



ST. PETER'S  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH

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## Epiphany 2021: A Call to Prayer for our Nation from Presiding Bishop Curry

[January 6, 2021] On this day of the Feast of the Epiphany, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invites Episcopalians and people of faith to turn and pray on behalf of our nation.

A transcript of the statement follows:

Today is January the 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. It is the Feast of the Epiphany. And on this particular day at this particular moment, even as our nation's capital is being endangered and assaulted, we pray that the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that God, in his Way of Love, might prevail in all of our hearts.

The events at our Capitol today are deeply disturbing. We believe the actions of armed protesters represent a coup attempt. We are a democracy, with long-standing institutional norms that must be honored, foremost among them, following the processes laid out in the Constitution and Federal statute to facilitate the peaceful and orderly transition of power.

Today's protesters pushed through police barricades and forced their way into Congressional chambers, and the Capitol building are now threatened, and threatening the safety of lawmakers, their staff, and others who work in the Capitol complex. This threatens the integrity of our democracy. The national security of our nation, the continuity of government, and the lives and safety of our legislators, their staffs, law enforcement, and all who work in the Capitol. I, therefore, ask you now to join me in prayer for our nation, praying first from the prayers that accompany Morning Prayer:

*Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;*

*Govern and uphold us now and always.*

*Day by day we bless you;*

*We praise your name forever.*

*Lord, keep us from sin today;*

*Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.*

*Lord, show us your love and mercy;*

*For we put our trust in you.*

*In you, Lord, is our hope;*

*And we shall never hope in vain.*

*-Morning Prayer II, Book of Common Prayer, p. 98*

*(Continued on page 3)*



Let us pray:

*Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered together under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one God and Creator of us all; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever.*

- *For Peace, Book of Common Prayer, p. 815*

*Oh God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your son. Look now with compassion on the entire human family; and particularly this part of the family, in the United States, and those in our nation's capital; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

- *For the Human Family, Book of Common Prayer, p. 815*

On this day and at this moment, we pray for our nation. We ask God to heal us, to show us the way to healing, to show us the way to be one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

*Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power and the glory,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.*

And now, may the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be on you and on this nation and on the entire human family and all of creation this moment and forevermore. Amen.

Source: <https://www.episcopalcafe.com/ens-presiding-bishop-condemns-coup-attempt-at-us-capitol/>

We are joining Trinity Lutheran Church in collecting toothbrushes during January for the Food Pantry. This is a great opportunity to support the work of our brothers and sisters in Christ and our neighbors. Toothbrushes can be dropped off here at the church with “no contact” and we will deliver them to Trinity. Thank You!



## Exciting News!!!

## Christmas 2020

I have exciting news that Angie Hoffman is the newest member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church! On Christmas Day I recorded her baptism into the Church Register and she is officially one of us.

Angie shared this poem with me about the experience and gave permission for us to print it in the newsletter. I hope you are as blessed by it as I was.

- Mother Mindy

That Christmas morning was so bitter cold  
I sat alone in the small church with the red  
doors  
candles glowing  
incense lifting off the altar  
I received holy communion  
My name, etched in the big book  
declaring my belonging to this family  
The most precious gift  
to receive and be received  
This year so long and lonely  
ended with my heart full

-Angie Hoffman-

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### How do I become a member of an Episcopal Church?

I love the answer that *The Episcopal Handbook* gives to this question, which is, "Just show up." And really, that's the easiest answer. If you start showing up and keep showing up to church, we'll consider you ours before too long and will be happy and blessed to have you! However, there are a couple of different ways to become an official member.

**Baptism** – if you have not been baptized, then receiving the sacrament of Baptism will make you a full member of the church.

**Recording a Previous Baptism in the Church Register** – Since we believe in one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, if you are baptized in any tradition in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that counts as good for us. We can record your baptism in the Church Register and you will be official. You'll need a baptismal certificate for this. No baptismal certificate? We can call the church where you were baptized and request the register. If all else fails, we can do a conditional baptism, where we say, "If you are not already baptized, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Traditionally though, when one joins the Episcopal Church as a teenager or an adult, they are confirmed or received.

**Confirmation and Reception** – Our Canons and Book of Common Prayer state that one should make a mature statement of faith. In the Episcopal Church, we typically do that through Confirmation. Confirmation is the Sacrament where we commit to baptismal promises and a way of life in Christ. The bishop lays his hands on confirmands, prays over them, and asks the Holy Spirit to continue to work in and through them.

-If you have been baptized but not confirmed, then we encourage you to become confirmed as part of your joining the church.

-If you have been baptized and confirmed, but not confirmed by a Bishop, confirmation would be appropriate.

-If you have been confirmed already in a tradition where a Bishop confirmed you, then we invite you to be received into the church. You will reaffirm the baptismal promises, but have the bishop receive you.

Our bishop is a sign of the unity of the universal (catholic with a small c) church. It is fitting that the bishop confirm or receive new members.

If you have questions, or if you are interested in Baptism, Confirmation, or Reception, please let me know and I will joyfully have a conversation with you about all of it.

-Mother Mindy

## CONFESSION OF PETER THE APOSTLE (18 JAN NT)

On 18 January we remember how the Apostle Peter was led by God's grace to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ (Matthew 16:13-20), and we join with Peter, and with all Christians everywhere, in hailing Jesus as our Lord, God, and Savior.

### ACTS 4:8-13

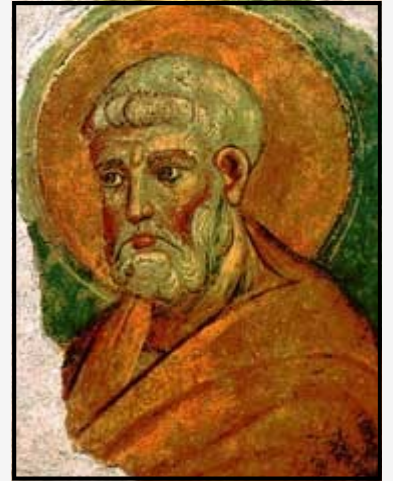
Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,\* whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

This Jesus is

"the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;  
it has become the cornerstone."\*

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.'

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.

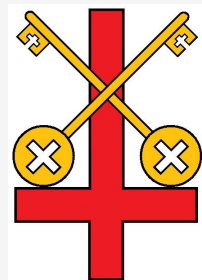


### MATTHEW 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

### PRAYER

Almighty Father, who inspired Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God: Keep your Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



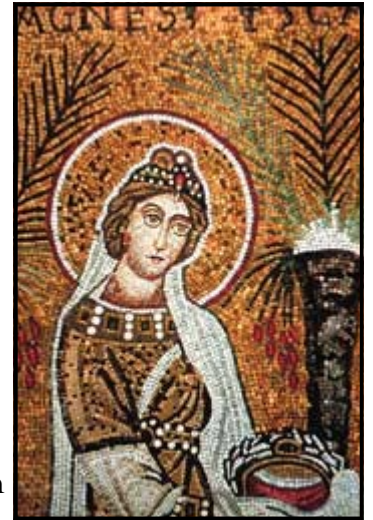
## AGNES OF ROME - MARTYR (21 JAN 304)

Agnes is a Christian martyr who died at Rome around 304 in the persecution of Diocletian: the last and fiercest of the persecutions of Christianity by the Roman emperors. The anniversary of her martyrdom is observed on 21 January. Her name means “pure” in Greek and “lamb” in Latin. She is said to have been only about twelve or thirteen when she died, and the remains preserved in St Agnes' Church in Rome are in agreement with this. It is said that her execution shocked many Romans and helped bring an end to the persecutions.

Some said, “It is contrary to Roman law to put a virgin to death. Our leaders say that it is necessary to kill Christians in order to preserve the old Roman ways: but they are themselves scorning those ways in the process.”

Others said, “Do young girls constitute such a threat to Rome that it is necessary to kill them?”

Others said, “If this religion can enable a twelve-year-old girl to meet death without fear, it is worth checking out.”



There is a narrative poem by Keats, called “The Eve of Saint Agnes.” It is a romantic poem with a mediaeval setting, about an elopement the night before St Agnes' Day. The only tie-in with Agnes is that (presumably because she died as a young virgin), Agnes is regarded as the patron of young unmarried girls, and there is a folk-belief that a girl who goes to bed supperless on the eve of St Agnes's Day will dream that night about her husband-to-be.

*by James Kiefer*

## CECILIA OF ROME – MARTYR AT ROME, c. 280

Saint Cecilia (Latin: Sancta Caecilia) is the patron saint of musicians and Church music because as she was dying she sang to God. It was long supposed that she was a noble lady of Rome who, with her husband Valerian, his brother Tiburtius, and a Roman soldier Maximus, suffered martyrdom, c. 230, under the Emperor Alexander Severus.

The research of Giovanni Battista de Rossi, however, appears to confirm the statement of Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers (d. 600), that she perished in Sicily under Emperor Marcus Aurelius between 176 and 180.

The martyrdom of Cecilia is said to have followed that of her husband and his brother by the prefect Turcius Almachius. The officers of the prefect then sought to have Cecilia killed as well. At that time, the officials attempted to kill her by boiling her alive. However, the attempt failed, and she was to be beheaded. The executioner attempted to decapitate her three times unsuccessfully, at which time he fled. Cecilia survived another three days before succumbing. In the last three days of her life, she opened her eyes, gazed at her family and friends who crowded around her cell, closed them, and never opened them again. The people by her cell knew immediately that she was to become a saint in heaven.



Source: <http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/Agnes&cecilia.html>





## **Proclaiming** by Linda Buskirk

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” – Mark 1:1

This is not a headline nor a subtitle. It is a proclamation that the stories about to be related are about THE savior, God’s own son.

Biblical scholars tell us Mark was writing for Christian believers living in Rome, the epicenter of an empire that recognized the emperor as a god. It was good news indeed to be assured that this Jesus for whom they were risking their lives was truly God, not another human invention.

“I am going to start with the main point,” Mark seems to be thinking as he picks up his writing instrument, “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

Scholars also tell us that Mark likely got his info from Peter’s preaching. Peter, who as a disciple sometimes blurted out wild guesses, got one big thing right. When Jesus asked him, “Who do you say I am?” Peter proclaimed, “You are the Messiah.” (Mark 8:29)

All of which begs the question for each of us: Who do YOU say Jesus is?

Is he past or present? Is he sage or savior? Are his humanity and his deity both relevant? If the government tried to push God away and persecute you for worshipping Jesus, would you cave or proclaim him as your King? Does the altar you prepared in your Advent heart still have a sweet baby from a manger snuggled in it, or did it bounce him out when he grew up and started explaining what the Kingdom of God was all about? Do you believe Jesus’ assurance that you are beloved as God’s own child even if your faith struggles with these questions?

May God bless our struggling, our seeking, and our proclaiming: This is good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

Source: <https://www.ecfvp.org/blogs/3849/proclaiming#jump>

## PRAYERS

- Parishioner Cycle of Prayer - Barbara Elwood
- Ministry Rotation Prayer - Music Scholars. Pray that we will be able to gather in person and have our "choir kids" with us before too long.
- For those who are sick: Kitty Martin, Jerry Swanson, Jack Scharck, Bev Wille, Marilou Haight
- 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](mailto:office@stpetersfort.org), or contact Eda Wilson, our prayer net coordinator, [edesw2@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

Our 2021 Offering Envelopes came in a little late this year, but they are now available. Please let me know if you would like to have yours delivered to your house by mail, or if you would like to pick it up yourself. If you call in advance I can have it ready for you out on the bench or just inside the door for "no contact pick-up". Thank You!

January 15, 2021 Newsletter

**ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

302 Merchants Avenue

Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Return Service Requested



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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.