

Forgiveness: *Matt.* 6:12; 18:35; *Eph.* 1:7; *Col.* 3:12-13

Each session is a stand-alone meeting so join us for whatever sessions you can fit into your schedule. All are welcome.

Join via [Zoom](#)

Bev Ridpath & Neal Ogle

### Adult Forum in Lent: What is Truth? An Embodied Lenten Series

This 6-session **Lenten** study, prepared by our Diocese's Racial Justice Commission, invites congregations, small study groups and individuals to go deeper into Pilate's question "What is truth?" and the truths we've learned about our history, our personal truths in relationship to the broader community, and national truths that have been told and, in some cases, need to be untold and then retold.

In light of our Vestry and Mission Outreach Committee's commitment to exploring racial justice as a congregation, we invite you to join Rev. Ellie



and Deacon Ken in this provocative [Lenten](#) forum.

Each session includes a theological reflection; suggestions of a short reading, online video or other media; a discussion guide; suggestions for group action in response to the content and discussion; and suggestions for individual and household follow-up reflection, study and action during the week. For more information, [visit here](#).

The program will be held in the Parish Hall and on Zoom on the following Sundays:

**Apr 3, 2022 11:30 am**

**Apr 10, 2022 11:30 am**

Here is the link for the [Zoom Meeting](#). Please feel free to join us for the rest of the program!



## *Is e pluribus unum possible?*

**Thursday, May 12, 6:30 p.m., Held on Zoom & in person at Luther Place Memorial Church  
1226 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC**

*Is e pluribus unum* possible? Is that Latin phrase which translates, from many, one, from many diverse people, one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all, possible? The phrase is the official motto of the United States. It is emblazoned on the Great Seal of the country. It is a statement of who we say we aspire to be as a nation, a society, a people. But is it possible? Is the American experiment in a multi-racial, pluralistic, egalitarian democratic society possible? Is it possible for this to be a country in which, "*there is plenty good room for all God's children,*" as Africans enslaved in this country once sang?

But the question is not one simply for the United States. It is a question for the human race. Dr. King often said it this way: "*We shall either learn to live together as [sisters and] brothers or we will perish together as fools.*" That is not simply a quaint religious question. It is one of ultimate urgency.

I am a follower of Jesus of Nazareth because I believe his way of love embodied in his Spirit, his life, his teaching shows us the very way and heart of the God who the Bible says "*is love.*" In so doing Jesus has shown us God's way of life. He has shown us the way to live in right relationship and reconciled with the God who is our Creator, with each other as the children of God, and with all of God's creation. He has shown us the way to the kingdom of God, the way to live in the rule and reign of God, the way to live as the family of God, the beloved community. And in that, I believe, is hope for the planet and the human race for that is what God had in mind when God first said, "*Let there be light.*"

If you cannot attend the live event, you can register to receive a recording of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's presentations to view at a time that works best for you. The presentation will be recorded (without the moments of interactive sharing from participants).

Here is the [link for more information](#) and to register.

**We hope to plan a watch party to view this together in community... stay tuned for details as that comes together.**



# Church School

## Your Old Towels...



The 5th and 6th grade Church School children have decided to collect used towels for an animal shelter (to be determined later). If you have any large old towels you'd like to donate, please leave them in the plastic tub to the right of the building entrance in the Narthex. They will be collected through Palm Sunday.



# Mission Outreach

*“We are called to be the change we want to see in the world by honoring human dignity and seeking to improve the rights and conditions of people locally, nationally, and globally.”*

## Outreach to Afghan Refugees

We have been working since the fall with the Acton-Stow Interfaith Partnership, a group of six faith communities formed to provide support for Afghan refugee needs. The group includes St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, the South Acton Congregational Church, the Apple Valley Catholic Community of Acton and Stow, the First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, and Trinity Chapel of Shirley. This group has been meeting weekly since early November.

Thus far, the Partnership has provided ongoing support to the start-up of a Halal food pantry in the Lowell area, food delivery to homes, a winter clothing drive, and a gift card campaign. Throughout this time the Mission Outreach Committee, which includes Ellie and Ken, has had rich discussions about the role of our church community in supporting Afghan families.

In August, 80,000 Afghans fled their country. Now we are all watching in horror as two million refugees flee Ukraine. It is often hard to know what to do, how to help in such a huge crisis. Our efforts can feel like a drop in the bucket.

This month the Acton-Stow Interfaith Partnership, with the blessing of its six faith communities, is moving forward to support an Afghan refugee family. The International Institute of New England (IINE) will be our partners in this endeavor. They will be doing much of the heavy lifting and will bring tremendous professional expertise to the work of resettlement. Our support is likely to include setting up an apartment, providing transportation, supporting school success and English language learning, introducing the family to the area where they settle, and helping with financial support for basic needs until the family is independent. I expect, as we go along, we will be defining some “roll up your sleeves” tasks that are one-offs, as well as longer-term commitments for volunteer-

“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”

– Hebrews 13:2

ing. These responsibilities will be shared among the six churches and coordinated by team leaders. I hope, during this six-to-twelve-month commitment, each of us can find a way to engage in welcoming the family to a new home and community.

In the meantime, we would love to know if anyone in the parish has any contacts with landlords in the wider Acton and/or Lowell area. And, I'll be putting together a Good Shepherd Team of about six people to coordinate our participation.

Please think about joining this important work. It just may feed your soul and contribute to that “Better World” we all want to create.

Barbara Magee.

## Action items

- **Paperwork!** If you expect to volunteer in a role that involves interacting with Afghan family members, you will need to register as a volunteer with IINE and fill out a few forms including a Cori. This takes a little lead time. Email Barb Magee and she will send you the forms.
- **Learn!** It would also be important for you to watch this cultural [orientation webinar presentation](#) with Rachel Lehr who worked in Af-

ghanistan for many years and provides cultural training to the State Department and the US Embassy.



- **Clean out!** Are you doing spring cleaning or redecorating? Are you downsizing? If you have furniture or household goods in very good condition, set them aside. We will be collecting goods to set up an apartment in the near future. Need to get them out of your house right now? Household Goods Recycling Center also provides apartments for refugees. Details are on their [website](#).

## Concert to Support our Afghan Family

Save the afternoon of **Saturday, April 23rd** on your calendar to listen to a rousing *a capella* concert and contribute to the Afghan Family Support Fund — and bring your friends too.  
(see next page for info.)

## Events

# Benefit Concert

## In support of Afghan Refugees



**Saturday, April 23, 2022**  
**4pm**

Church of the Good Shepherd  
164 Newtown Road  
Acton, MA

For more information:  
Call 978-263-5782  
[www.goodshepherdacton.org](http://www.goodshepherdacton.org)

### Featuring NOTA

Celebrating 15+ years of music-making and camaraderie, None of the Above (NOTA) is an a cappella octet who loves to perform a diverse repertoire of catchy pop tunes, finger snapping jazz standards, familiar folk songs, uplifting spirituals, and non-traditional academic pieces. Ensemble-in-residence at the Unitarian Universalists of Wellesley, NOTA has performed all over New England at coffeehouses, libraries, churches and other ace-friendly performance spaces. They were selected as one of the top eight finalists on the inaugural season of WGBH's (PBS) TV series "Sing that Thing!" NOTA has also been featured on WERS-FM's (Emerson College Radio) All A Cappella Show during their live music week.

- ▶ Suggested donation \$20. Contributions of any amount gratefully accepted.
- ▶ All proceeds will be used in direct support of a local Afghan refugee family sponsored by the Acton-Stow Interfaith Partnership and supported by the International Institute of New England ([www.iine.org](http://www.iine.org)).
- ▶ Family, friendly. Kids are welcome!
- ▶ Concert will last ~50 minutes.
- ▶ Reception to follow

# Committee News

## Coffee Hour Returns & We Need Volunteers!

**It is time to reinstate the grand tradition of the Coffee Hour!**



If you do nothing else other than prepare hot coffee, both decaffeinated and regular, plus hot water for tea, and put out a plate of cookies, you are a **HERO** in our eyes.....

Preparation is simple:

- Make a few pump dispensers of both regular and decaf coffee
- Fill up the hot water dispenser with boiling water
- Lay out cups
- Have ready a few select teas, spoons, sweetner, milk, and half and half

The Church will have on hand simple snacks, both with and without gluten, to offer as refreshment so no planning ahead of time is required.

### **THAT'S IT!**

We have several excellent bakers in our congregation, and if you are so moved to bring along your favorite sweet or savory snack when hosting, these are always gratefully received but not necessary. If you are new to hosting, an experienced coffee hour host will show you the ropes.

The last thing we want to do is to burden the stalwart coffee hour volunteers who thoughtfully jump into the fray at the last moment. To avoid this, we will try and



schedule a host each week, signed up in advance. Without a host on the schedule, we will have to go without if no one signs up that week.

We would welcome all who are interested in hosting coffee hour. Please feel free to contact Wendy Feddersen, for more information and/or to be added to the roster.

Wendy Feddersen



Please help Make our Church Kitchen More Environmentally Sustainable

We are called as Episcopalians to grow loving, liberating, life-giving relationships with the whole of God's Creation and to protect and renew the Earth and all who call it home. For God's sake, we want to adopt practical ways of reducing our climate impact and living more humbly and gently on Earth as individuals, households, congregations, institutions, and dioceses.

As we regather and open our kitchen to prepare coffee hours and events, let's make our kitchen more environmentally sustainable, a place where we can actively share our love for the earth and each other. With this in mind...

The Creation Care Committee thanks you for **not** bringing plastic:

- plates
- cups
- utensils
- tablecloths

for coffee hour or events. Our kitchen is well supplied with alternatives.

We also thank you for taking home your plastic containers as we are not yet set up for recycling.

Please let us know if you would like to help work on other practical ways of reducing our climate impact in our church and homes.

Carolyn Platt & Bev Ridpath

## With Abundant Gratitude to:

- the **Prayer Shawl Ministry** for their dedicated stitching work and the lives their work touches. We received this thank you:

*Thank you very much for the lovely prayer shawl. I make them for my church but not as pretty as this one. - Joan*

- **Bev Ridpath** who deserves a shout out for pro-



viding coffee hour after eight o'clock service on those chilly mornings outside — with warmed mugs no less.

- **Margaret Geanisis** for her fantastic work



putting together and editing the Shepherd's Staff each month. It is a great celebration of our parish and a true labor of love. Margaret puts in countless hours to produce this wonderful magazine. We are all so grateful!! (submitted by Rev. Ellie Terry)

- **Ellie Terry and Ellen Oak** for reimagining our Worship space for this important season.
- **Tony and Margaret Geanisis** for creating the placards with Bishop Curry's quotes.
- to the Altar Guild for hanging the Stations.
- **Jessie Panek and Margaret Geanisis** for hanging the quotes and adding the final touches.
- **our Regathering Team** for the extra time they have put in throughout this Pandemic and for getting us ready to reopen.
- **our Ushers** who have had extra duties during this "inside but not fully open" time period: **John Erickson, Gail Lyons, Steve Schmitt, Tony Geanisis, Marilyn & Dick Fedele, Peter & Lena Grant, Debbie Flint-Baum.**
- **Ken Schmidt and Rev. Ellie**, for leading an excellent Adult Formation Class about *Love Is The Way*".
- **God's abundant Grace in this church as we have navigated these Pandemic Times. We love you Abba.**

## Administration

### February Vestry Vignettes

The Vestry meeting began with a short reflection from the Gospel of Matthew, followed by Opening Prayer. January Vestry Minutes were approved; then we discussed what was needed for the upcoming Annual Meeting.

We were pleased to learn that after our budget appeal, 27 households increased their existing pledges for an increase of \$21,665. It is strongly hoped that we will not need to have a second appeal next year.

### 2022 Budget:

The budget includes a standard shrinkage factor of 4.5%. This year we assumed a larger amount for plate identified regulars as many previous pledgers continue to donate, but never filled out a pledge card. We are projecting \$299,305 for regular gifts and \$608,800 for total income.

We are moving forward with an estimated deficit of \$25,581.

The Vestry went through line items and reduced or cut some expenses (Sexton, Rector Professional Expense, Substitute Clergy, Substitute Organist, Youth Director) and increased the Parish Life

Budget.

A motion was APPROVED to pass the budget with a \$13,467 deficit.

### **Annual Meeting**

We will have a 20-minute Coffee Break between Church and the meeting, and Margaret will organize it.

The meeting ended with a closing prayer and dismissal.

## **March Vestry Vignettes**

We opened with prayer and moved on to approving the February Minutes. We listened to a reading from Colossians 3: 12-17, and shared what word or phrase spoke to us.

### **About our Vestry:**

Rev. Ellie asked us to introduce ourselves, including our name, how long we've been at CGS, what gifts and expectations we brought with us, and who we represent. What we learned is that we are a very varied Vestry, bringing lots of different experiences, both from Good Shepherd and from other parishes. We also have quite a variety of gifts to be used for Good Shepherd and we have forward-thinking expectations. One very common experience which was repeated by all is the welcoming atmosphere which includes acceptance for all our members, just as they are.

### **Goals which came out of the Parish Meeting:**

Rev. Ellie discerned that we are called to structure our work around these four areas

- Evangelism/Community Engagement - signage, newspaper, social media, website, community events
- Diversity and Racial Justice - to increase diversity, mission outreach projects, dismantle racism, welcoming LGBTQ
- Christian Formation - welcoming children and families, planning for church school, staff and welcoming families
- Facilities - using our space, defining which groups we can invite in, figure rental costs, etc.

The Vestry will divide up and work in the areas where we feel called.

The Vestry will also be reading *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going* by Susan Beaumont. This is particularly appropriate to read as we gather after the Pandemic. We will be reading a

chapter a month, and discussing it at our meetings

### **Sr. Warden's Report:**

Wendy shared a wonderful Vestry Job Description from the book *Vestry Resource Guide*. She sent the Vestry members a copy of our job description to keep on hand.

### **Jr. Warden's Report:**

Harry reminded us all that we must take the Safe Church Training if we haven't completed it within the last 3 years. The link was emailed to Vestry members who need to take the course.

### **Changes in Covid rules:**

Ellie reviewed the new Bishops' Updated Requirements and Guidelines. The Regathering Committee will meet to have conversations about which to adopt and continue given vulnerable populations, including but not limited to singing with or without masks, coffee hour, common cup, and other items.

### **Plans for Holy Week:**

Holy Week was presented by Rev. Ellie Terry Maundy Thursday Agape Meal, Good Friday - Stations of the Cross and Passion Reading, Saturday - Easter Vigil(ish)/Lighting of the Paschal Candle, Sunday - 8 am and 10 am Full Service Easter; 7:30 pm Easter Evening Service around the fire

### **Diocesan Business:**

The Parochial Report needs to be sent in yearly. Rev. Ellie Terry reviewed it with the Vestry before it went in. It also needed Vestry approval, which it received.

### **Finance Report:**

Denise Kelly briefly went over the monthly numbers, and then explained that we would have to vote to change a signer of church checks from Lydia Tolley to Wendy Feddersen, which passed.

### **Marketing the church:**

Wendy Feddersen led a discussion about various ways we can draw some attention to what is happening at Good Shepherd. She noticed that Acton Beacon didn't post the service hours. Wendy would like to see Easter times posted; put something on sandwich placards in Acton(?); tabling at external community events; Littleton paper(?); and to explore other avenues.

### **Change in the next Vestry meeting:**

Because the next Vestry meeting is scheduled to happen during Holy Week, the meeting will be held in the week beginning March 4th, exact day TBD.

The Vestry closed with prayer.