

Southwest Michigan Episcopal Covenant  
Announcements  
November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Covid Update

**Masks are required at all times in all areas of our buildings.**

**Anyone in a ministry that brings you in contact with another person should be vaccinated. If this is a concern, please see Rev. Diane.**

<p><b>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS THIS WEEKEND.</b> <b>TURN YOUR CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR SATURDAY NIGHT.</b></p>
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THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Year B  
RCL

**The Feast of All Saints**

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9

Psalm 24

Revelation 21:1-6a

John 11:32-44

Services this weekend: St. Joseph 9:30 am Holy Communion with organ  
Dowagiac 10:00 am Holy Communion  
Niles 9:30 am Holy Communion

Covenant News

DOWAGIAC

- The November Food Pantry will be held early in observance of Thanksgiving. Our clients may pick up food on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. If you are available to assist, please arrive by 10:00 am.

- If you are interested in discussing the possibility of a House Church, beginning in January, please reach out to Dick Judd. He will take your name and will help with coordinating this effort.

### NILES

- Please remember to turn in your **estimate of giving** cards for 2022. The vestry will use these numbers to finalize a budget for next year. Thank you.

### ST. JOSEPH

- The Monday Book Group is meeting again at 10:00 each Monday morning. Come and enjoy fellowship and discussion about the books we read.
- Please remember to turn in your **estimate of giving** cards for 2022. The vestry will use these numbers to finalize a budget for next year. Thank you.
- St. Paul's will offer CPR and/or First Aid courses on December 5<sup>th</sup> following the service. Folks from Niles and Dowagiac are invited as well. The fee is \$30 for the two year certification. Please contact Dan Reed, Sr. Warden, at [reeddax@yahoo.com](mailto:reeddax@yahoo.com), or sign up on the bulletin board.
- Water Distribution for our Benton Harbor neighbors is a much needed ministry in the name of St. Paul's. Those of you who have time availability during the day can Volunteer at a couple of locations depending on the day of the week. This is going to be an ongoing situation so there is ample opportunity to serve.
- If you are feeling called to serve during worship, we are in need of ushers, Eucharistic Visitors, Lay Readers and Leaders for Morning Prayer (training will be provided).

### Mark Your Calendars

An **Advent Evensong** will be held at 4:00 pm on **Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>** at St. Paul's in Dowagiac. The service will be about an hour and provides an opportunity for us to be mindful about the Season of Advent.

**Christmas Eve Services:** Dowagiac 4:00 pm; Niles 6:30 pm; St. Joseph 9:00 pm

**Christmas Lessons and Carols** will be held in Dowagiac on **Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup>**. This service will feature Christmas readings and beloved hymns and carols. It will be held at 10:00 am and will be our last event as a Covenant. Coffee Hour

will follow the service. *Three volunteers for readings are needed from each congregation. Please contact Rev. Diane if you are willing to read.*

[revdmpike@swmec.org](mailto:revdmpike@swmec.org)

**Covenant and Retirement Celebration** Saturday, January 1<sup>st</sup> at Trinity Niles.  
Brunch 11:00 – 1:00. Come say farewell to our Covenant friends and to Rev. Diane as she begins a new journey of retirement.

The closing service for Dowagiac will be held on **Thursday, January 6<sup>th</sup>** for the Feast of the Epiphany. Time to be announced at a later date.

### Reflection from the Rector

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; <sup>4</sup>he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” <sup>5</sup>And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” <sup>6</sup>Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Revelation 21:1-6*

This passage from John’s Revelation is a passage often chosen for the burial rite of a funeral. It describes in succinct detail God’s presence among us before, during and after our mortal existence. It is a hope-filled passage and one that provides peace to those who mourn.

John’s revelation includes a view of Jerusalem, the new city, the city on the hill that comes out of heaven to be among us on earth. The passage describes a loving God who walks with us in this earthly existence. We do not have to wait until our death to see and experience the God of John’s revelation. God’s home is with us.

God’s mercy is profound – God wipes every tear from the eyes of those who mourn. Death is abolished by God’s loving hands ... as is pain and suffering of

human beings. The ways of the world are no more ... God is creating a new world in which we will exist with Jesus and all the saints who have gone before us.

As we observe All Saints' this weekend, let us remember John's dream, a dream of a new heaven and a new earth. May we rest in peace and hope knowing that with God all things are possible, including overcoming pain, crying, suffering and death. God raised Jesus from the dead. The love of God is awesome and amazing. We will cry no more and rest in peace with those who are in the nearer presence of God.

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