

South Dakota Episcopal
Church News



www.episcopalchurchsd.org

Winter 2021

Acting on Faith,
A desire to see God's Hand,
They left familiar environs
To seek a child.

A child who looked
Just as other children do,
Living, and laughing, and crying
Cherished and loved.

A child who showed
Nothing to indicate a
Miraculous life awaiting,
Acting on Faith.

But all children
Are miraculous, aren't they?
Every earthly breath and step they take
Displays God's mark,

Christm retraced
Of God's accompanying Love,
And blessings often unseen that
Comfort our wounds.

Our Savior child
Would know the pains of our lives,
The many pains of Creation
Yet the chasm

Keeping us from
Divine life of peace and grace,
He lovingly bridged with his gifts
Asked for or not.

The Magi's gifts
Foretelling the greatest gift
Echoes across the universe.
Acting on Faith.

Such a great gift
Challenges us and calls us
To accept unknown potential
Acting on Faith



The Venerable Paul Sneve, January 5, 2021

The Diocese of
South Dakota



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Church News Editor
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office@episcopalchurchsd.org

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“It’s a New Year — Really, It Is”

by

Bishop Jonathan

On the morning of New Year’s Day, all of my various news sources shared reports about how people chose to end 2020. Historically speaking, I am used to hearing people talk about an upcoming new year with enthusiasm and sparks of promise. People concoct plans and make resolutions focused on making their lives better. A fresh slate awaits us to write upon, and genuine excitement is in the faces of those cheering, greeting, and hugging each other as the clock strikes midnight.

That...was not the case this time.

New Year’s Eve, based on the reports I read, was not an occasion to greet New Year’s Day as much as it was a time to grieve all the hefty costs that 2020 exacted from the world. There has not been a shortage of cartoons and memes which have used humor to highlight our darker shared feelings that 2020 will not be a missed year. And topping the list of things that 2020 brought into our lives that we would like 2021 to take back is COVID-19.

Although there have been silver linings to this crisis, COVID-19 has exacted a high cost worldwide and in varying ways. Having to bury loved ones far sooner than we expected and not being able to spend their final days sitting by their bedside was an everyday price paid by far too many. Health systems whose employees are overburdened and overworked while they care for our loved ones is another high cost demanded by the virus. And a third high cost paid is, of course, economic. Due to shut-downs and regulations, various businesses have had to shutter their windows and release their employees.

COVID-19 also taxed our relationships with our neighbors to the hilt. Many who oppose wearing a mask have lost friends who, on the other hand, feel that wearing a mask is a way that we express our shared love and concern for each other. Relatives who hosted Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings at their homes — and then had to mourn the deaths of those who died from COVID-19 as a result — they are now begging forgiveness from other relatives who had begged them not to host such gatherings at all. Only grace and time will provide the answer if restoration in those families is possible.

So again, even though there have been some silver linings to the COVID-19 crisis, this virus's costs have been very high. And when our family witnessed the ball drop in a sparsely populated Times Square and saw the few people gathered there hugging each other, it was as if they were saying, “We made it through. We’re still here. We survived.”

There is a genuine temptation to remain stuck in 2020 if we are not both conscious and careful. Whereas I agree that the costs of this past year have been tremendously high, and as aware as I am that some of my friends are currently dying from COVID-19, our faces still need to be turned toward 2021 and towards hope. As Christians, we are God's people of hope. Put another way; we are people who recognize the costs of Good Friday. We remember Christ's pain and our own betrayals and denials of Christ's love. One of the reasons church attendance is low on that day is because these sins, and these shortcomings of ours strike close to home, closer than many of us would like to come to them.

But Christians are not people who remain stuck on Good Friday. We don't go around calling ourselves God's "Good Friday people." We are God's Easter people. We are people who know both the promise and the power of hope. And we are people who use that hope to get us through our Good Friday experiences, to get us to that empty tomb, to get to that place where we can welcome the Happy Morning that God has prepared for us and the world.

As St. Paul so eloquently stated in his letter to the Christians in Rome: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Whereas perhaps these words aren't as singable as the words to "Auld Laud Syne," I do think this is a fitting piece of Scripture for us to read, reflect upon, and take to heart as we make the transition from 2020 to 2021 — and I highly commend them to you. Use them when you start feeling stuck and wondering when life will return to some semblance of normal will return. Use them when you find yourself drained of hope and need a reminder of the hope that God has gifted us with through Jesus Christ. Use them when you need to remember what kind of people we are — and keep using them until the next Happy Morning arrives. Because it will.



I pray all is well with you and your families. I especially pray for all whose loved ones have left this world, either unexpectedly or through some illness. We of the ECW send out our sympathies and condolences. You are all in our hearts and prayers.

On November 21, 2020, we had our ECW Winter meeting on Zoom. We had very good attendance, and Holly will fill in the details of the event. Thanks go out to all who were able to attend and to those who stepped up to honor the Lord in servitude to Him by accepting the positions they were nominated to.

I will be attending the ministry on Practicing Discernment (I call them workshops, it's an educator's thing) in Pierre at Trinity on January 15 and 16, 2021. The last time I was at Trinity, I bought the book, *THE WALK: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life* by Adam Hamilton. I would like to share some passages from it and hope you find some comfort, encouragement, and/or inspiration from it, especially during these trying times.

Hamilton states how "Most of us know we should exercise, but the Center for Disease Control, CDC, says that only 23 % of Americans exercise as they should... (and that) most Christians struggle to pursue the simple exercises needed to have a healthy spiritual life.

Those simple exercises needed for a healthy spiritual life are: 1). Worship (including daily prayer), 2). Study (listening to God with an emphasis on Scripture reading), 3). Serving (including acts of justice and kindness), 4). Give (generosity toward God and others), and 5). Sharing our faith (through deeds and words). These practices should be pursued in our communities, with others, and individually as we train ourselves for a holy life that Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 4:7-9.

As we enter into a new year, the pandemic is still wreaking medical turmoil throughout the world and doesn't seem to be subsiding any time soon. Let's pray that the percentage number that the CDC quotes as those who exercise is not indicative of the same percent who follow the CDC guidelines to wear a mask, cover their cough, wash their hands, stay home, and do not gather in large groups. These guidelines DO SAVE LIVES!

I have been following those recommendations, but I did go to Denver twice and found out that the Governor of Colorado mandated that there be no travel during Thanksgiving. The other elements to the mandate are everyone MUST wear a mask when shopping, wear gloves if they're going to be touching items in a store, and employees are to continually wipe down things in the store. As a result, Colorado has the lowest number of COVID cases in the United States.

In closing, I quote Hamilton, "Jesus calls you to follow him, to walk with him, and he promises to walk with you. Are you ready?"

Eileen Grinnell, ECW President

From SD ECW Vice President, Holly Moseley

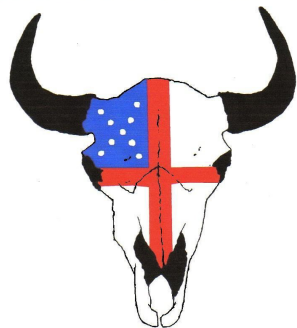
It's time to nominate your candidates for the 2021 ECW Honored Woman. Do you know of an exceptional woman in your church, someone who gives service to both church and community? Please write a short (200 words or less) description of her character and her work, then send it with a photo to 4sdecw@gmail.com by February 5th so we can publish the nominations in the next issue of the ChurchNews.

At the fall meeting on Zoom, those who were able to participate elected Holly Moseley to two more years as Vice President, Eva Gilbert to two years as Treasurer, and Deanna Stands to one year as Secretary. At the spring, 2020, meeting we had approved moving the election of VP to even years and election of Secretary to odd years; with the end of Irene Rondell's term last year, we needed someone for the interim and Deanna agreed to run. Diana Mathisrud was appointed by President Eileen Grinnell to be our new UTO representative.

Many thanks to Irene Rondell, outgoing secretary; Lisa Fischer, outgoing treasurer; and Linda Simmons, outgoing UTO representative. You have served us well and we appreciate it very much! We hope you'll continue to be active in SD ECW.

Next meeting: Saturday, April 24; 10am Central Time at Trinity Church in Pierre or by Zoom. Email 4sdecw@gmail.com to be added to our mailing list or text 605/569-2618 if you want to be informed via text.

NIORRARA SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

DAKOTA EXPERIENCE

Dakota Experience is an educational course open to anyone interested in the culture, history, spirituality, and theology of the Dakota/Lakota people.

It is required for people in the ordination process and for clergy new to the diocese.

Cost is \$30 which covers 2 meals. The session begins at 5:30 pm on Friday with supper, and ends about 2:00 pm on Saturday, after lunch.

2021 Dates

- **Spring (East): April 16 & 17, 2021**

Location: TBD

Registration is available online at www.episcopalchurchsd.org via the Niobrara School page. Or you may contact the Diocesan Office by email office@episcopalchurchsd.org

Questions? Contact Archdeacon Paul Sneve

605-381-2018

paul@episcopalchurchsd.org

Transitions in the Diocese:

It is my sad duty to let you know that Fr. Ed Hunt, superintending presbyter for the Pine Ridge Episcopal Mission, has accepted a call to be the rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Onancock, VA. His last day with the people of the Pine Ridge mission will be January 31, 2021.

Fr. Ed and his wife Mary have served the people of the Pine Ridge mission with great love and dedication, and we will be sad to see them go. We are at the same time excited for the possibilities that this new ministry will bring them and wish them the absolute best.

The Diocese is currently looking at ways to ensure ministry coverage after Fr. Ed leaves for his new position. More information will be provided as soon we have news to share.

COVID –19 Vaccines

There has been some concern regarding our elders in various care facilities insofar as how they will receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Clergy, this is an opportunity for you to reach out to your members. Remind them that they need to advocate for their loved ones. The family should be in discussion with the care facility and not assume their loved one has or will be receiving the vaccine.

Please remind your members also that the vaccine is a two-dose vaccine and to make sure everyone receives both shots. Receiving only one dose is not effective.

Every copy of *The South Dakota Church News* that has an incorrect address ends up being returned to the Diocese with a 75¢ postage due charge.

Please use this form to update your address or supply your new address BEFORE you move.

Moving? Please tell us...

Change Cancellation Contribution

Name.....

NEW mailing Address:

City, ST, Zip

Effective Date

Church we plan to attend after the move :.....

Please mail your changes to Diocese of South Dakota
408 N. Jefferson Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-2626

Bishop's visitation & travel dates are in **bold letters**.
Please remember the Bishop's schedule is subject to last minute changes.

Diocesan Calendar

February:

- 2/4** Zoom meeting w/reservation
Mission Clergy
- 2/7** Emmanuel, Rapid City
- 2/9** Small Church Gathering
- 2/14** Wyoming Bishop's Consecration
- 2/21** Trinity, Pierre

March:

- 3/9-3/12** HOB
- 3/20-3/28** Eastern Deanery Visitations

April :

- 4/3-4/4** St. Johns, Oglala and
Christ Church, Red Shirt Table
- 4/11** Grace Church, Madison
- 4/12-4/15** Clergy Retreat
- 4/18** All Angels, Spearfish
- 4/20-4/23** BEST Conference hosted by
Province VI & VII
- 4/25** Christ Church, Milbank

