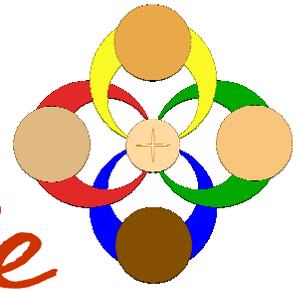


CREATOR



Chronicle



“As a congregation named for our Creator, we are children of the Living God, beloved brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, selflessly living out our faith in worship, fellowship, giving, education and outreach.”

April 2020

Dear Friends,

The 5th Sunday of Lent’s Gospel text, the story of Mary anointing Jesus in anticipation of his death and burial, portrays the woman as a person of humble devotion. She entered a public space, hair let down (scandalous!), and emptied her expensive jar of perfume on Jesus, wiping his feet with her hair. Jesus took this as an act anticipating his death and burial and commended her.

In the context of John’s Gospel, Mary serves as a foil both to those who found themselves threatened by Jesus in their self-righteousness and pride and who therefore plotted against him (11:45-47), and the disciples, who had to be shamed by Jesus into washing one another’s feet (13:1-15).

Mary’s humble love and devotion, like the fragrance that filled the room that night, is potent and attractive.

Richard Rohr finds a similar fragrance in *St. John of the Cross’s* teachings about humility. John of the Cross understood the true meaning of humility, which is not self-deprecation or low self-esteem, but a simple acknowledgment that I am very small, quickly passing, and insignificant as a separate self. That is just objective truth. Our dignity and sacredness precisely come from our connection. With this deep and experienced and inherent connection, John was free to rest in a union that could not be taken from him.

Mirabai Starr expresses John of the Cross’s longing in her own beautiful words:

In the *dark night*, says John, the secret essence of the soul that knows the truth is calling out to God: Beloved, you pray, please remind me again and again that I am nothing. Strip me of the consolations of my complacent spirituality. Plunge me into the darkness where I cannot rely on any of my old tricks for maintaining my separation. Let me give up on trying to convince

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Rev. Robert M. Blanton, Priest-In-Charge * office hours: Monday—Thursday, 9:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

Please call the church office, 601-924-2261, to schedule an appointment.

Continued from page 1

myself that my own spiritual deeds are bound to be pleasing to you. Take all my juicy spiritual feelings, Beloved, and dry them up, and then please light them on fire. Take my lofty spiritual concepts and plunge them into darkness, and then burn them. Let me love only you, Beloved. Let me quietly and with unutterable simplicity just love you.

In the *dark night of the soul*, the only thing left to do is to let go of the ego's need for self-importance and validation and simply turn our attention toward God. There is no need any longer to achieve or manufacture our union with God. Soft piety and sweet feelings are no longer necessary. God is much more trustworthy and solid than feelings. We are henceforth able to give ourselves over to a now natural flow of loving and being loved. What once seemed impossible and "supernatural" is now enjoyed as both total gift and yet totally natural to our deepest being.

To John, humility meant accepting our unquenchable thirst and need for God and acknowledging our emptiness at the same time—they work together! This is why the contemporary "I am special" and "I have dignity" eventually falls apart for lack of foundation. This is hard to say, with so many people today having such low or disguised self-esteem, but that is precisely what the mystics want to address. I want to offer you here, through them, an objective (philosophical, theological, metaphysical) foundation for a positive self-image, which can never be taken from you. It does not come and go; *it is you at your deepest core*. This is the ecstasy of John and Teresa.

Then in the Palm Sunday Jesus enters Jerusalem on the final week of his life, the Gospel of John describes what was about to happen in these terms: Jesus was entering into his "glory" (see John 12:23).

This is a continual thread throughout John, beginning with the confession in chapter one: "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (1:14). The background of this statement is found in Exodus 33 —

Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." And the Lord continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

When God "passed by" Moses, the "name" he declared to him was the description Richard Rohr cites from Ex. 34:6-7.

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Continued from page 2

Moses experienced God's glory when he heard God's own affirmation of his steadfast love for his people. John testified that he and the other disciples experienced God's glory when they looked into the face of Jesus the Messiah and saw that same steadfast love, the love that led him through Holy Week to the cross.

Holy Week is a week to experience the glory of God. May each of us find it in the faithful love displayed in Jesus.

Yahweh, Yahweh, a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and abounding in faithfulness. For the thousandth generation, Yahweh maintains his kindness, forgiving all our faults, transgressions, and sins. Exodus 34:6-7

In this marvelous early affirmation, we have, in the words of **Walter Brueggemann**, "a formulation so studied that it may be reckoned to be something of a classic, normative statement to which Israel regularly returned, meriting the label 'credo.'" In it are found five generous and glorious adjectives that describe the heart and soul of Israel's belief. Somehow, against all odds and neighbors, they were able to experience a God who was *merciful* (in Hebrew, *rhm*), *compassionate/gracious* (*hnn*), *steadfast in love* (*hsd*), tenaciously *faithful* (*emeth*) and *forgiving* (*ns*). This is the dynamic center of their entire belief system, as it should be ours, and like all spiritual mystery, seems to be endlessly generative and fruitful, culminating in the full-blown—and literally unthinkable—concept of *grace*.

In Ezekiel, chapters 36-37, Yahweh really chews Israel out, telling the people, in effect, through the prophet, "You haven't done anything right; you've missed the whole point."

Yahweh disqualifies the children of Israel as a worthy people, almost as if to tell them to throw the whole thing out and start over. Then, seemingly out of nowhere (but really coming from *divine mercy*, which is always present), Yahweh promises to rebuild the project from the bottom up, and says, "I am not doing this for your sake, house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name" (Ezekiel 36:22).

God is God's own reference point. God is being true to Godself in loving. God's faithfulness has never been dependent on our worthiness or readiness. This is *restorative justice*, the divine form of justice.

The word that is translated as "*steadfast love*" is often rendered "covenant love" or "faithful love." Today we often call it *unconditional love*. It's "one-sided love," if you will, because *Israel never keeps its side* of the covenant, just as *we never keep our side* of the relationship to this day. Yahweh has learned to do it all from God's side since we are basically unreliable as lovers. That is the constant message of much of the Hebrew Scriptures from Moses to Job.

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Yet, as Paul says, "Is it possible that Yahweh has rejected his people? Of course not!" (Romans 11:1). Israel is a stand-in for everything.

We may be deep in Lent for many weeks, even months to come. As a world community we are living through a shared deep, dark night. We must be patient. Of course, we have not been rejected. We must humbly turn to the resources to be found at our deepest core where our soul that knows the truth is calling out to God. We will be heard. We are being heard.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bob



Please continue sending your pledges in to the church. Even though we are not meeting, the monthly expenses still need to be met.

Also, we need to continue maintaining the church grounds. See dates in the calendar.

Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday

April 5



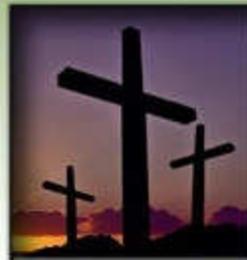
Holy Wednesday

April 8



Maundy Thursday

April 9



Good Friday

April 10



Easter Sunday

April 12

From the

Worship Leader's Desk

Mike Milone

Brothers and Sisters,

As I sat at my desk re-doing the April newsletter, removing all the Holy Week services, schedules and activities, a cloud of depression began to settle over me. I look forward each year in excited anticipation to walking the path to Calvary during Holy Week. This special time is a culmination of everything we have experienced since the beginning of the liturgical year. It is a time of entering Jerusalem with Jesus on Palm Sunday, praying the stations, being reminded of our servitude to others on Maundy Thursday, experiencing the stark reality of Jesus' death on Good Friday and finally with great anticipation - laughter, joy, celebration, flowering the cross, incense, Easter egg hunts, sharing a meal together, and rejoicing in the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. After having an extended pity-party, my mind began taking me back to one of my sermons from last year where I said in part:

“What I have learned through all of this recent chaos in my world is - we never actually know what a day will be like. I so often think of James in his book toward the end of the Bible where he said, “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money.’ Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes”. The truth is - we never know what is just around the next corner.

Just trust in God and let Him help you when life isn't working out like you thought it would or when intruding events or shocking changes bring you to a point where you just don't know what to do with life because it has become so messed up. We know that God is actually in the center of what we call a “mess” God knows you are worried, frustrated, depressed or scared, however; He is showing you His love more than ever by guiding you toward a greater plan. When you are in a dire situation and feel all alone just say to yourself - *Precious Lord, take my hand, Lead me on, let me stand, I'm tired, I'm weak, I'm alone' through the storm, through the night, Lead me on to the light, Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home.*”

Even though we will not celebrate Holy week together this year, this abnormal Easter season reminds us that the light of resurrection always prevails. Darkness cannot overcome the light. Regardless of who you are, where you are, God's light prevails. Regardless of your doubts or fears, God's light prevails. Regardless of your life's circumstances, God's light prevails. The light of the resurrection always wins.

Christ's resurrection is not a one day celebration. It is not confined within the walls of a building on a particular date, Easter is a way of life. We should live everyday as if it were Easter Sunday. It means: every cross flowers with new life, every tomb becomes a womb of new birth, and every darkness we experience is overcome by light.

***Easter has NOT been cancelled! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed!
Thanks be to God!***

Church at Home

Family WORSHIP

“Even if we cannot gather with our church community, we can pray with our church. We can pray together online. We can pray at the same time. We can pray knowing that somewhere in the world, others are saying the same prayers we are. We can pray knowing that we are always joined in prayer with the company of heaven.

When we pray, we are never alone.” – *Scott Gunn, Forward Movement*

During this challenging time in our common life, we offer some alternative ways to worship.

The following churches in our diocese will be live streaming a Sunday service.

Copy & paste the following link into your browser to see a current list of all live streamed services and links to many other resources.

<https://www.dioms.org/Resources/church-at-home---livestream-other-resources.html>

Click the link next to a church to connect with the stream. Many of these will take you to Facebook Live. Don't have Facebook? You can still watch the stream.

April



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays

		13	Kathy Milone		
2	Joan Blanton	28	Mary Hulsebosch		
3	Pamela Wilder	29	Courtney Randall		
6	Amy Daniel	30	Charles Williams		
7	Max Lanford				
10	Nickie Carre				
	Gale Nelson				
	Beverly Wilder				

Anniversaries

4 Scott & Linda Waldbauer



Pack 345 Community Service Project

In March our Cub Scout Pack visited Clinton Community Christian Corporation (4 C's) to help shelve food items in the food pantry. They were practicing their Scout Oath to "Help other people at all times" and to "Do a good turn daily".



Dear Friends,

I am so impressed by the many ways you have been the Church over the last week. Thank you for the creative and profound ways the Gospel was preached and the love of our Lord celebrated. Seeing the many ways we lifted up our hearts was a beautiful and glorious blessing, thank you. I remain bolstered by the words of the Apostle Paul who said, “nothing can separate us from the love of God.”

Much has changed and shifted since my last communication with you concerning the coronavirus. COVID-19 cases in our state have risen to at least 80 and we’ve had the first COVID-19 related fatality in Mississippi. Statewide, the Governor closed public schools until at least April 17.

Public and private schools, colleges, universities and seminaries are shifting to distance and online learning in order to finish out the spring semester. Sewanee has canceled its May graduation ceremonies for undergraduates and seminarians.

Social distancing is the new normal. In an effort to “flatten the curve,” local, state and federal leaders have suspended public gatherings, including worship of more than 10 persons, and required restaurants and other businesses to close or limit service. In Jackson, those limitations specifically apply to worship services.

Last week, Presiding Bishop Curry sent a message saying, “The next 30-60 days at the least are simply going to be unlike anything we have experienced in recent history, even including 9/11. The dilemma of what we know and what we don’t know will continue to complicate our decision making and our lives.” To that end, I, along with my staff and the leadership of the Diocese, have been monitoring these and many other developments over the last week, including information coming from the CDC, the Mississippi Department of Health and other organizations. I continue to be in touch with several of my fellow bishops, and our Canons are participating in calls and Zoom meetings to discuss the ramifications of this public health emergency on the church.

A week ago, after much deliberation and prayer, I made the decision that all face to face, in-person services of public worship in our Mississippi churches would be suspended through Sunday, March 22. I made that decision in an effort to protect and promote our health and to slow the spread of the pandemic in our corner of God’s kingdom. In light of the need to continue efforts to protect everyone, especially the most vulnerable, I am extending the suspension of face to face, in-person public worship through and including Easter Sunday, April 12. This suspension also extends to all in-person gatherings and meetings of vestries, mission committees, as well as diocesan and local church groups, committees, commissions and the like.

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I will continue to monitor news throughout the day and will be in consultation with Diocesan leadership about when adjustments to this suspension might safely be made. I will communicate such adjustments immediately.

In addition to this suspension, the following guidelines will govern our common life as communities of faith.

For the foreseeable future, funerals should be simple graveside services limited to a gathering of no more than 10 people. A requiem Eucharist may be celebrated at a later date.

Weddings may be held but are also limited to gatherings of 10 or fewer persons.

AA and similar 12 step recovery groups can continue to meet on church property. I would recommend that such groups limit their gatherings to no more than 10 persons in any given room of the church. I also suggest that you be in touch with the secretaries of these groups which meet in your churches to share the limitation on meeting size, and to work with them to make multiple meeting spaces available, if needed. It is appropriate to ask these groups to sanitize all hard surfaces following each meeting to promote health and safety.

Feeding ministries may continue to provide assistance and support to those in your communities who are vulnerable; however, meals and food must be offered via “curb-side pickup” only. I also request that volunteers, whether members of your church or persons from the broader community, over 60 years of age not be allowed to participate in these programs, and that you ensure that volunteers take adequate precautions to protect themselves from infection while so serving.

Staying connected during this time of social distancing is vitally important to who we are as a church. I have encouraged priests, deacons and church leaders in the Diocese to continue to reach out to church members who may be in need. I have encouraged our clergy to connect with members via phone calls, text messages, Face Time, etc. and to recognize that face to face visits in homes and hospitals may heighten the risks of infection. Be smart. Always ask for permission before making an in-person visit.

Facing our current reality, and in an effort to model and normalize social distancing, beginning today the Allin House staff will work from home. They will continue to be available to answer your questions, and provide guidance and resources. Please look for communications from Canon Ponder on how to contact staff members. I along with Canons Ponder and Stephens will continue to offer Noonday Prayers Monday through Friday via Facebook Live on our respective Facebook pages. Please join us!

Almost all groups that had made reservations at Gray Center during the next six weeks or so have canceled those reservations. In consultation with me, the decision has been made to temporarily close both campuses of the Camp and Conference Center to all traffic and visitors. Please respect the closure by staying away from Gray Center! I encourage you to reach out to the Gray Center staff if you have questions about deposits, reservations or the like. Presently, summer camp sessions have not been suspended or canceled. We'll keep you informed as other decisions affecting Gray Center are made.

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Worship is central to who we are as Christians who practice our faith in the Episcopal tradition. It breaks my heart to extend this suspension and add these guidelines but it gives me peace in the hope that we are doing a small part in stopping the spread of this virus.

I join Presiding Bishop Curry in encouraging you to explore and experiment with online worship. Several faith communities across the Diocese, and beyond, are already providing virtual Morning, Noonday and Evening Prayers and Compline. Others have broadcast services of Holy Eucharist. Still others are sharing Prayers for Spiritual Communion. We are pulling together liturgical

resources that may help you in planning for the remainder of Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Those will be shared as soon as possible.

Other resources are being gathered and shared as they become available, including resources on stewardship, Christian Education for children and youth, human resource management and the like.

Please let us know what resources or other support I or my staff can provide.

In an effort to create intentional pastoral care groupings, and to otherwise provide support to and for one another, I have established a series of “Affinity Groups” across the Diocese. These are clusters of parishes, missions and chaplaincies which are in geographic proximity to one another. The purpose of these groups to ensure that clergy are cared for during this time, and that coverage in the case of illness, etc. is available. For your convenience, I am attaching the Affinity Group listing. Please take the initiative to reach out to others in your group.

In the last ten days or so, the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Mississippi creatively, positively, and prayerfully responded to this public health crisis. I have seen worship and expressions of faith offered from every corner of our church, for instance, young people gathering online for compline while others prayed the Daily Office; and families watching on-line celebrations of the Holy Eucharist while saying together the Prayers for Spiritual communion. I encourage our churches to continue these moments of public prayer! The Diocesan office will continue to offer information and resources for your use.

Now is the time for all of us to pick up the phone and call each other! It is time for all of us to offer our prayers for the wellbeing of our people and communities. It is time for us to follow the instructions of our civic, state and national leaders and do our part in minimizing the spread of the virus.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Peace be with you,

The Very Reverend Brian Seage



Pack 345

Cubmaster: Mike Milone
Pack Committee: John Lanford, Chairman, Edie Hill,
 John Fox



Pack 345 Calendar - 2019 - 2020

September

16 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 20 New Parent Orientation, 6:30 pm
 27 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm

October

12-14 Akela Cub Weekend
 19-21 Akela Cub Weekend
 27 Brighton Park, 2:00 pm, Water Rockets

November

9 Church Campout
 21 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm, Flag Retirement

December

1 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 7 *No Pack Meeting*, Winter Pack Outing

January

30 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm
 31-Feb 2 Cub Scout Polar Weekend

February

2 Scout Sunday (@ church @ 10:00 am)
 27 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm (Pinewood Derby)
 Camp Card Sales Begin

March

TBD District Pinewood Derby
 26 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm

April

17-19 Cuboree Weekend
 23 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm
 Camp Card Sales End (money due)

May

3 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 14 Year-end Parent & Den Leader Meeting,
 6:00 pm
 28 Blue & Gold Banquet, 6:00 pm
 Graduation

June

6-8 Cub / Webelos Summer Camp
 15-19 District Day Camp
 TBD Pack Summer Outing





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 pm: Zoom: Compline & Conversation 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	2 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	3	4 5 pm: AA / AI-Anon Meeting Special Work Day 8am-12pm Clean-up Stations of the Cross Area in preparation for Holy Week
5 Palm Sunday	6 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	7 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	8 6:30 pm: Zoom: Compline & Conversation 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	9 12:00 pm: AA Meeting Maundy Thursday	10 Good Friday	11 5 pm: AA / AI-Anon Meeting
12 Easter Sunday	13 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	14 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	15 6:30 pm: Zoom: Compline & Conversation 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	16 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	17	18 5 pm: AA / AI-Anon Meeting Church Work Day 8am-12pm
19 FOOD PANTRY for the 4 C's	20 6:30 pm: Vestry 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	21 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	22 6:30 pm: Zoom: Compline & Conversation 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	23 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	24	25 5 pm: AA / AI-Anon Meeting
26	27 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	28 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	29 6:30 pm: Zoom: Compline & Conversation 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	30 12:00 pm: AA Meeting		

Episcopal Church of the Creator

Church Office Hours:

9:00 am—2 pm, Monday—Thursday

Presiding Bishop

The Most Reverend Michael Curry

Bishop

The Very Reverend Brian Seage

Priest-In-Charge

The Reverend Robert M. Blanton

Administrator

Beth Braley

theepiscopalchurchofthecreator@gmail.com

Choir Director

Vacant

Senior Warden

Rhea Estes, 601-813-3863

Junior Warden

Vacant

Treasurer

Tommy Mills, 601-259-5333

Vestry

Ross Turner, 601-214-2484

John Lanford, 601-708-4374

Dianne Martin, 601-906-5086

Isabel Mills, 601-954-3769

Jennifer Duncan, 601-850-6353

Contacts

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Administrator—Beth Braley, 601-924-2261

Email: theepiscopalchurchofthecreator@gmail.com

Pastoral Emergencies

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Polly Marshall, Cell: 601-953-2980

Acolytes

Mike Milone, Cell: 601-473-6305

Adult Christian Education

Rev. Robert M. Blanton, Cell: 601-291-0652

Altar Guild

Larry & Rhea Estes, Cell: 601-813-3859

Choir

Vacant

Children's Christian Education

John Lanford, Cell: 601-966-3441

Columbarium

Wendy Brantley, Cell: 601-954-3946

Flower Guild

Becky Wright, Cell: 601-940-4861

Funeral Guild

Vacant

Parish Lunches & Special Events

Andrew Wilder, 601-842-0058

Doug George, 601-502-5063

Cubmaster

Mike Milone, Cell: 601-473-6305

Wedding Coordinator

Vacant



Episcopal Church of the Creator
1445 Clinton-Raymond Rd.
Clinton, MS 39056

*We are part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion and in communion with the
Archbishop of Canterbury.*

“We are a congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi: One church in mission, inviting, transforming, and reconciling. We seek to serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being.”