

Embracing the Gift of Change

by Judy A. Lewis, Licensed Professional Counselor

Transitions happen to all of us: job changes or loss of a career, failing health, relationship changes, children leaving home, death of a loved one. When we face such changes, our priority can be just trying to get through to the next stage in our life, rather than being open to any growth within the process itself. But COVID-19 is teaching us that we do not even know what the next stage is, let alone when our normalcy will return. In times of major change there can be resistance in your heart rather than surrender and acceptance. By trying to hold onto a sense of control, you can miss God's peace and gentle nudges toward growth.

We resist change out of fear. We fear the loss of the known. It is scary to navigate without a map into uncharted territory. If you try to change based on your own human strength or willpower you will fail, ending up disappointed and frustrated. Our relationship with God must come first. That's the key to effecting change in your life.

So, what are you most afraid of? What do you need from God? Take time each day to notice how you are feeling. We may not be able to change the events themselves, but we can change our response to them. In times of uncertainty and fear it can be easy to fall into the trap of anxiety, depression, resentment, anger or frustration. Take time to explore underneath these feelings because they may be masking a much deeper emotion.

Imagine what would happen if, instead of resisting the unknown and uncertainties of change, you accept it as a gift and pay attention to what God is doing. Changes imposed because of COVID-19 are stark and not of our choosing. There is much of normal life that we have to let go of. But as you let go of these things, be open to the new opportunities that God may be working within you. Change can add beautiful meaning and grace if we allow it to shine into our hearts as we welcome new beginnings.

"People are like stain-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within." Elizabeth Kubler-Ross.

Let Jesus be that Light!

Please contact me with any comments or questions, or if you have a personal matter you would like to discuss. I can be reached at 810-599-5188 or jlewis3454@gmail.com. I would love to hear from you!

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We are aiming to issue the next Tidings in early August. Please submit stories by July 20. We are especially seeking pictures of masks and stories regarding masks! Thanks!

Send to Father John:
john@joyfulrumblings.net



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TIDINGS

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Episcopal Church ☪ Dahlonega, GA ☪ June/July 2020

The mission of St. Elizabeth's Church is proclaiming God's word, celebrating God's love, and sharing God's gifts.



Pictured here are Judy Ford, Tom Roberts and Don Clark. Judy recently moved to Savannah, but, because of our online life, she continues to worship and fellowship through YouTube and Zoom with our congregation. We are so blessed.

Litany During a Pandemic

God the Father,
Have mercy upon us.

God the Son,
Have mercy upon us.

God the Holy Spirit,
Have mercy upon us.

Holy Trinity, One God,
Have mercy upon us.

Spare us, good Lord, spare your people, who you have redeemed with your most precious blood, and by your mercy preserve us through this crisis, and forever.
Spare us, good Lord.

From all evil and wickedness, from disease and illness, especially this coronavirus,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From all ignorance and apathy, and from all willingness to engage in activities that could harm others,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From all blindness of heart, from pride and a sense of invincibility,
Good Lord, deliver us.

We your children beseech you to hear us, O Lord God, to look upon this world struck by pandemic, and drive from us this disease,
We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to strengthen the weak, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems,
We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to give health and comfort to all who are already stricken with illness,
We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to give patience and grace to all those who are in quarantine or who fear that they have already contracted the virus,
We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

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Revelations of Divine Love

by Rev. John Hamilton

Julian of Norwich is not her real name: she was named after the church where she was a residential hermit, or anchoress. She wrote a book called "Revelations of Divine Love" based on a series of visions she had during an illness sometime around 1373. It is interesting because as a woman she was not allowed to be a theologian, but as someone writing devotional material based on visions, she was able to go uncensored. She writes that God's love is enormous, unconditional, and non-judgmental, and that it is the love of God that keeps all things in existence. Her memorial day is May 8, so it is appropriate to mention her at this time.

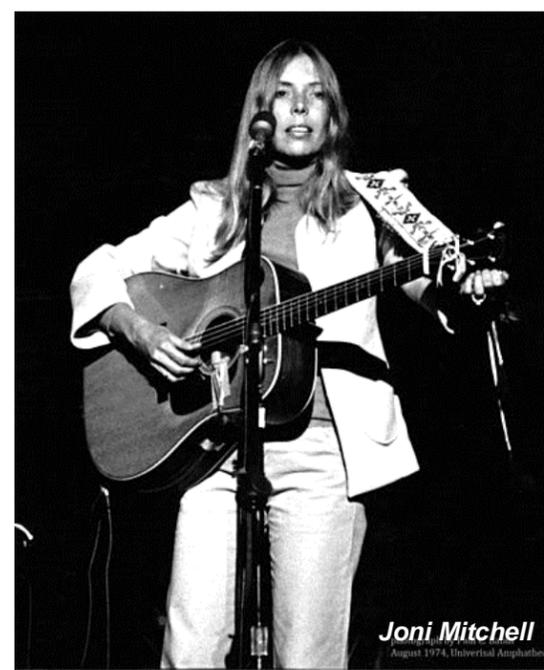


I thought of her because of the idea of revelations. The Greek word for it is Apocalypse, literally, the curtain is "pulled back" to reveal a hidden truth. But the subtle point missed by Evangelical writers and Biblical literalists, is that it is about things that are hidden in plain sight. Things that we should have seen already, things we could know if we paid attention or practiced awareness. Revelation is not a magic thing. It is the insight of someone who is spiritually grounded.

The same point is made by Joni Mitchell in her song, "They paved paradise and put up a parking lot." She writes, "It only goes to show; you don't know what you've got till it's gone. They paved paradise and put up a parking lot." She is saying we should realize that we are spoiling the beauty and indeed the health of nature by our actions. Her song is revelatory. She says what is hidden in plain sight. We are marring the beauty of our planet with poorly conceived "development," and yet we continue to build and build and build and build. That is, until we have to stay inside to escape the COVID 19 pandemic, yet before the pandemic we were covering nature with our concrete. What will we do afterwards?

This pandemic is annoying, getting very old, and quite frankly a pain. However, to the spiritually grounded it can be revelatory. We can discover things about ourselves, and about our fellow human beings, that will serve us as we seek to become more Christ like. What are some of the things you have noticed because of the pandemic? I'd love to hear them. Allow me to share a couple I have discovered.

The first is a revelation of divine love. I have discovered what I always supposedly knew: the love of God is felt through people. I miss the heck out of you guys!



The second is a revelation of the incarnation, the teaching that God takes flesh in Jesus, and in us through Baptism and Eucharist. We are embodied creatures. Zoom is no substitute for being in your presence. Hugs would be great, but just the physical presence of other people, is like manna from heaven.

The third is that we are herd animals. When we gather for worship, we access a part of our humanity that we do not realize. We are sheep. We want to be a part of the herd, even if several of the sheep do get on our nerves from time to time.

And finally, we as the church have a mission. The poverty and lack of access to health care for so many of our people has been exposed, and it is pretty clear that it is the system that is much to blame for it, not the people themselves. We do not need to propose the specific solution to the problems we see, but clearly this pandemic has revealed the "system" is failing many people. Our baptism vows demand we challenge society with the ugliness that has been revealed. Like the prophets and Jesus before us we must hold up for scrutiny what has always been hidden in plain sight. Peace and Well-being St. Elizabethites.

NOTES FROM THE TREASURER
by Ben Wallace

Financial Results as of First Quarter 2020

JANAURY - MARCH 2020

CATEGORY	ACTUAL	THOUSANDS BUDGET	VARIANCE
INCOME			
PLATE	\$1.3	\$1.5	\$(0.2)
PLEDGE	\$49.7	\$44.8	\$4.9
TOTAL INCOME	\$51.0	\$46.3	\$4.7
EXPENSE	\$44.8	\$46.3	\$1.5
NET	\$6.2	\$-00	\$6.2

Plate was lower for March versus budget which accounted for the full YTD variance of \$.2k and we can probably expect plate to lag behind budget in the absence of Sunday gatherings at the Church.

Pledge revenues for March were slightly above budget for the month but included \$.5k of deferred revenue, however, the quarter showed a positive variance of \$4.9k due to an annual pledge paid in January for a net positive to budget YTD of \$4.7k. It is too early to project what effect, if any, the current economic situation will have on pledge revenues.

As presented at the annual meeting approximately 82% of our budgeted expenses are fixed so there will be little variation over the course of the year. The \$1.5k variation for the 1st quarter YTD was simply the result of timing (as not all expenses occur evenly over the year).

Clearly from a revenue versus expense perspective the net positive of \$6.2k for the 1st quarter is a favorable result. Through April and May, revenue and expense trends remain unchanged from 1st quarter results. Plate continues to under budget while pledge contributions remain strong and are above budget year to date. Expenses remain in line with budget.

DOK Hosts Diocesan Luncheon

by Jill Hayes

On Saturday, December 7, the St Elizabeth chapter of the Daughters of the King was privileged to host the annual Atlanta Diocesan DOK holiday luncheon. We were pleased to host 23 members who arrived bearing gifts of yummy dishes of all kinds and who enjoyed coffee and muffins while they waited for all to gather. Three of our wonderful husbands joined us in welcoming the women and were there to assist them getting into the church and dropping off their fare. Once all had arrived, Father John celebrated a Eucharist with them and received so many "kudos" it clearly was a wonderful service.

Following the service all came downstairs for good food and fellowship – thanks be to God for the elevator! We had been asked to wear our holiday fashion and



prizes were given for the most memorable/ ugly/creative choices. Dawn Hayes, my daughter, helped me by creating cute little ornaments for the center of the tables which were given to each attendee to take home for their tree. The "jewelry tree" on which they were hung was also awarded to someone at each table. Fun was had by all!



Reflections from Memorial Day 2020

We were in a major health crisis this past Memorial Day, but it is still essential that we remember those of our nation that have died serving and defending it. As I write this article, I am reminded of those that I either knew, or at least was acquainted with, who died while serving their country. Some died in combat, while others died as a direct result of training accidents, disease, or other causes. Some I merely knew from studying local history. Nevertheless, they all come to mind on this Memorial Day. As I once stated in an earlier article, 1,323,385 service members have died while in service. That was as of 2018. No doubt there are more that need to be added to this list from over the last two years. I also stated that of this number, 660,794 died in combat, while 662,591 died of other causes. This is astounding when you stop to consider that half or more of these service members died of non-combat wounds and injuries. These figures do not even include peacetime non-hostile deaths, such as sicknesses and mishaps of all kinds.

I am listing the names of some of these precious individuals in this article, in order to honor them and their families, and to put a most personal take on this year's Memorial Day. Some of these names will be familiar to some of you, as some of them have had a connection to our local community, or perhaps you have only read about them. So here they are, and I ask each one of you to pray for their families, even though the deep personal loss to these people has, over the years, been time-healed to some extent. The main thing is, as we reflect on this recent Memorial Day, let us not forget any of them and the other many of hundreds of thousands like them:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Weston C. Lee Iraq 2017 | Joe R. Simpson Cold War 1963 | Tom Oakes Vietnam (Agent Orange) 2015 |
| Jamie Blasingame Iraq 2009 | William W. Gabriel Cold War 1963 | Gregorio M. Comacho Vietnam 1968 |
| Randy Duff Vietnam 1972 | Robert J. Morrison Cold War 1963 | James L. Collins Korea 1951 |
| Bill Steele Vietnam (PTSD) 2018 | Robert J. Hill Cold War 1963 | David Thomas Vietnam 1971 |
| Greg Morgan Vietnam 1971 | Herbert L. Hanson Cold War 1963 | Jeff Hounshell Vietnam 1968 |
| Leonard Bolden WWII 1944 | Charles G. Leuchter Cold War 1963 | Michael F. O'Keefe Cold War 1963 |
| Three Names Unknown but to God Vietnam 1971 | | Charles I. Humber WWII 1945 |

The History of St. Elizabeth's Ambry

by Tom Roberts

An Ambry (sometimes spelled Aumbry) is a small cabinet in the wall of a Christian Church used to store the reserve sacrament (consecrated elements from a previous Eucharist service which are available for immediate use).

During 2005, St. Elizabeth's Rector, The Rev. Paul Roberts, discussed the possibility of designing, fabricating, and installing an Ambry in the Chancel, with congregation member, Turner Wiggins. Turner and I had worked on previous projects at the church, and after he prepared a sketch of his and Fr Paul's conceptual ideas for an Ambry, he asked if I would participate in its construction and installation.

In an effort to be aesthetically consistent with some of the existing design elements of our Altar, Processional Cross, and Altar Rail, the initial sketch of the Ambry was modified, and a final drawing was prepared. The finished Ambry design included exterior columns, similar to those on the Altar, a miniature of the Processional Cross used in our church services, and scroll work similar to that on the Altar and Altar Rail. In addition, the inside was designed to reflect the reverence of the contents: the elements were to sit on a hand-crafted doily and be enclosed by a retractable, hand crafted curtain. A door-activated light for the interior was also included in the design. Finally, the Ambry was to be lockable. Fr. Paul suggested that the Greek inscription, which translates as, "The Bread of Life," be included above the Ambry door.

After completion of the final drawings, several members were asked to help with the fabrication. Turner Wiggins and I built and finished the wood structure of the Ambry and embossed the Greek lettering; David Hughes applied the gold leaf.

David, who was a charter member of St. Elizabeth's, also provided the turned, walnut columns. Jim Ritch provided the scrollwork above the door, and Jan Stepancik, who died several years ago, crafted the linen doily and retractable curtains



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Order of Saint Luke Inducts Karyl Loux

by Karyl Loux

The Order of Saint Luke exists to empower God's people with Jesus' healing ministry. A person is typically drawn to this ministry by the voice of Jesus in the heart of those who are called, and who have a special feeling about the power of Jesus to heal all wounds and illnesses of individuals and the world.



Once I made the decision to join this Order, I was asked to engage in a study of all 26 of the healing miracles of Jesus in the Bible. The readings and reflections occurred independently, but then we came together weekly as a group of 8 to discuss and examine what each miracle means and how it impacts each of us in the group. We met weekly for about 3 hours per session. Group study is important, as Jesus modeled his teachings to groups, and seldom to just an individual. His core group was 12 and he taught and modeled healing behaviors for three years.

By the second session we began practicing and submersing ourselves in healing prayers for each other, including laying our hands upon each other. This not only involved the obvious prayer call, it involved us being willing to express our own needs for healing prayers. We also joined in a circle, holding hands and prayed for the health of each other, our parish, and the world. We engaged in soaking prayer for each other, that involves silent laying on of hands and simply soaking (or pouring over) the person, prayers of healing and health. We developed and maintain an ongoing prayer list for which we pray at least daily or more as time permits, and we still meet weekly. In each of these types of prayers we seek an indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the Healing Light of Jesus. We are simply the vessels; Jesus and the Holy Spirit do the healing and often direct the prayers.

Beyond these two aspects of training, we were required to attend a few healing services and at least one conference. Our group attended two Order of Saint Luke Healing Conferences. At these conferences we were called to both give and receive healing prayers. At my first conference, my hands were anointed to do this work. I also sought healing for my distressed gastric system, as Jesus told the disciples to go into any home and eat what is put before you. I am pleased to say that I have not taken medicine for GERD for over two months now, and even my gastro doc said I am so much better. We have also seen obvious/apparent healings as a result of our prayers. Thus, we have been given affirmation that what we are doing matters.

On February 23, 2020, we were inducted into the Order of Saint Luke. We were anointed with Holy oil on our heads and our hands, and charged with the responsibility to anoint others and lay hands on as we pray for their healing, always remembering that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the true healers, and that we are His anointed vessels in this work. I am blessed, and may my healing prayers bring blessings to all that seek His intervention, via mine or other hands Jesus chooses to use. We have had few opportunities to have face to face, hands on, anointing and laying on of hands due to the COVID-19 situation. Thus, we pray remotely for others. I know that the fairly rapid healing of Dave and I after our accident is due to all the healing prayers sent our way. May you be blessed with good health and healing of any part of your body or mind, in the precious name of Jesus.

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for the inside. Pat Pattillo, another long-time member of St. Elizabeth's, who has since relocated to Rome, GA, provided and installed the interior light, the door-operated switch, and the curtain rods, which enable the curtain to open and close.

With the assistance of another long-time member, Bill Hartman, the completed Ambry was installed in the Chancel wall in its current location. Well into his 90's, Bill, was one of the most active volunteers on church projects, and, well into his 90's was often seen on a ladder replacing parking lot light bulbs or air filters on the units in the attic. He was also known for his special deviled egg recipe. Bill died three years ago at the age of 93.



Bill Hartman

The design and fabrication of the Ambry was truly a 'church family' effort and one of the many projects completed by the caring craftspeople of St. Elizabeth's.

St. Elizabeth's Receives Grant to Start Celtic Worship Service this Fall

by Lara Lowman



Photograph from St. Stephen's

Earlier this year, Father John, Barbara Day Miller and I began exploring the idea of having a monthly Celtic service. We were inspired by St. Stephen's Episcopal in Richmond, VA, that has offered this type of worship on Sunday evenings for more than 20 years.

After discussing the idea with the Vestry and the Worship committee, the three of us submitted a grant proposal to the Calvin Institute and, in May, learned that our request had been fully funded.

Of course, since completing the grant proposal, budget and timeline, much has changed about how we worship. However, while

we don't know exactly what the service will look like, we are still planning to begin in September.

Whether we gather outside, via video, or in our sanctuary, we envision the service following our usual pattern of worship with hymns/songs, prayers, hearing the Word (followed by a brief reflection and silence), responding in prayer with an invitation to light candles as the musicians play meditative music, and Eucharist. The 'Celtic' descriptor refers primarily to the use of instruments and prayers and meditative practices that have the feel of the Irish/Scottish/Northumberland areas: string instruments, flutes, simple prayers, folk tunes from those regions (think "Be Thou my Vision") and a grounding in nature with live and seasonal plants to enhance the space. Held in the early evening, the service will draw us into the stillness of the night, and centers us in the loving presence of God.

We also think this service will attract a variety of people, from retirees who don't go to church anymore but are looking for a spiritual experience, to college students who are more apt to go to church on Sunday evening vs morning. It will also give us an opportunity to tap into the variety of local musicians, who have expressed interest in participating, and many of whom – until the pandemic – gathered for the monthly Celtic Jam at Canvas & Cork as well as numerous other jams that occur weekly.

You can read more about the service, view a video, and listen to reflections by selecting The Celtic Service under the Worship & Prayer tab at the St. Stephen's website, ststephensrva.org. Father John and I will also be keeping the parish apprised as plans develop as we know that many of you are interested in participating.

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That it may please you to surround those who are scared and fearful, those who are overcome with anxiety and worry,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to give wisdom and stamina to all scientists, doctors, and all who are working on tests, vaccines, and treatments,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to uphold all those who are treating and ministering to the sick,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to give to your people a heart to love their neighbor through this time, and to look after those who are most vulnerable.

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to support, help, and comfort those who are worried about getting through this time financially, and whether they will have employment when this passes,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to help our young people grow in wisdom and knowledge even as universities are closed,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to heal the sick, lift up the stricken, and open the airways of those who have difficulty breathing,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please you to receive into your bosom those who have died from this disease, and to gather into your arms those who grieve,

We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.

Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.

Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

Grant us your peace.

Consider the Lilies

article and photo by Rosalie Jensen

Every Easter as we celebrate the glorious event of the Resurrection, we display lilies at the altar and around our worship space. Resplendent in the beauty of their white purity they remind us of the passage in the sixth chapter of Matthew that urges us to consider the lilies of the field. They grow without toil, but "even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed as one of these."

The flower pictured is a native lily called a *trillium*. Like the term Trinity, the prefix indicates three interrelated parts. If you look at the flower you will see three petals, three leaves, and three sepals. Georgia has the special honor of hosting the largest number of different trillium types than any other state, including 22 kinds that have been identified to date.

The picture here is a Southern Nodding Trillium, a shy bloom that hides its beauty under the leaves of the plant. This lovely flower was in Cross Creek Farm, the residential area that is in back of the church property. It was near a sea of green umbrellas of the native plant known as Mayapple, which hides each flower under a pair of large leaves. From a position on the ground I was able to make this photograph in such a way as to emphasize the smooth white petals and the striking red sepals of the trillium. So far this year I have been unable to find a descendent of this flower near the large patch of Mayapples next to Cane Creek. Fortunately, I can relive seeing this beautiful specimen through the preservation of photographs made through the years of walking in wild places and considering the majesty of the Creation.

Look at the Birds

If you go out in the morning as the sun is rising you may hear birds singing from trees before you are able to see them. Listening to the songs of birds this morning reminded me of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*, which many people think was an important motivation for the first Earth Day declared in 1970. Her narrative begins with a fable about a land with the music of birds, the beauty of the countryside, and contented human inhabitants. Then a scourge takes away the birds, devastates the land, and sickens the people. Drawn in by this literary portrait of a crisis, the reader goes on to learn that the tragedy was akin to what would happen if the increasingly lethal insecticides being used extensively on crops and home gardens continued causing harm to both the environment and human populations. In particular, the eggs of birds at the top of the food chain were already displaying thin shells that could not support the developing birds within.

Reviled in her lifetime by manufacturers of chemicals such as DDT, Rachel Carson held to her position. When she died of cancer in 1964, she never knew the important role she had played in the establishment of Earth Day, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and environmental activism, including the removal of DDT from the list of approved insecticides used in our country. Unfortunately, today regulations are being relaxed to the extent that the basic needs for healthy air and water for all people may take a back seat to profits for industrial concerns. Both healthy citizens and successful business concerns are necessary, but a balanced approach is required for a country like ours to survive and flourish.

With the current health pandemic and limitation of gatherings, many activities planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, were curtailed; however, creative people discovered ways of using technology to emphasize their love for the Creation. On Earth Day a 12-hour virtual celebration carried messages from people all over the world to an estimated audience of 1 billion people who appreciated the efforts of those who went before us.

When Mike and I discussed memorable personal experiences in Wildlife Refuges involving the great birds saved after the publication of *Silent Spring*, we chose this siting to recount here. St. Marks Wildlife Refuge is a favorite destination that we had planned to visit this year. During one springtime visit we parked at the historic lighthouse and walked along the road looking for long-legged waders, otters, and other wildlife. Suddenly overhead we spotted an osprey with a fish in its talons carried in torpedo fashion to cut down on air resistance. From a tall tree nearby an eagle flew at the osprey to steal the fish, and just as unexpectedly another osprey, probably the mate of the first one, flew directly at the eagle, diverting it from its attempted theft. We have speculated that the fish was for nestlings, which both partners protect and feed.

According to Matthew 6:26, "*Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them.*" Thanks to environmentalists like Rachel Carson, we still have the birds of the air, both great and small.

