

Service Schedule

Niles

9:30am

Indoor
Eucharist –
Trinity's
Feast Day!

*limited
seating*

St. Joseph

9:30am

Indoor Morning
Prayer

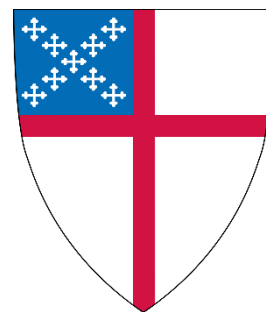
Dowagiac

10:00am

Indoor Morning
Prayer

The Covenant Close-up

May 27th, 2021 Issue #78



Worship Materials

First Sunday after Pentecost – Trinity Sunday

[Facebook](#) Live Service from Niles with [Bulletin](#)

The Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The First Reading: Isaiah 6:1 - 8

Psalm 29 or Canticle 13

The Second Reading: Romans 8:12 - 17

The Gospel: John 3:1 - 17

President Biden announced this week that Americans can safely be out of doors without masks. That is great news, **except for church! We are still under Phase 2 of the Pastoral Directives. Masks are expected to be worn at all times. The exception is that the preacher may remove their mask to preach. Thank you for understanding and for keeping everyone safe. **

In This Edition



Down Low from Dowagiac

Just in from St. Joe

News From Niles

Announcements and Reminders

Extra Spiritual Materials

Reflections from the Rector

From the desk of Reverend Diane Pike

This week is the Church's observance of the Holy Trinity – the One in Three and Three in One. We might be well-advised to leave it there, take it on faith and move on. It is one of the weeks most preachers dread ... what does one do with the doctrine of the Trinity? Most of us do not preach doctrine; we preach how to live our lives in faith with the Living Christ.

One word I remember distinctly from seminary Greek is *ousia* (ooo-see-yah) – of one substance which cannot be divided. The Holy Trinity is one substance from which three entities – God, Son, Holy Spirit – emanate in and through God's creation – the world, the saints of heaven and us.

If I peeled an orange and put it in front of you; the peeling, the orange sections, and the seeds – and asked you which was the orange, your answer would probably be "all of it." And that would be correct. Each part is of the orange, though each has a different purpose in the existence of the orange. The seeds will provide new growth, the orange segments are edible and nutritious, and the tough exterior skin protects the fruit and the seeds. The difference is that *ousia* – the Trinity – cannot be divided as the orange is. That is the rub in trying to explain the Trinity.

Our creeds talk about our beliefs in one God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We affirm that belief each week during our corporate worship. But do we really understand what we are saying, what we are affirming when we say, "We believe in ...?" If you are curious about the doctrine of the Trinity, check out the catechism that can be found at the end of the Book of Common Prayer. The creed of St. Athanasius speaks about God the Creator, the Son – Jesus – Who is the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit Who sustains us in Christ's absence on Earth. It is an interesting creed and explores, in a deeper way, the one substance which cannot be divided ... *ousia*.

So why is the Trinity part of our doctrine? Why is it important?

The simple answer is because God is the great Creator and Lover of the world. God became incarnate as the Son, Jesus, and came to Earth to redeem God's people to God's self. Following the execution of the Son, the Holy Spirit – the Advocate – exists with us to guide us, to protect us and to lead us. The Trinity is the foundation of our theology as Christians and as our doctrine as Episcopalians. I think it is important for us to understand what it is we say we believe before receiving Holy Communion.

Unfortunately, trying to define and explain the Trinity limits God. Our explanations put God, Son and Spirit into neat little boxes, because that is how we like to order things. We like things neat and tidy, and there is nothing neat or tidy about the Trinity. If the Trinity were neat and tidy it would not be God Who is everywhere and is everything all of the time. God is too big to be organized so our little brains can understand the doctrine.

Maybe it is good that we cannot really get our heads around the doctrine of the Trinity. Maybe it is good that God is so big that we cannot define God's unlimited love and omnipotence in theology and catechesis. And, maybe, just maybe, this talk about the Trinity might help us to evolve our thinking about God and provide more room for God in our hearts and minds.

<https://www.swmecovenant.org/>

Birthdays!

**Elizabeth Shapleigh
(St. Joseph) – 5/28**

**Tharon Combs
(Dowagiac) – 5/29**

**Joe O'Dell
(St. Joseph) – 5/31**

**Pat McKee
(St. Joseph) – 6/1**

**Chris Kirchoff
(St. Joseph) – 6/4**

Down Low from Dowagiac

From the desk of Carol Haney, Senior Warden

- ❖ Dowagiac needs extra prayers during their time of discernment. Their Keepers of the Kaleidoscope chapter of the Daughter of the Kings has written a prayer for guidance and strength. Please find it [here](#).
- ❖ The next St. Paul's Food Pantry is **Saturday, May 29th**. Help is always needed and appreciated! Please be there by 10:00am to help get things set up. If you have questions, please feel to contact the [office](#) or [Carol Haney](#).

Just in from St. Joe

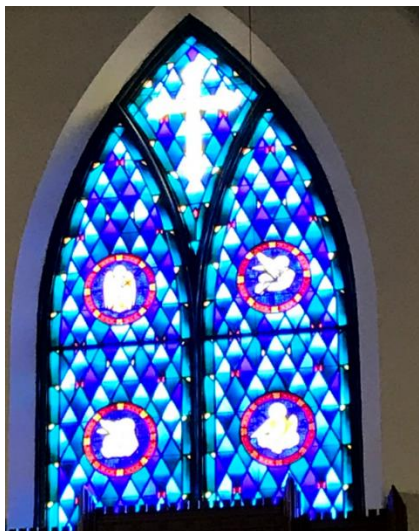
From the desk of Daniel Reed, Senior Warden

- ❖ Our next Soup Kitchen is **Friday, May 28th**. Please arrive by **9:30am**. We will be making sandwiches for distribution in sack lunches. Please contact [Bill Davidson](#) if you have any questions.
- ❖ Ladies at Lunch will be held at 11:30am on Thursday, June 3rd at Schus on Pleasant Street.
- ❖ The Vestry met this past Sunday and has authorized some repair project that done during the summer. These include: Work on John's closet; the heating system; and the door on Morton Street. If you have any questions, feel free to contact any member of the vestry.

News from Niles

From the desk of Kathy Davies, Senior Warden

- ❖ Trinity is looking forward to being inside on **Trinity Sunday, May 30th**. All are welcome to join us. We will have doors open and music and flowers! Seating will be limited inside.



Announcements and Reminders

Anniversaries!

**Barb and Bob
Cheek**

(St. Joseph) – 5/27

**Bob and Connie
Plucienik**

(Dowagiac) – 5/28

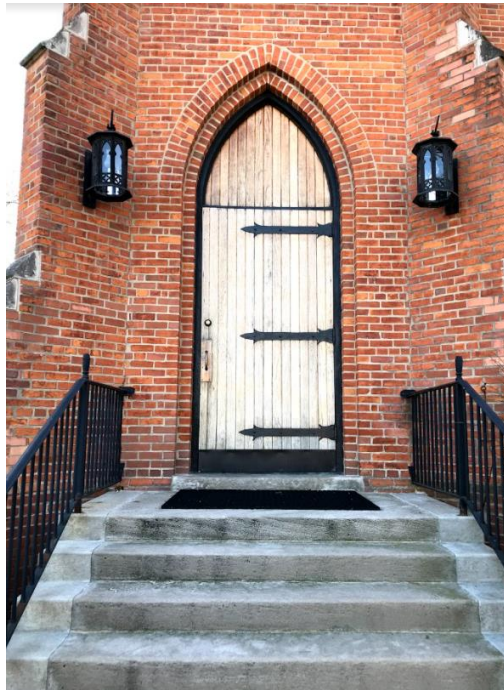
**MaryAnn and Mike
Mierau**

(St. Joseph) – 5/29

**Allen and Lois
Thomas**

(St. Joseph) – 6/2

- ❖ St. Paul's St. Joseph will be hosting a Gun Violence Reduction Sabbath Candlelight Vigil on **Friday, June 6th, at 7:00pm**, put on by the Daughter's of the King.
- ❖ The Province V ECW will be holding their Annual Meeting on Zoom (3 separate meeting links). For more information or to register, please go to their [website](#).
- ❖ Please watch for an email or letter from the dioceses of Western and Eastern Michigan. They are sending out information and gathering feedback on the suspension of Bishop Hougland. Please take a few minutes to [read](#), contemplate, and **respond** to the standing committee's request for feedback.
- ❖ **CALLING ALL KNITTERS – CROCHETERS – WEAVERS – KNEEDLE POINTERS!!!!** Our first session of ChurchNext's Contemplative Knitting series has gone off with a hit, and interest has picked up in it! Diane+ will be leading another group starting in **June**. No cost to you – the Covenant is paying for it. We are getting ready to start the next group, so if you are interested please let [Diane+](#) know ASAP!



Our Covenant Cares Mailing List



St. Joseph

Elizabeth Shapleigh
3033 Mansueto Dr.
Stevensville, MI, 49127

Kitty Fisher
The Whitcomb
509 Ship Street
St. Joseph, MI, 49085

Jean Bartz
Woodland Terrace
8850 Red Arrow Hwy.
Bridgman, MI, 49106

Extra Spiritual Materials

- ❖ The Episcopal Church put on an event "In These Uncertain Times." Here is the [link](#) to the description and recording.
- ❖ A new book has been released from Forward Movement titled, *Angels of the Bible*. Over the years, many people have asked me if I believe in angels. While I don't have a definitive answer, Rev. Kate Moorehead gives us an opportunity to explore what is written in the sacred texts. The book is a bit pricey at \$20.00. But if there are 10 or more people interested, the cost drops to \$18.00 - hey, two bucks is two bucks! Please email [Diane+](#) if you are interested in participating in a study group for this book. I have not seen the book so I don't know if we will study 1, 2 or 3 angels each week. That will be determined by the group.
- ❖ Want to explore other services in other churches? Click [here](#) to take a peak at some of the others that are being offered. AND do not forget to [check](#) out St. Paul's Cathedral in Detroit!
- ❖ Want up-to-date news and announcements from the Diocese? Click [here](#) to subscribe to The Feast.
- ❖ Registration for this year's Episcopal Youth Camp has OPENED!!! Please follow this link to [register](#). For more information on the camp and mission, please follow this [link](#).
- ❖ ECF (Episcopal Church Foundation) sent out its newest newsletter follow this [link](#) to view.

Our Covenant Cares Mailing List Continued

Niles

Harvey and Simone Bird
132 East Bertrand Rd.
Niles, MI, 49120

Jayne McQuaid
1147 South 3rd St.
Niles, MI, 49120

Virginia Strayer
C/O Anne Comer
5153 Oak Hills Dr.
Eaton Rapids, MI, 48827

Irene Williams
2410 Miller Dr.
Niles, MI, 49120

**Want something
added to the
newsletter? Just let
Diane or Heather
Leonard know! **

Let's Get to Know...

The St. Joseph Leadership Council Reps

Daniel Reed



- **Which parish is your "home" parish? How long have you been there?**
 - St. Paul's in St. Joseph is our home parish where I serve now as the Senior Warden. Sharon and I came to St. Joseph with our daughters in 1993. We attended here until we bought a house in Sodus. After our kids went to college and after Sharon's mom sold her home we moved her in with us back in St. Joe and we returned to St. Paul's in 2012.
- **What is your responsibility to the Covenant?**
 - I'm one of the Parish Representatives for St. Paul's. And am one of the original members of the Leadership Council.
- **What is your favorite part of our Eucharist service?**
 - I was raised a Roman Catholic and seriously considered the Priesthood. The entire Service has elements I appreciate but for me Holy Communion is what we come for first and foremost.
- **What is your favorite season, and what is your favorite activity in that season?**
 - My favorite season is Summer but I enjoy all the types of weather we have here. But as a runner and especially as a Triathlete, swimming is really hard to do in Winter. Call me crazy but Florida looks better to me, despite those pesky gators, all the time.