

Service Schedule



Niles

9:30am

**Indoor Morning
Prayer**

St. Joseph

9:30am

Indoor Eucharist

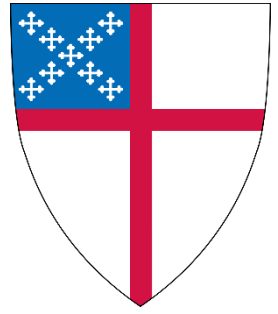
Dowagiac

10:00am

Indoor Eucharist

**Please keep an eye
out for updates from
our One Call Now
system for any changes*

The Covenant Close-up



August 5th, 2021 Issue #88

Worship Materials

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

[Facebook](#) *Live Service from Dowagiac*

The Collect: Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do always those things that are right, that we, who cannot exist without you, may by you be enabled to live according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The First Reading: 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 31-33

Psalm 130

The Second Reading: Ephesians 4:25 – 5:2

The Gospel: John 6:35, 41 - 51

Note: Masks and social distancing are recommended when inside the church buildings. There will still only be the host served at Eucharist, and no contact during the Peace.

In This Edition



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Reflections from the Rector

From the desk of Reverend Diane Pike

Putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

The passage of Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus that we read this week has familiar overtones. "Do not let the sun go down on your anger..." is good advice often given to newlyweds. It's more than an old adage, and the writer wants us to go further in our relationships with God and with each other.

This almost sounds like another version of the Ten Commandments. I think it's an expansion of the Great Commandment: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. The second is like unto it; "Love your neighbor as yourself."

This passage is clear about how we are to live a life in Christ. A Christian life, according to the writer of this letter, leaves no room for anger, the devil, theft, destructive speech, slander, falsehood or malice. We are to be "kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven (us)." It's about truth – truth in our relationship with each other and with God.

The writer is giving us a road map, a pattern to follow for being a Christian disciple. We don't get to pick and choose which biblical instructions we follow. We are to be diligent, forthright and persistent in our lives with God and through Christ. It's not easy, yet we have all the directions and instructions we need to know how to navigate a holy life while living in a secular world.

I love this passage. The instructions are written in a clear and concise manner to allow for our comprehension of the steps to be taken toward reconciliation with God and with each other. There is little to think about except how we can alter our lives to be in concert with a forgiving God full of grace and mercy.

To be in true grace and in God's abundant love is the most we can pray for living in a fallen world. What mercy is shown by the God of Love and Light when we choose to follow what God wants for us. It is the best Way forward.

Peace,

Diane+

Leadership from the Leadership Council

From the desk of Jean Walsh, Covenant Convener



The Leadership Council had a short meeting in August as there hasn't been much business to discuss. Sunday worship at the three churches has been steady and increasing as people become more comfortable with venturing out. Recent increases in positive COVID cases may have a future impact on in-house worship. Parishes are encouraged to consider outdoor worship with the nice weather.

Parish audits for St. Joe and Niles are getting underway this month. The respective vestries will receive the reports by September. Dowagiac will conduct their audit separately. Thanks to the volunteers who will be assisting in all of the parishes.

The congregation in Dowagiac is facing some difficult decisions regarding the selling of their building. This is a sad and difficult time for the parish as they prepare themselves for an unknown future. Keep our brothers and sisters in prayer for discernment and comfort.

The vestry of Trinity Niles is focusing their energies on creative outreach activities in the community. It is all about exposure and "being Christ" in the world. Anyone interested is welcome to join them. Contact Kathy Davies for opportunities.

The St. Joe congregation is keeping up with their monthly commitment to the Soup Kitchen and taking care of regular business. Summer near the lake is always "down time" as many take advantage of the beautiful weather. This is often an opportunity to welcome the worship visitor staying at our lakeshore.

Reminder of our Covenant Octoberfest gathering, **Sunday, September 19**. We will gather for a joint Eucharist at St. Paul's in St. Joseph (outside weather permitting) on **Sunday, September 19 at 10:00 am**. Morning Prayer will take place in Dowagiac and Niles that day. We will then fire up the grills and break out the food and fun on the lawn.

Our next Leadership Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 7 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. If you are interested in joining us, contact either Jean Walsh or one of your parish representatives for the Zoom link.

Peace,

Jean Walsh

Birthdays!



Sandy O'Dell (St. Joseph) – 8/4

Jean Walsh (St. Joseph) – 8/4

Heather Leonard (Dowagiac) – 8/4

Gabby Combs – (Dowagiac) 8/7

Jacalyn Odden – (St. Joseph) 8/15

Mamie Okeke – (Niles) 8/9

Elaine Kernodle – (Niles) 8/10

Darlene Morey – (Dowagiac) 8/10

Shirley Miller – (Niles) 8/12

Jennifer Frechette – (Dowagiac) 8/12

Teri Kirchoff – (St. Joseph) 8/14

Down Low from Dowagiac

From the desk of Carol Haney, Senior Warden

- ❖ There will be a congregational meeting following worship on Sunday, September 12th. The topic of the meeting will be the closure of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and plans to sell the building. A congregational vote is required by the canons of the diocese. Your presence, input and vote are important. Please plan to join us on that day.

Just in from St. Joe

From the desk of Daniel Reed, Senior Warden

- ❖ The Monday Morning Book Group will resume meeting on Monday, September 13th at 10:00 in the St. Paul's library. Please pass the message to all of our book group friends. We also invite other friends to meet with us. See you on September 13.

News from Niles

From the desk of Kathy Davies, Senior Warden

- ❖ Niles will be helping audit St. Joseph finances this Saturday for their annual audit needed for the Diocese. They will be returning the favor and helping out audit us on Saturday, August 14th.

Anniversaries!



**Susan and Steve
Rice**

Dowagiac – 8/8

Announcements and Reminders

- ❖ A word from Bishop Houghland – Saying Goodbye and Blessing. To watch the video message follow this [link](#).
- ❖ We are having a Covenant Picnic Oktoberfest-style in September (September 19th)! We will be having a joint service at St. Joe; morning prayer will be held at the other two. If you would like to help, please contact your warden or [Heather Leonard](#).

Our Covenant Cares Mailing List



St. Joseph

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Kitty Fisher

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Virginia Strayer

C/O Anne Comer
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Irene Williams

2410 Miller Dr.
Niles, MI, 49120

Jeri Spitzer

1070 Vineland
St. Joseph, MI, 49085

Extra Spiritual Materials

- ❖ 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!
- ❖ Upcoming Events for Interfaith [Action](#)!
- ❖ 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.

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