

The VOICE



Summer 2020

REOPENING OUR CHURCH

On Tuesday, June 2, Darren Miller, the Senior Warden, received the “Diocesan Guidelines for Parishes during the Coronavirus Pandemic.” The Bishop has authorized the reopening of church buildings for services for no more than 25% of building capacity provided the diocesan guidelines are followed.

With a combined effort by the wardens, ushers, parish administrative assistant and our parish cleaner, we were able to come back to our beautiful church for services beginning on June 14th. Here are the changes you will see:

Entry

- Do not enter if you are ill or have been in contact with someone who is ill.
- A mask is required at all times.
- An usher will sanitize your hands upon entry.
- We require your name and contact information.
- Sorry, no bathrooms available.

Offering

Collection plates are at the rear of the church; thanks for dropping your envelope there!

Bulletins

Are in the pews.

Seating

- 8 am – sit in pews *with* blue tape.
- 10 am – sit in pews *with purple* tape.

Peace

6’ apart - No touching – bow, sign, wave.

Communion

- Please follow ushers’ instructions.
- Begins with people at the rear of the church.
- Distinct households remain 6’ apart.
- An usher will sanitize your hands just before you receive.
- Only host will be distributed (sorry no wine).
- For communion, hold out your hands.
- For a blessing, cross your hands over your chest. Return to your seat via the side aisle on the left (the Gospel side).

Leaving

- Wait until the usher signals that it’s your turn to leave.
- Place your bulletin in the waste basket or take it home to recycle.

If you are not comfortable returning to church at this time, we understand and you are not alone. We are continuing the Sunday videos to meet the spiritual needs of those who are unable to come to church in person. If you would like a call from the church, please reach out to Barbara in the church office.

INTRODUCING BETHESDA’S NEW RECTOR



Photo by Jane Agee

In August 2020, Bethesda Church welcomes the Reverend Charles Wallace. Charles comes to Saratoga Springs after 17 years at Saint Thomas Choir School, New York. One of only three residential schools in the world exclusively for boy choristers, Saint Thomas originally appointed Charles as chaplain, but after a year asked him to become headmaster. In this role, as priest-educator, Charles served the choristers, the staff and their families both administratively and pastorally, responding to the complex concerns and needs of a boarding school where children and teachers live together in community.

Prior to moving to New York, Charles served as a member of the clergy of St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle, in the United Kingdom. He oversaw the liturgical life of the chapel, working closely with clergy colleagues and

the music department staff in the planning and preparation of worship, from the regular daily services to state occasions for the Royal Family. He also worked on the teaching staff of St. George's School, teaching in the French and Religious Studies departments.

Charles studied History and French as an undergraduate at King's College of Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, before entering Trinity College at the University of Toronto in 1995. While at Trinity, Charles was assigned to a five-month parish placement at the Church of Saint John the Divine, Victoria, British Columbia. At the end of his internship, he was invited to join the clergy staff there. As a busy center-city parish, St. John's provided a solid and comprehensive grounding at the beginning of life as an ordained person. On any given day, there were interactions with the business community, the elderly and homebound, young families, and the university community. Because the parish included both extremely affluent and poor underserved neighborhoods, St. John's provided a very active and intentional ministry to the city's homeless population.

In 2017, Charles took a six-month sabbatical from the Choir School, through his association with the Anglican Diocese in Europe (a diocese within the Church of England), working with parishes in transition. At St. Andrew's Church, Tangier, Morocco, Charles sought to build bridges between the Christian churches and other social service organizations working with sub-Saharan refugees as well as the Missionary Sisters of Charity working with orphaned girls. In Marseille, he assisted at a center sponsored by the Lutheran Church that offers academic support, counselling and assistance to recent immigrants to France from the Middle East

Charles' experiences at St. John's Victoria, St. George's Chapel Windsor, and St. Thomas Choir School have given him considerable insight into the importance of establishing meaningful links between churches and the communities that they serve, and the level of collaboration required for institutions to be successful. He hopes to establish a similar level of cooperation between Bethesda Church and the local organizations seeking to bring care and relief to those in need in Saratoga Springs. The parish's commitment to building Mercy House is a significant step forward in making this important ministry a reality in the years ahead. We welcome Father Wallace!

PREPARING THE RECTORY

In anticipation of the May 19 arrival of our new Priest-in-Charge, Father Charles Wallace, the Rectory at 19 Saw Mill Court in Wilton was inspected by Pam Houde and John Van der Veer to ascertain if any further cleaning or repairs would be necessary. The Rectory was in very good shape except for the need to remove a number of picture hangers, fill the holes, do some minor painting and cleaning. A hearty thank you to Tom Remington and our church cleaner, Amanda Walsh, who pitched in and did a fine job of completing those tasks. On the parish's behalf, Pam Houde put together a welcome basket with food and paper products. Gordon and Sharon Boyd provided Father Wallace with tuna salad sandwiches and Saratoga water as well as the key to the rectory when he arrived with a van filled with various personal items from his apartment in New York City. Sharon continues to work with him to enhance the rectory's yard with appropriate plants. The Rectory is now occupied by Fr. Wallace and we all hope that he is enjoying the comfort of his new home.

NEWS OF THE BUILDING PROJECT

Bethesda's new parish house and community center is moving ever closer to groundbreaking. In recent weeks, City of Saratoga Springs office staff began working remotely due to the pandemic, and so various dialogues slowed down.

Notwithstanding the slowdown in approvals, Bethesda's architects and contractor, subcontractors and consultants used the downtime to good result. Much work has gone into thinking through the heating and ventilating system, with consensus on use of a Variable Refrigerant Flow system, which is both highly energy efficient and also does not require large ducts for air flow.

Sizing and placement of the emergency generation unit has also been a subject of discussion with the team, along with drainage from around the church and within the courtyard.

On May 13, Bethesda received its fourth approval from the city's Design Review Commission after adding back in one window and changing the brick exterior plan to incorporate more visual appeal from afar.

Meanwhile, Mercy House's major partners, Backstretch Employee Service Team, Transitional Services Association, Salvation Army and CREATE are eagerly awaiting the start of our construction, and have happily endorsed some changes in interior plans that increased the number of handicap accessible bathrooms in the apartments.

In recent days, our builders, Sano-Rubin, have resubmitted a complete foundation permit, including responses to all issues raised by the city's outside review team. If you are out in your car, drive by the church. You never know when you might see a fence up and equipment on site.

Gordon Boyd

OUR FINANCIAL CONDITION

Due to the pandemic, we have amended our budget, reducing projected income for March through June by 35%. We have also eliminated all income from special events such as weddings and concerts. Despite various economies we have taken, our gross income for January through April 2020 was \$15,000 below the comparable 2019 amount.

Even though Bethesda was closed for worship in person for three months, our work and our expenses continue. In fact, we have had new expenses such as the costs for making the Sunday videos that can be accessed on Bethesda's website. We are deeply grateful to those of you who have sent in your gifts by mailed through PayPal, or by credit card. The Vestry and I ask that you give what you can to support our church.

Sara Manny, Treasurer

CHURCH OFFERINGS

You may mail your Offerings to the Church office at 96 Ballston Avenue, Saratoga Springs NY 12866. or by using PayPal. You can make your gift to Bethesda by going to <https://www.paypal.com/us/home> and choosing bethesdaepiscopalchurch@gmail.com as the payee. You may also use your credit card. There is a link on the Bethesda website, bethesda-church.org on the right hand side about halfway down.

EUCARIST ELEMENTS AND FLOWERS

If you would like to make an offering of flowers or Eucharistic Elements, please contact the Parish Office by phone, 584-5980 or email barbara@bethesdachurch.org. Your gift is appreciated by all.

AMAZON HELPS

If you are shopping online remember to use AMAZONSMILE and designate Bethesda Episcopal Church as the charity to which you want Amazon to donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases.

Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/14-1364477>.

SARATOGA COUNTY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

Thank you to all those who have already donated items. We are continuing to collect canned fruits and canned vegetables, as well as an assortment of personal items (soap, shampoo, deodorant, tooth paste, tooth brushes, hygiene products, razors, shaving cream, and baby wipes) between 8 am and 11:30 am on Sundays (i.e., before and after church services). We will be delivering the donations to the Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) for distribution to those who need them in our community, and we will continue this collection drive during the pandemic. Thanks again for your generosity.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We stay in touch and communicate key parish news by email, particularly during this pandemic. If you would like to receive our emails, please sign up on our website bethesdachurch.org or call the office (518) 584- 5980. If you have signed up but are not seeing an email from Bethesda Episcopal Church at least once a week, please let the office know and you will be contacted to correct the problem. If you do not use email and would like to receive communications by US mail, please let the office know.

SUNDAY VIDEOS

In addition to the videos Dean Vang made before his retirement on May 31, Father Moore has made six videos with guest appearances by the wardens and two choir members. They cover two Sundays in June and all the Sundays in July, thereby taking us up to the point where Father Wallace begins his ministry with us. The videos continue to be available on our website <https://bethesdachurch.org/> on Facebook www.facebook.com/bethesdaepiscopalchurch and on Look TV.

SUNDAY VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR.

Now that Sunday services have resumed, we are going to stop holding virtual coffee hours on Sundays - 12:30 is not convenient for most people, particularly in the summer, and an earlier time would conflict with services. Therefore we are looking for a better day of the week and time to hold a virtual fellowship session on Zoom. If you are interested in participating, please send an email to gather@bethesdachurch.org and let us know what is a convenient time for you. Once we find a new day and time, we will send an email to the parish list. That email will contain instructions on how to request the Zoom link. Unfortunately, we cannot post the Zoom link on our website or social media given the well-publicized issues with 'open' meetings, so you need to request a link. If you have never used Zoom and would like help setting it up, please put that request in your note.

On Thursday mornings since May 28, Vestry members Karen Finkbeiner and Dave Wilder have been meeting via ZOOM with two to three residents of the Home of the Good Shepherd's Assisted Living Facility in Saratoga Springs. During those meetings we share Bethesda's short liturgy videos, offer selected prayers and scripture passages, and ask the attendees if they have any specific prayer requests.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Our Parish Administrative Assistant, Barbara Latzko, is working from home and is available for calls (518-584-5980), from 9am until 2pm Monday and Thursday; 9am until 3pm Tuesday and Wednesday; and 9am until 12:30pm on Friday. Or you can reach out by email to her at office@bethesdachurch.org You can also email the wardens (Darren Miller and Kate Berheide) at wardens@bethesdachurch.org with questions or concerns.

Bethesda Episcopal Church
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If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, please contact the Parish Office at (518) 584-5980.

A NEW LOOK ON WASHINGTON STREET

Our venerable and beautiful building is sporting a new look to those passing by on busy Washington Street. American and Episcopal Church flags are flying from poles anchored to the façade. And on weekdays and Sundays, the newly-restored massive main doors will be thrown open and, in the central opening from narthex to the nave, an elegant new glass door will give passers-by a full view of the church interior. These changes, while they will be overshadowed by Mercy House in the future, will doubtless give Bethesda Church far greater visibility to those who might just seek its counsel.

