

THE PIEDMONT EPISTLE

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS BY WORD AND DEED

April 2018

Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This year the early Easter coincides with a delayed spring, creating a riotous convergence of natural and theological beauty that we aren't often privy to. In my own yard, the lemon yellow daffodils are set off by the magenta of the flowering quince, which are themselves backdropped by the white of an ornamental pear blossoms. And each evening, as the sun retires, spring peepers serenade, transmuting the beauty of sight into sound. More than mere beauty, though, the scene reminds me of the new life that has sprung afresh for us in the Resurrection.



As Paul writes in his letter to the Colossians, “For in [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” By virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection, all things in creation from the spring peepers to the daffodils are brought into God’s order. They have new life, a new significance, a new meaning.

We approach that new significance in the sense we have that life is more than what we are in touch with at this moment, but that that life is not different from it, not unrelated to it. It is something familiar yet a mystery, the Mystery. Our simplest word for it is life, but it is more than that.

The poet and priest Gerald Manly Hopkins provides an arresting description of the world enlivened by the resurrection in one of his sonnets:

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves — goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*

I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

Hopkin's sonnet conveys the vigor and spark and spontaneity that is inherent in all of life. The focused conviction expressed here is that it is Christ, the God-revealing Christ, who is behind all of this living and in all of it. The message is that all this life— this kingfisher-and dragonfly-aflame life, this tumbled stone and harp string and bell-sounding life—gets played out in us, in our limbs and eyes, in our feet and speech, in the faces of men and women we see all day long, every day, on the sidewalk and in the mirror, in classrooms and kitchen, in workplaces and on playgrounds, in sanctuaries and committees.

For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces

The central verb, “play,” catches the exuberance and freedom that describe life when it is lived beyond necessity, beyond mere survival. It conveys a sense of freedom, of flourishing, enjoying, not just surviving. “Play” also suggests words and sounds and actions that are “played” before another, for an audience. Hopkins incorporates this sense of play with God as the “ultimate” audience (... “to the Father”)—which is to say that all life is, or can be, worship.

With this understanding, Hopkin's sonnet is as good a presentation of what we are after in understanding life, the “end” of life, as we are likely to find: the vigor and spontaneity, the God-revealing Christ getting us and everything around us in on it, on the playful freedom and exuberance, the total rendering of our lives as play, as worship before God. This is what we call the “Christian life.” And it is the task of Christian community—us—to give witness and guidance in the living of this life in a culture that is relentless in reducing, constructing, and enervating this life. That is our joy and privilege—to commend this grace-filled life, this life of play, to an empty and joyless world.

On Easter Sunday, the Resurrection story that we read from the Gospel of Mark ended—or rather left off—with the announcement by an angel that Jesus has risen and has gone on ahead to Galilee. Christ is on the move! The message is the grave cannot hold him. He is at play in ten thousand places!, as Hopkins writes.

As we revel in this season, I encourage each of you to seek out the resurrected Christ, to look for him in the kingfishers and daffodils, but also in the people and the community around us. Where has the news of the resurrection changed lives? Where is the hope of new life in Christ carrying and strengthening those who are

weak? Where is Christ playing among your neighbors and loved ones? And how can you share that joyful sight with others, calling them to join Christ in the play?

May this Eastertide be a time of joy, of wonder, of worship, and most of all of play!

Yours in Christ,

W Terry Miller

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Loose Plate Offering---The Loose Plate Offering (cash) that is collected on the fourth Sunday of this month (April 22) will be given to Boy Scout Troop 116, which our congregation sponsors.

Parish Work Day—Join us on Saturday, April 21 to help clean up, spruce up and polish up the grounds around our parish, to prepare it for the growing season.

Deacon's Desk

"Lent in a Bag" and Holy Week in a Box" are among some of the newer aspects of Christian Formation to be found in liturgical churches these days. Initially skeptical, I spent some time with the concept and found it a fruitful way to support our families, both those with children and adults only. Unlike "Ashes to Go", it uplifts and deepens an ongoing worship experience for those who know our Lord. Like the early church, it is about feeding those who love Christ where they are.



In Shepherd's Way, our Easter season will be spent on discovering the appearances of Christ to the Early Church, Stations of the Resurrection as it were. Having spent time in Lent prayerfully reflecting on The Apostles' Creed, now the shift will be to the Nicene Creed; how is it different? Who did the early church say Jesus was? As always, there will be age appropriate activities and experiences for our "little lambs" as well.

As in past years, Shepherd's Way will take a summer break after a Pentecost celebration. However, look for opportunities coming throughout the summer to walk with our Lord and be His hands, feet, and voice in the world. Remembering at all times that we may be the only Bible that someone may read, how are we to spend this season of Easter now that the baskets are put away? With Easter, we have traded our Easter "duds" for the white gown of Baptism worn in the early church. It is in wearing our faith out into our daily lives that we share with the world that "Christ is Risen. Alleluia, alleluia!"

In His service,
Deacon Kathryn+

PRAYER JOYS & CONCERNS

We offer prayers of healing for friends and family:

Corey Barker	Griff & Vera Griffin	Susan Muston
The Barksdale Family	Stanley Griffin (Vera & Griff's son)	Donna Nettles
Emily Begovitch (Kathy Henken's niece)	Mary Haley	Amanda Paff
Nicky Bourgeois (Doris Lackey's friend)	Reggie Hall (Barbara Straightiff's brother-in-law)	Sara Parmenter
Fran Bowers	Luke Harbert,	Beau Puryear
Jean Brashears	Sue Lam	Maria Rosenberg
Max Brown (Sue Burnett's friend, 4-y.o.)	Ted and Rene Hinds	Myia MacKenzie Shifflett
Jane Cameer	Skip McDanolds	Lorraine Sandifer
Doris & Roland Chapman	The Hitt family	Jacqueline Smith
Heather Comer	Ren LeVally (Dink's son)	Judy Taylor (friend of Kathy Henken)
The Cox family	Keira & Brendan Miller	Bob Thomas
Harley Cronk	Ruby Minick (grandmother of a friend of Kay John)	The Thomas family
David Cronk	Rosalie Mow (Doug's mother)	Matt Tsun
The Filmore family	Susan Mowchan	Robert Ulrich
Patrick & Sean Fohner	Dorothy Mudd	Bernie Valdez
Cynthia Gerstner		Donna Whitman (friend of the Griffiths)
Carrie Gilles		Augusta Woodward
The Gleason family		Jeff Yowel

We pray for peace and the restoration of people's safety and dignity in Middle East, for the victims of famine and discord in Africa, and those suffering due to conflicts in Asia. We pray for the victims of severe weather. We pray for all prisoners and their families.

We pray for the men and women in the armed services, especially Mike Butterworth, Chris Burnett, Patrick DaSilva, Graham Davidson, Alex Gochenour, Sean Hegg, R.E. Hutton, Nathan Kinkey, Jeffery Mainwaring, Todd Mainwaring, Anthony Mark, and Clay Puryear, and for our first responders. We pray for our presiding bishop, Michael Curry; our bishops, Shannon Johnston, Susan Goff, Bob Ilhoff, the churches of the Diocese of Virginia, and for our 70 million brothers and sisters in the Anglican Communion.

We pray for the families in Barbara's House; for the work of Madison Emergency Services Association, Madison Free Clinic, Literacy Council of Madison County, Boy's and Girl's Club of Madison, Senior Nutrition Site, Madison County Education Foundation, Boy Scout Troop 116, and Madison Strong.

We pray for our youth in college: Nick Bader, Josh Good, Isabella Hansen, Ben Landolt, Sam Landolt, Paul Jackson, Jacob Young, and Nathan Young.

We give thanks to God for all the families in this blessed Piedmont Church. Gracious Lord, guide, preserve and protect your servants as they create for your glory a holy family of love. May their love for each other be a sign of your tender care.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday 9:45 a.m. Shepherd's Way (Sunday School)
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour in the parish house
Monday 7:00 p.m. Adult study group at the McDowell's home
Wednesday 10:00 a.m. Community Book Discussion
Thursday 7:00 p.m. Bible Fellowship – parish house

If you know of someone who is unable to get to church, but would like to receive communion, please let Father Terry or Deacon Kathryn know and they will arrange for a visitation.

MESA food donations - Please bring a can, bag, bottle, or box of non-perishable food item. Thanks for your generosity.

Graves Chapel News

Susan has arranged for Lucia Bakewell to return to the Chapel and offer her art expertise as it pertains to *hands on art!* It's a *very* fun event and all individuals that attended earlier classes, really enjoyed themselves.

The event will begin at 10:00 a.m. and run until approximately 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 28, with a light lunch provided.

There is no fee involved although tax deductible donations to Graves Chapel would be appreciated.

So mark your calendars for this very fun event!

Our next Evening Prayer Service will be Sunday April 29, 2018--at 4:00pm and, since this is the 5th Sunday of the month, there will be a *potluck dinner* immediately following the service.

Please bring food dishes and/or desserts enough for your family and to share with others.
Beverages will be provided!

Everyone is welcome! Bring your neighbors, and any additional friends and/or guests...

Church Service Volunteer List April 2018

	April 1st	April 8th	April 15th	April 22nd	April 29th
Lector	Doug Mow	Joe Parker	Sue Brown	Briarley Rogers	Jim Landolt
Intercessor	Kathryn Thomas	Bob Nowak	Eve Bargmann	Norris John	Kathryn Thomas
Acolyte/ Crucifer	Annika & Caden Burnside	Molly Sanford	Beth Roireau	Jordan Spencer	Jim Landolt
Chalice	Kathryn Thomas	Bob Nowak	Eve Bargmann	Norris John	Kathryn Thomas
Usher	Colt Puryear	Nick Spencer	Dink Kreis	Kay John	James Maloney
Vestry Person					
Social Hour					
Altar Care	Carol Nowak and Vickie Parker				



Piedmont Episcopal Church
“Proclaiming the Good News by Word and Deed”

April 2018

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