



ST. PETER'S
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

302 MERCHANTS AVE.
FORT ATKINSON, WI 920-563-3889



We have received some great news from the Standing Committee. The guidelines have relaxed a bit and we will soon offer an in-person Sunday Service! The letter from the Standing Committee is below.

Before we can meet in person, there are some decisions to make and steps to take. When we envisioned regathering, we never envisioned a thirty-minute time limit. We need a bit of time to plan and regroup. I will be working with the Vestry and Task Force on a system for RSVPing for services, determining what time we will offer services, and making sure that we have everything in place to keep you safe.

We are still committed to provide our digital livestream services weekly. These services will remain important, as our guidelines do not allow for congregational singing and the 30 minute time limit would not even allow for instrumental music. To have a service that is closer to "normal," allow for hymns and music, continue to have sustained online presence, and a worship option for those not comfortable meeting in person, our virtual service will remain vital.

Please take the time to read the letter from the Standing Committee. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the vestry.

I look forward to seeing many of you very soon. -Mother Mindy

March 4, 2021

Dear friends,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many have us have endured one of the hardest years in our lives in the 50 weeks since we ceased most in-person gatherings in the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee. We have done something that has been extraordinarily difficult to demonstrate God's love to the elderly and the medically vulnerable in our midst. And while the need to take basic precautions, wear masks and socially distance in gatherings will remain for a time, it has become apparent to the Standing Committee that we can now change tactics and respond to the situation facing our churches somewhat differently.

We are writing today to tell you that the Standing Committee is deeply aware of the pain that many of the parishioners and clergy in our parishes are experiencing as a result of our current situation. The choice to have very tight criteria for in-person gatherings over the last year, born out of a desire to protect the vulnerable and to respect the dignity of every human being, has kept people safe from the virus, but you have clearly communicated with us the poignant, tender and difficult ways our decisions have impacted you and your parish communities.

Our role as the Standing Committee is not only to keep our communities safe from the virus, which, together with the Way Forward Task Force, we will continue to work hard to do. We also have to balance the need to keep people safe from the virus with the grief, loss, need and hurt that are being experienced by many people in our churches today. We are thankful to the Way Forward Task Force



THE STANDING COMMITTEE
Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee

members for their ministry over the last year and for their continued work on our behalf in this next season. In faithful love and service to all of us, they have kept us safe, and they are committed to helping us regather as safely as it is possible to do so.

After hearing from so many of you, and after consulting with the Way Forward Task Force and receiving substantial input and feedback from them, we are pleased to inform you that Standing Committee is issuing a new set of Returning to Public Worship Guidelines effective the Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 14.

These guidelines, which are found here, contain the following major changes:

The guidelines raise our risk tolerance and change our thresholds for indoor gatherings such that at this time, every parish in the diocese will be able to meet with at least 10 people indoors and parishes in most counties will be able to meet with 25 people indoors (or whatever lesser number their maximum capacity with social distancing is);

The guidelines lay out a process by which parishes may use a given space for worship multiple times in one day with some pre-work on ventilation and HVAC systems;

The guidelines streamline the process of obtaining approval from the Way Forward Taskforce for the resumption of worship services so that it is less cumbersome.

In addition to these changes, we'd like to remind you that in the last edition of the guidelines, released in early February, restrictions on the number of people gathered outdoors were removed, making it possible for all parishes to offer outdoor gatherings with as many people as will fit provided they are spaced at 6' or greater.

We will continue to use the Regathering Risk Assessment Dashboard to keep track of the number of cases of the virus in our communities. You will notice changes to that interface that reflect the changes in the guidelines. The Way Forward Taskforce continues to update that Dashboard every day. This tool continues to be invaluable to the Standing Committee and to the churches of the diocese.

This is a moment to celebrate, even as we continue to have some restrictions in place. We have been doing what love requires, and it has been very difficult. Now we will begin to gather together again, to bear one another's burdens, to mourn with those who mourn, to comfort the afflicted, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor: that the One who God raised from the dead is the One who has brought us safely to this day and will bring us safely to that day when there shall be no more crying or pain when all things will be made new, when all will be well and all manner of things shall be well.

We are so grateful for your prayers for us as we lead the diocese in this season, and please be assured of our daily prayers for you.

In the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ,

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Milwaukee

The Rev. Scott Leannah, President

Ms. Margaret Done

Ms. Celia Fine

The Rev. Andrew Jones

Ms. Tammy Prather

The Rev. Jana Troutman-Miller

Mr. Marcus White

The Rev. Dave Mowers



Daylight Savings Time reminder:

March 14—Set your clocks ahead!



Slow Sunrise

by Kimberly Knowle-Zeller

This past month my son, Isaac, received a new bed. It was time for him to move out of his crib and into a big boy bed. We've had some short nights, lots of trips to the bathroom, and a few thumps as he's fallen to the floor. One morning at 4 am (I'm not sure this even counts as morning) I hear Isaac talking to himself. I find him awake and alert playing with his stuffed animals and blankets. "I'm playing library, mommy. My workers are busy."

Even at 4 am, it's hard not to smile at his imagination. "I know buddy, but it's still time for sleep."

"But I'm not tired." He tells me.

I'm determined to get a few more hours of sleep, so I hop in his bed and tell him to come sleep with me. We lay together for a few minutes, he keeps telling me about his library and workers and what needs to get done, he also repeats that he's not tired. Finally, as he rubs his eyes, he tells me,

"Leave."

The next morning over breakfast, I ask Isaac why he got up so early. He lifts his arms up and with exasperation says, "**The sun is taking so long to come up.**"

I know what he means. Perhaps you do, too. Maybe you're waiting for the chance to safely see your family and give a hug. Maybe you're looking forward to being in person again for worship. Maybe you're excited for the day your kids will be back in school. Maybe you simply want a break, or relief, or a moment alone. Maybe you're wondering how your mental health will survive more tension and uncertainty.

"The sun is taking so long to come up."

It feels like the sun may never come up. And if it does, we wonder if we'll have the strength to see it.

As we enter a new month, I invite you to sit with your feelings. The waiting. The lament. Let them wash over you. It's holy and necessary. It's a faithful response to this world and our place in it. It allows us to know the power of light once we've settled in the darkness.

Maybe for you in this darkness you're like Isaac and inviting someone to be with you. Maybe you

(continued on p. 4)

feel even more lonely. Wherever you are, however you feel, you're not alone. God is with you. God is holding you. God is sitting with you in the darkness.

God is bringing forth the light.

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:78 NRSV).

Kimberly Knowle-Zeller is an ordained ELCA pastor, mother of two, and spouse of an ELCA pastor. She lives with her family in Cole Camp, MO. You can read more at her [website](#), follow her work on [Facebook](#), or [sign up for her monthly newsletter](#).



Lay Eucharistic Leaders Schedule

March 14

Lector: Eda Wilson

A/V Technician: Bob Krumm

March 21

Lector: Randy Ridout

AV Technician: Bob Krumm

March 28—Palm Sunday

Lector: Laurie McHenry

AV Technician: Breck McHenry

This Week at St. Peter's

Sunday, March 14

10:00 AM Sunday Worship
(Live Streamed on YouTube)

5:00 PM Evening Prayer
(On YouTube)

Tuesday, March 16

6:00 PM The Screwtape Letters Book Study
(On Zoom)

Wednesday, March 17

6:00 PM Vestry Meeting
(On Zoom)

Words of Thanks

This week we received a Thanksgiving postcard in the mail from a parishioner stating:

"This Thanksgiving I am thankful for "my family!"

We are grateful to continue to receive these responses—so keep them coming.

A Thank You card came in the mail.....

"Mother Mindy—Just a quick note to express our sincere gratitude as recipients of the **Agape Essential Care Program**. Literally, the day after you dropped off the hygiene products, we had a student come in that needed help. Please know that we are thankful for Outreach programs such as yours and will not hesitate to contact you for future needs. Kind Regards, Student Services, Fort Atkinson High School

PRAYERS

- Parishioner Cycle of Prayer - Cole Jones and Carmen Garcés
- Ministry Rotation Prayer - Hospitality
- For those who are sick: Kitty Martin, Jerry Swanson, Jack Schark, Bev Wille, Marilou Haight, Gary Allen, Vickie Davis
- Happy Birthday Eda Wilson and Doris Middlebrooks
- Diocesan search for next Bishop
- Prayer for difficult times (coronavirus)



To add someone to the parish prayer list, please e-mail the office at:

office@stpetersfort.org, or contact Eda Wilson, our prayer net coordinator, edesw2@gmail.com.

If you someone you know and love has Covid-19 we would like to pray for them. Please email Eda and she will add their name to the prayer list.

This prayer was developed by the Diocesan Standing Committee to pray as the search for our next Bishop progresses:

Gracious and loving God in whom we live and move and have our being, We pray for your guidance and wisdom that we may faithfully follow your calling in our own lives and as we as the Diocese of Milwaukee discern the calling of our twelfth bishop. We give you thanks for the service of Bishop Steven Miller in the life of our diocese and for the blessings that marked his ministry among us. We also pray for his family during this time of transition. We pray for those whom you have called to serve on our Standing, Search, and Transition Committees, and we pray also for those who will respond to your call to enter into discernment with us to be our next bishop. Give us all listening and prayerful hearts for this most important task. This we ask in the name of the One who said, "Come, follow me." Amen.

Prayer for a Time of Pandemic Illness:

O God, our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, in this challenging and uncertain time of global pandemic and public health crisis, we come before you offering our prayers on behalf of those in need, the Church and the world. For all affected by the coronavirus pandemic around the world.

For the leaders of the nations that they may work together for the common good as the outbreak spreads. May barriers that divide be brought down and bonds of trust strengthened, to benefit the entire human family.

Grant to our nation and its leaders, public health officials and government the will to act swiftly and decisively, with wisdom and compassion.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen.

LENTEN MID-WEEK ECUMENICAL SERVICES

Each week a new link is sent out in an email for you to participate virtually in an ecumenical Lenten Service.



March 17 is hosted by:
Grace United Church

March 24 is hosted by:
The First Congregational Church

VINCENT DE PAUL—HELPER OF THE POOR, 27 Sept. 1660

Vincent de Paul was born in Gascony in about 1580, of peasant stock. He was an intelligent lad, and his father sent him off to be educated. He was ordained at twenty, and at first was interested chiefly in a successful career. But when he was thirty, he accepted a post as chaplain and tutor in the household of Philip de Gondi, Count of Joigny. This brought him into contact with the peasants on the Gondi estate, and he became concerned for their needs, physical and spiritual. A peasant who believed himself to be dying confessed to him that his previous confessions for many years had been dishonest. Vincent began to preach in the local church on confession, repentance, forgiveness, and the love of God. His sermons drew such crowds of penitents that he had to call in a group of other priests to assist him. He took on the pastorate of a neighboring church attended by a more fashionable and aristocratic crowd, and there he likewise drew many of his listeners to repentance and amendment of life. Returning to Paris, he worked among the prisoners destined for the galleys who were being held at the Conciergerie.



In 1625 he established the Congregation of the Mission (now known as the Vincentians, or the Lazarists), a community of priests who undertook to renounce all ecclesiastical advancement and devote themselves to work in the small towns and villages of France. In an age not noted for "interdenominational courtesy," he instructed his missionaries that Protestants were to be treated as brothers, with respect and love, without patronage or condescension or contentiousness. Wealthy men and women came to him, expressing a wish to amend their lives, and he organized them into a Confraternity of Charity, and set them to work caring for the poor and sick in hospitals and in home visits. In 1633 the Archbishop of Paris gave him the Priory of St Lazare as a headquarters. There he offered retreats six times a year for those who were preparing for the ministry. These lasted two weeks each, and each involved about eighty students. He then began to offer similar retreats for laypersons of all classes and widely varying backgrounds. He said (identifying Lazarus of the Parable with Lazarus of Bethany):

"This house was formerly used as a retreat for lepers, and not One of them was cured. Now it is used to receive sinners, who are sick men covered with spiritual leprosy, but are cured by the grace of God. Nay, rather, they are dead men brought back to life. What a joy it is to think that the house of St Lazare is a house of resurrection! Lazarus, after he had been four days in the tomb, came out alive, and our Lord who raised him up still gives the same grace to many who, after staying here some days as in the grave of Lazarus, come out with a new life."

Out of his Confraternity of Charity there arose an order of nuns called the Daughters (or Sisters) of Charity, devoted to nursing those who were sick and poor. He said of them, "Their convent is the sick-room, their chapel the parish church, their cloister the streets of the city." Many babies were abandoned in Paris every year, and when Vincent saw some of them, he established an orphanage for them, and thereafter often wandered through the slums, looking in corners for abandoned babies, which he carried back to the orphanage.

He complained to the King that ecclesiastical posts were distributed simply as political favors, and that the spiritual qualifications of the appointees were simply ignored. The King responded by creating a Council of Conscience to remedy the matter, with Vincent at the head. On one occasion, a noblewoman of the court, furious with Vincent because he refused to nominate her son for a position as bishop, threw a stool at him. He left the room with a stream of blood pouring from his forehead, and said to a companion who was waiting for him, "Is it not wonderful how strong a mother's love for her son can be?" He died 27 September 1660. by James Kiefer.

Source: http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/vincent_de_paul.htm

LOUISE DE MARILLAC—MONASTIC, WORKER OF CHARITY, 1660

Louise de Marillac DC, (August 12, 1591 – March 15, 1660) was the co-founder, with Vincent de Paul, of the Daughters of Charity. She was born out of wedlock near Le Meux, in Picardy. She never knew her mother, but Louis de Marillac, Lord of Ferrières (1556-1604), claimed her as his natural daughter yet not his legal heir.

When she was 22, her uncle arranged for her to marry Antoine Le Gras, secretary to Queen Marie. Antoine was an ambitious young man who seemed destined for great accomplishments. Louise and Antoine were wed in the fashionable Church of St. Gervaise on February 5, 1613. In October, the couple had their only child, Michel. Louise grew to love Antoine and was an attentive mother to their son. Along with being devoted to her family, Louise was also active in ministry in her parish. She had a leading role in the Ladies of Charity, an organization of wealthy women dedicated to assisting those suffering from poverty and disease.

Antoine contracted a chronic illness and eventually became bedridden. Louise vowed not to remarry if her husband died before her. She also believed that she had received the insight that she would be guided to a new spiritual director whose face she was shown. When she happened to meet Vincent de Paul, she recognized him as the priest from her vision.

In 1625, Antoine died. Widowed and lacking financial means, she had to move. Vincent lived near her new dwelling. His work needed many more helpers, especially ones who were peasants themselves and so would be closer to the poor. He also needed someone who could teach and organize them. In 1629, Vincent invited Louise to become involved in his work with the Confraternities of Charity. She found great success in these endeavors. In 1632, she became convinced that it was time to intensify her ministry with poor and needy persons.

Louise found the help she needed in young, humble country women, who had the energy and the proper attitude to deal with people weighed down by destitution and suffering. She began working with a group of them and saw a need for common life and formation. Consequently, she invited four country girls to live in her home in the Rue des Fosses-Saint-Victor and began training them to care for those in need.

Mobility was a major innovation. The Daughters of Charity were unlike other established religious communities, whose religious women were behind cloister walls in a monastery and performed a ministry of contemplative prayer. "Love the poor and honor them as you would honor Christ Himself," Louise explained. That was the foundation of the Company of the Daughters of Charity, which received official approbation in 1655.

Louise led the Company of Daughters until her death. After increasingly ill health, she died six months before the death of her dear friend and mentor, Vincent de Paul. She was 68, and the Daughters of Charity had more than 40 houses in France. The nuns have always been held in high repute and have a presence in all parts of the world.

Source: http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/vincent_de_paul.htm



March 10, 2021 Newsletter

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

302 Merchants Avenue

Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Return Service Requested



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CHURCH**

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Rector: Mother Mindy
Valentine Davis

ST. PETER'S MISSION STATEMENT

To Lead Each Person into a Living Relationship with Jesus Christ,
Train Them as Disciples, and Make Jesus Known to Others.