

Bede's Journal

The monthly newsletter of St. Bede's Episcopal Church • July 2020



Two Steps Forward... One Step Back

Our regathering team has started work on our plans for in-person worship, involving parishioners representing liturgy and music, buildings and grounds, Altar Guild, and worship volunteers like ushers. Unfortunately, the dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases here in California will delay the Diocese's approval of any reopening plans at least until next month. In a recent communication, Bishop Marc Andrus announced that the current worship and gathering guidelines remain in place until further notice.

"I know this further delay is disappointing," writes Bishop Marc, "particularly after so much creative and collaborative work developing plans to worship together in new ways. But the health and safety of our congregations and communities remains our priority; and, now, after so much good work 'flattening the curve' and, literally, saving lives, it appears more important than ever to stay the course and lead by example in our approach to public health."

The Diocese's COVID-19 team continues to monitor the latest health guidance and our team will continue their work on our regathering plans. We hope to have more details for you next month. In the meantime, please join us for Morning Prayer Sundays at 9:30 p.m. via Zoom.

In faith and peace,

– Anne Vitullo, Senior Warden

Looking Ahead: Key Dates on Our July and August Calendar

July 19: Copy deadline for August *Bede's Journal*

July 21: Vestry meeting, 7 p.m.

July 25: LifeMoves Dinner, 5 p.m.

August 5: Bede's Book Club, 9:30 a.m.

August 11: Finance Committee meeting, 4 p.m.

August 17: Copy deadline for September *Bede's Journal*

Note: Most committee meetings and parish events are being conducted virtually via Zoom.

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Introducing Rev. Martha

Dear People of St. Bede's,

After having spoken with your Vestry and other leaders in the community, I have grown very excited and honored to be called as your Interim Rector. It is clear that, even in the midst of the pandemic, you all love one another and care for one another, and that the Holy Spirit is in your midst. I have also been inspired by the ways in which you – again, despite the pandemic – care for members of the wider community, and seek out ways to be Christ's hands in the world.

The time between rectors is a liminal time. This "in between" time can heighten the challenges already within the community, but it can also heighten the holiness already within the community, by placing the emphasis of the community's attention on following the call of the Holy Spirit. I believe that a good Interim Rector does two things: a good Interim Rector helps the community "lean into" what are already its strengths as a way of claiming its identity, and also, a good Interim Rector walks alongside the community as they discern the Spirit's call. My goal is to support you, strengthen your self-understanding, maintain the beautiful worship you have, and your commitment to lifelong Christian formation and service to others, and also, to offer gatherings (that are safe) and opportunities for learning, so that the community can come together and learn how to articulate your identity and the gifts you hope to find in your next rector. And we will pray. We will pray for guidance for the Search Committee; we will pray for the discernment of those who submit their names for consideration to be your next rector; and we will pray for the Vestry as they make the final call.

You are already in my prayers, and I look forward to walking with you through this part of your community's journey.

God bless,

Martha Korienek+
revmartha@stbedesmenlopark.org
(650) 427-0719

Martha would love to get to know as many parishioners as possible – even if in-person meetings aren't possible yet.

Please call Martha at (650) 427-0719 or drop her a note at revmartha@stbedesmenlopark.org to set up a personal meeting.

Upcoming Parish Events

Feeding Our Unhoused Neighbors

In response to this request from LifeMoves, "*There continues to be a great need for donations and dinners to help sustain unhoused families,*" St. Bede's has responded with an ambitious "Yes We Can!" We have stepped up to prepare a home-cooked dinner for 135 individuals at the First Steps for Family Shelter on Saturday, July 25.

The entire LifeMoves program is a great success story in these times of COVID-19: while practicing strict social distancing, to date, they have had only two incidences, one staff, one client, in all of their shelters. Let's help them keep up the good work caring for our unhoused neighbors!

New this quarter, parishioners from Trinity Church will be joining us in preparing and delivering food to the shelter. Because COVID-19 health and safety protocols prevent us from working together in the kitchen at St. Bede's, our volunteers will shop for groceries and prepare food at home. And, as volunteers are not able to serve meals at their facility, we will prepare the meal and deliver everything to be served by staff at First Step. The Sartors have generously offered their home as the central intake point for all prepared food and beverages on July 25. The caravan to LifeMoves will leave from their house for the First Step facility at 5 p.m.

LifeMoves has also requested donations of yard games such as jump ropes, hula hoops, playground balls and other supplies for the shelter's play space. As of this writing, volunteers are still needed for ingathering of meals, preparing flowers or other table decorations and driving our donations to the First Step facility. If you can help with any of these, please call Vicki Blayney at (734) 709-8703 or sign up via Sign-Up Genius.

August Selection for Bede's Book Club

For the Book Club's August meeting on **Wednesday, August 5**, the selected book is *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor. The renowned and beloved *New York Times* bestselling author recounts her moving discoveries of finding the sacred in unexpected places while teaching the world's religions to undergraduates in rural Georgia, revealing how God delights in confounding our expectations. The Book Club meets at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom; contact Laura Gable at lwgable@hotmail.com for a meeting invite.

Vestry View

This periodic report on the Vestry's actions and decisions is part of our commitment to serving the St. Bede's community. Following is a brief recap of key issues discussed and actions taken at the June Vestry meeting.

Church finances. Julie Backlund officially became St. Bede's treasurer this month, following Hal Louchheim's 20 years of services in that role. Vestry passed a special resolution honoring Hal for his service to the church. Julie presented a review of our May financial statements as well as a revised budget for the balance of this year. The new budget takes into account reduced spending in some key areas, in part because of the pandemic, as well as revised projections for pledge income this year.

Search Committee report. Co-Chairs Sue Sartor and Doug Blayney joined the June meeting to present two documents critical to our search process: the parish profile and Office of Transition Ministry (OTM) narrative. These documents, along with the job description reviewed and approved by Vestry last month, provide prospective applicants with the information they need about St. Bede's to consider applying for the rector's position. Both documents were approved by Vestry and St. Bede's position was posted to the Diocesan website and our website on June 22.

Recommendations on clergy housing. Van Jepson provided Vestry with an update from the Ad Hoc Housing Committee on options the committee has explored. The committee recommends two viable options for providing local housing for our incoming rector. The first option is for the rector to make use of current Federal tax law, which allows them to declare a portion of their income as a housing allowance, and thus avoid income taxes on that amount. (This option has been used by past rectors at St. Bede's.) The second option is to explore the lease or purchase of a home or condominium in Menlo Park or a nearby community. Knowing that the cost of housing will be important to anyone applying for our position – particularly if the candidate is coming from out of state – Vestry voted to continue to focus our efforts on these two options.

New welcome statement. Vicki Blayney and Nancy Stork presented a revised welcome statement which was approved by Vestry:

Welcome to St. Bede's

In song and sermon, prayer and practice, we seek to renew our ancient traditions in light of the modern world. We affirm the transformative power of God's word and Jesus' call to active charity.

*Whoever you are, and wherever you find yourself on your journey of faith,
please join us today in fellowship. You are our most welcome guest!*

Senior Warden's report. Anne Vitullo reported that we have received the reopening guidelines from the Diocesan COVID-19 team, which require us to develop a detailed plan for reopening for in-person worship. As follow-up to a special Vestry meeting on June 9 to interview Rev. Martha Korienek to serve as our Interim Rector, Anne reported that she would soon be sending a letter to Rev. Korienek to officially extend the offer.

Junior Warden's report. Brendan Deocariza-Nee reported that his new biweekly newsletter for the Children's and Youth Program is getting some positive engagement from families in the parish. Brendan will add all Vestry members to the e-mail so that we may share it with others who may be interested.

Community Outreach. Vicki Blayney outlined plans for the LifeMoves dinner on July 25. We will be preparing dinner for 135 individuals at one of their local shelter.

The business of the church continues to hum along, thanks to the continuing efforts of Vestry members and other volunteer leaders who have adapted to new ways of doing things. I'm grateful for all of you.

– *Anne Vitullo, Senior Warden*

Report on the June 27 Deanery Meeting

The Deanery of the Peninsula met for the first time this year on June 27. For those unfamiliar with the intricacies of the Episcopal Church, Deaneries are gatherings of local parish representatives in specific regions of the Diocese. The Deanery structure enables neighboring parishes to share information and concerns peculiar to a local geographical area. St. Bede's is a member of the Deanery of the Peninsula. We include a wide variety of parishes and missions from Pacifica to Los Altos. Deaneries in our Diocese have traditionally met four times a year.

Some of the key areas in which Deaneries play a role are:

- Reviewing and discussing the Diocesan Budget prior to the annual Diocesan Convention,
- Participating in the preparation of Resolutions for the Convention (in the past, St. Bede's has successfully authored one resolution supported by the Deanery with successful passage at Diocesan Convention),
- Nominating individuals for Diocesan offices,
- Supporting our mission activities (recently the Deanery used some of its treasury funds to buy new chairs for Holy Family in Half Moon Bay), and
- Sharing information on best practices that have contributed to local parish life.

The June 27th meeting was held as a virtual picnic. Rev. Eric Metoyer from the Diocese presented us with general information on how Bishop Marc Andrus plans to approach reopening sanctuaries. The Bishop has now issued guidelines for parishes within the Diocese. Gatherings are not required at this time. This is, in part, due to differing county requirements on attendance numbers, cleaning and other safety concerns. Since the Deanery of the Peninsula covers several counties, each parish can work within the rules their county of residence requires. At this time, 50% of the parishes in the Deanery have submitted their plans to the Diocese.

Individual parishes within the Deanery shared their responses to the sanctuary closure in March. Some smaller congregations joined resources in presenting online worship. A majority of parishes have merged two services into one. The learning curve on virtual worship has proven successful for all parishes involved. In numerous cases, new virtual attendees have appeared from a wide variety of locations both within and outside of the Deanery and Diocese. Although some of these attendees were members who have moved out of the area, others are totally new. The general consensus was that, even after reopening, most parishes would continue their virtual services as part of a wider outreach. Virtual worship has either maintained attendance or, in at least one case, increased it. As a mission outreach this is a new and unexplored arena. For example, St. Mark's Palo Alto now offers virtual evening Compline every day with good attendance results.

In the sharing of individual parish activity, St. Bede's was happy to report our successful use of virtual choir and organ presentations as part of our Sunday worship. In addition we were able to report continuation of our book discussion group and a virtual fundraising event.

Several parishes expressed serious interest in improving virtual coffee hour. Trinity Menlo Park has had some success in setting up a Sunday coffee hour at 3 p.m. instead of having it immediately follow the morning service. Trinity Menlo Park also gave a very good summary of its situation concerning the embezzlement proceedings regarding Rev. Dutton-Gillette.

In other matters, the Deanery approved giving \$1,000 to Second Harvest to help those in desperate need of food supplies. Deanery will meet again in August.

– *Michael Graebner, Deanery Delegate*

A Few Short 🎵🎵🎵🎵: Music at St. Bede's This Summer

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- 🎵 The Arts at St. Bede's series will be on hiatus for the remainder of 2020, as we wait and watch to see when our community will be ready for public concerts to resume once more. We hope to be able to announce a slate of 2021 performances by mid-autumn.

 - 🎵 The choir is taking a summer break from weekly Zoom rehearsals, but has decided to meet virtually for social gatherings on the first Wednesdays of July and August.

 - 🎵 Rani will be on vacation the first two weeks of August, while Kathy will be taking some vacation time in September.

 - 🎵 Using the *Spire* app as well as music-edition software *Audacity*, organ solos, hymns and anthems are being recorded weekly for our Sunday Zoom services. From the organ at St. Bede's to singers in Sunnyvale, San Francisco, Mountain View and beyond, m4a files make the rounds each week and come back to enliven and illuminate our worship.

 - 🎵 You don't need to be a choir member to contribute music to our summer worship services. Any singer or instrumentalist who'd like to offer their talent and is willing to pre-record music for Sunday services is encouraged to contact music director Katherine McKee at kmckee@stbedesmenlopark.org.
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– *Katherine McKee, Music Director*

Celebrations: July Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

4	Cristina Harris
8	Ann Mason
8	Nancy Stork
10	Jeffie Kopczynski
20	Clark Barrett
20	Curtis Grisham
21	Ray Ross
25	Isabel Gable
29	J. Jeff Badger

Anniversaries:

6	Jon & Julie Backlund
13	Doug & Vicki Blayney

Please let the parish office know if you are celebrating a birthday or anniversary this month!

St. Bede's Episcopal Church

2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, CA. 94025 • (650) 854-6555 • www.stbedesmenlopark.com

Sunday Services: Morning Prayer, 9:30 a.m. on Zoom

Vestry

Deb Blackmore
Vicki Blayney
Carol Brink
Van Jepson
Irene Lawrence
Nancy Stork
Anne Vitullo, Senior Warden
Dick Zeren

Staff

Rev. Martha Korienek, Interim Rector
Brendan Deocariza-Nee, Children's
and Youth Minister
Katherine McKee, Music Director
Rani Fischer, Organist
Siri Huntoon, Parish Administrator
Angela Sherry, Bookkeeper

Committee Chairs and Volunteer Leaders

Altar Guild: Deb Blackmore,
Elaine Kreigh and Sue Sartor, Captains
Buildings and Grounds: Jon Backlund, Chair
Community Outreach: Sue Sartor, Liz Bellock,
Deb Blackmore, Vicki Blayney and Angela Sherry
Finance: Julie Backlund, Treasurer;
Michelle Swenson, Assistant Treasurer
Hospitality: Laura Gable, Helen Greenwood
and Kathy Thompson, Captains
Search: Doug Blayney and Sue Sartor, Co-Chairs
Deanery delegates: Laura Gable and Michael
Graebner