

May 7, 2020

**“Our mission is to celebrate God’s transforming Love in Jesus, by following where Jesus’ Love is calling us to serve the community”**



## Ascension This Week

**Good News – from Fr Bill Baker and several other people**

On Sunday, May 10

— All services, classes and meetings held in Church of the Ascension are cancelled until July 1, 2020. We continue to have morning prayer and the Sunday Eucharist Service on Facebook, and now have added Bible Study on Zoom.

**God loves you.  
No exceptions.**



The Episcopal Church Welcomes You. [www.dohio.org](http://www.dohio.org)

Inside this issue:

—“Good News” stories from our friends and fellow parishioners and Fr Bill

—“Remember your Pledge” reminder

—An awesome Bible Study Class meeting on Zoom! And a virtual Coffee Hour!

—Save the Date reminders and announcements.

*Last week we posted a request for your Good News stories of our time in quarantine. Following are your fellow parishioners and friends ruminations about how they are enjoying this quarantine during the pandemic of Covid-19 as a time of renewal, respite and a chance to celebrate life.*

### Linda Gibney

Being at home has given me a renewed appreciation for my house and yard. The good weather has allowed me to sit outside and enjoy the azalea bush in my back yard which is a glorious show of pink blossoms. I also bought a suet cake for the birds. They don't need the seed this time of year but it is a source of pleasure for me and Amber to watch the birds.

### Deacon Geri Swanson

This evening the Swanson family will have a Zoom gathering for Briella's first birthday! It is a "bring your own cake" event! (Editor's note—Happy Birthday and many blessings, Briella Nicole!)

### Laura Wonica

During this pandemic, I have had more time to reach out to family and friends through phone calls and FaceTime. I have been watching Netflix, cooking new recipes and drinking more wine. ☺🍷 I have been walking outside and exercising more using online resources. Taking this one day at a time.

### An Anonymous Contribution

I have been blessed with great friends and caring neighbors who call to see how I am doing in these unhealthy times. SO..... I bake batches of cupcakes each week and send a plate of cupcakes over to them to enjoy. Something sweet seems to always make life seem a bit better.....

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## **Nancy Reiersen (Christ Church, New Brighton)**

My “quarantine” has not involved any new-found talents in cooking or baking – according to friends and family neither of these has ever been my strong suit and a pandemic is not going to change that. I’ve always found my “joy” in daily morning walks through Silver Lake or Clove Lakes Park but I now find myself taking more time to stop along the way and look more closely at things I used to take for granted: the colors in the trees, hidden pathways, shadows, birds, and the sunlight reflecting on the lake. I’m really starting to enjoy taking pictures during my daily journeys and trying to capture some of the hidden beauty that can only be seen by taking the time to appreciate it. In fact, I’m thinking about taking a few photography classes when we’re no longer housebound.

This morning the phrase “Be still, and know that I am God” came into my head while I was walking through Clove Lakes Park. I can’t begin to count how many times I’ve heard these words in church, but I never really gave it much thought until now. For the past two-plus months I’ve been “sheltering in place” and pretty much forced to “be still” - perhaps this is God’s way of telling us to slow down, appreciate the beauty all around us and trust in him to deliver us from these scary and uncertain times.

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## **Liina Keerdoja (St. Columbus, DC)**

Many of you know Fr. Bill’s friend from his seminary days. She usually attends ballet classes three times per week in a dance studio in Washington, DC. During the pandemic, all classes were canceled. In their place, the studio began Zoom classes. The students are in their homes and virtually, through their computers they take classes and the instructor can see them and offer corrections on posture and positions. Liina now takes 2 classes per week and walks every day on a trail near her home, which features some of the most beautiful cherry blossoms in DC. They were in full bloom two weeks ago and she enjoyed their majesty and gloriousness. Liina adds, "A side remark: The Zoom ballet class is especially nice when it's raining outside."

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## **Fr. Bill**

During the last few weeks, I decided to take the opportunity to cook at home, making healthy meals and stick to my diet. In order to get fresh air, help keep both the dogs and humans sane and to get some exercise, Mohsin and I walk the dogs for at least one hour per day almost every day—rain or shine! To date, I have lost 25 lbs. and I feel great. I also feel connected to God and all of you from the Facebook services and look forward to the addition of Zoom meetings. I pray for each of you often and hope hearing what others are doing to ward off boredom and depression will inspire each of us to commit to using this time, over the coming weeks, to find a new “Pandemic Pleasure”. Commit to walking once or twice a week. Find a health recipe on the internet and cook it. Work on praying with regularity to stay connected to God. May God continue to blessing you!

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Many thanks to those who shared their Good News about their time in quarantine. Are you still working on a paragraph or two about your experience and haven’t yet sent it to Fr Bill? Go ahead—send it this coming week! ([Wbaker@vts.edu](mailto:Wbaker@vts.edu) or call Fr Bill at 917-863-1516)

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### Are you willing to help lead Morning Prayer on Facebook?

Want to be added to the rotation of Officiants? All you need to lead is a computer with access to the internet and Cindy or Fr. Bill can train you how to do it. If you are interest please email Liz (admin@ascensionsi.org), Cindy (macat757@aol.com), or Fr. Bill (wbaker@vts.edu).

### Coffee Hour with Zoom at Ascension —

Fr. Bill will be hosting his first **“Virtual Morning Coffee Hour”**. It will be on ZOOM at 11:00 am this **Sunday, May 10**, right after mass! What a great way to enjoy a cup of coffee and a snack while you catch up with your Ascension friends! If you would like to join in the fun, please let Liz know ASAP. She will send you the invitation link by email.

Seeing all the faces and hearing their voices again uplifted and energized me (your newsletter editor)!



### Pray With US

**During this time when we cannot meet in person for monthly healing prayers, we are praying daily at Ascension, during Morning Prayer and with the Prayers of the People on Sundays. Please join us at these times.**

And Liz reminds us that we can email her with any special prayer requests. The names will be posted in the Prayers of the People for a cycle of four weeks. If they need to be extended, let Liz know and she will renew them for another four weeks. Please be sure to notify her by Thursday morning to be included in that week’s prayers.



### Save the Date Reminders and Announcements:

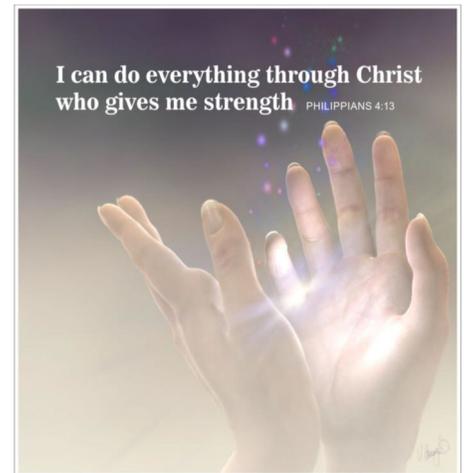
**As announced by Bishop Dietsche congregations will not be meeting in the churches until July 1.**

**We will continue with Morning Prayer and Sunday Church Services at Ascension on Facebook for at least the duration of the time that churches are closed to congregations. Please join with Fr Bill and Cindy McCloskey at 9:30am weekdays, and 10:00am on Sundays.**

### ZOOM at Ascension

Our first Bible Study meeting was held this past week, May 7, on Zoom, and **it was an awesome Bible Study**. We will continue with this weekly, Wednesdays from 2 to 3 pm. Please notify Liz via email if you want to be added to the group.

Zoom proved to be easy to use and it was wonderful to see the faces and hear the voices of our friends—here on Staten Island and further away—and our fellow parishioners.



### Update for Gene Darconte

Fr. Bill received an update on Gene from Jill. Gene (who is in a Las Vegas hospital) remains in critical but stable condition. He is off the heart pump after undergoing three procedures. Please continue to pray for Gene, knowing he is in God's hands.

### Our Pledges

While we realize that all our minds are preoccupied with the uncertainty that the Coronavirus and what it means might bring, please keep in mind that in order for there to be a church for us to return to when this period is over, we must continue to pay our bills. Please consider dropping your pledge in the mail to us.

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Find us on Facebook@Church of Ascension Staten Island

