

# Service Schedule



## Niles

9:30am

Indoor Morning  
Prayer

## St. Joseph

9:30am

Indoor Eucharist

## Dowagiac

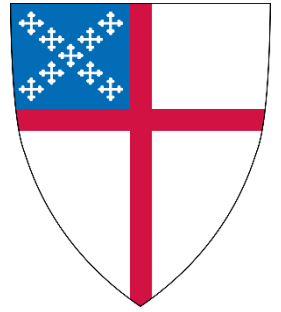
10:00am

Indoor Eucharist

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

# The Covenant Close-up

June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 Issue #79



## Worship Materials

### Gun Violence Sabbath

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

**The Collect:** O God, of whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; 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:** 1 Samuel 8:4 – 1, 12-15, 11:14-15  
Psalm 138

**The Second Reading:** 2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1

**The Gospel:** Mark 3: 20-35

Note: Masks and social distancing required at all times when inside the church buildings.



# *In This Edition*



## **Counsel from the Leadership Council**

## **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

The Episcopal Church marked the first weekend in June to observe and promote as Gun Violence Reduction. Lest it be just another day on the calendar that slides by unnoticed, I offer this personal reflection.

I grew up in Michigan in a family of rifle hunters. My father hunted small game, his father hunted and my great aunt, who was all of 5'1" was maybe the best hunter of them all. I dated a guy who hunted and would, on occasion, walk with him. Guns were in our house. We knew where they were and Dad always kept the ammunition separate from the rifles. (I still don't know where he kept it.) Every fall we knew the guys would all be gone for a day for the opening of deer season. It was just how it was.

Plainwell, my home town, is a small town. When I was growing up population was about 3500. We didn't experience much tragedy or violence. An old barn fire was about as exciting as it got.

Over the course of my lifetime I have had four friends and family members who have been murdered and/or who have committed suicide. Four. That seems like a lot to me, for someone who comes from a small town where people didn't lock their doors and almost everyone I knew lived in a home with a hunter and guns.

These weren't accidents – I experienced one of those in junior high when a classmate was killed in a hunting accident. All four people were murdered or victims of murder/suicide or suicide. It used to be that we all knew someone affected by cancer. That still holds true. I also contend that most of us have been touched by gun violence ... someone we know or someone close to us has been a victim of gun violence. Just as the COVID virus is an epidemic, I contend that gun violence is at epidemic proportions and is a public health issue.

The year 2021 is on track to be a record breaker with the number of deaths by gun violence. As of the end of May, there is an increase in gun-related deaths ... and we aren't even halfway through the year. And 2020 was the deadliest year in history with deaths attributed to firearms. I am not against gun ownership. That said, I do believe that each of us, as a creation of God, has a right to feel and to be safe in our own homes, schools, churches and places of work. I don't like having to lock the office for safety when I leave, and someone is still working. I don't like waking up in the morning to find that another unarmed (usually) young man (usually black) has been shot by a (usually white) police officer overnight. I don't like wondering if someone I know, someone I love, will be hurt or killed by a random act of violence.

What I pray for is a revitalization of "random acts of kindness" where each of us does something nice for another person, preferably someone we don't know, once a day. Remember the movie, "Pay it Forward" released in 2000 starring Kevin Spacey, Helen Hunt and Haley Joel Osment? If not, I suggest renting it ... it's a great story about how lives are changed through small, intentional acts of kindness.

I don't know what the answer is for our country's sad statistic on gun violence. I'm sure God weeps with us. Perhaps we can make a small difference in our own communities and in our own lives by being kinder and gentler with each other. It might be a start.





# *Counsel from the Leadership Council*

From the desk of Jean Walsh, Covenant Convener

## *Birthdays!*



**Joe O'Dell**  
**(St. Joseph) – 5/31**

**Pat McKee**  
**(St. Joseph) – 6/1**

**Chris Kirchoff**  
**(St. Joseph) – 6/4**

**Jocellie Llanto**  
**(St. Joseph) – 6/7**

**Jerry Rossow**  
**(Niles) – 6/9**

**Connie Blackmond**  
**(Niles) – 6/12**

Summer is here and the weather is finally turning in our favor. We celebrated the positive changes with worship back in the churches this past weekend. Alleluia!

While we are able to worship in the churches, masks and distancing as well as all other preventive protocols are to be followed. As the weather gets nicer, vestries may choose to hold worship outdoors to take advantage of the cool breezes and sunshine, truly gifts from God.

The Leadership Council meeting was short and sweet this month as there was not much to catch up on. We are still in the preparation stages for annual audits. If you would have time to help gather and scan documents for your parish, contact your senior warden. The more that we have digitally, the easier it will be to conduct our reviews. Audits are due to the Diocese by September.

Also in financial news, the Covenant thanks Kathy Davies of Niles for her work as our Bookkeeper/Treasurer for the past several years. She has done triple duty for some time and now is stepping back. We are looking for a volunteer for a few hours per month to handle the duties. Kathy is getting everything set up for quick and easy upkeep and there is always support available. If this is something you may be interested in contact your Senior Warden or Jean Walsh (JeanWalsh@swmec.org) to find out more.

Consider joining the vigil at St. Paul's, St. Joseph on Friday, June 4 against gun violence. Too many people are dying senselessly in our country. Wear orange for solidarity.

The Leadership Council is looking ahead to a possible Covenant gathering outside, a.k.a. a picnic, in the later summer. We need to see how the health situation shapes up over the next weeks. This would allow all of us to finally be in one place, sharing lockdown stories and fellowship. Anyone interested in helping with the planning can contact your Senior Warden or Jean. It has been a long and lonely year plus. We are all ready to see some friendly faces.



# *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](#).
- ❖ Our next vestry meeting is **Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm via Zoom!** If you have anything you would like to add, or join in the open discussion, please let Heather or Diane+ know.

## *Anniversaries!*



**Allen and Lois  
Thomas**

**(St. Joseph) – 6/2**

**Karla and Harold  
Bragg**

**(St. Joseph) – 6/12**

## *Just in from St. Joe*

From the desk of Daniel Reed, Senior Warden



**Stay safe and  
God Bless!**

## *News from Niles*

From the desk of Kathy Davies, Senior Warden

- ❖ Thank you to everyone that came and worshipped with us on Trinity Sunday! It was so wonderful to be inside with everyone. A special thank you to Paul Hochstetler for the wonderful organ music.



# Announcements and Reminders

## 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

### ❖ HELP WANTED!!!!

Our wonderful Covenant Treasurer, Kathy Davies, is taking a step back and we are looking for someone to help and take on this important role. No experience necessary, just the willingness and time to learn and listen. If you have questions or feel the call to help please contact [Diane+](#) or [Jean](#).

- ❖ St. Paul's St. Joseph will be hosting a Gun Violence Reduction Sabbath Candlelight Vigil on **Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 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](#).

## Extra Spiritual Materials

- ❖ Bishop Skip did another Feast Day Video on the The Visitation. Watch it [HERE](#).
- ❖ 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!
- ❖ 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.



# *Let's Get to Know...*

*The St. Joseph Leadership Council Reps*

**Bob Cheek**



## *Our Covenant Cares Mailing List Continued*



### **Niles**

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

Jayne McQuaid  
1147 South 3<sup>rd</sup> 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! \**

- **Which parish is your "home" parish? How long have you been there?**
  - St. Paul's in St. Joseph since 1965.
- **What is your responsibility to the Covenant?**
  - I am one of the Parish Representatives for St. Paul's.
- **What is your hope for the Covenant in 2021?**
  - That we process through COVID-19 protocol so we can worship and gather as a community.
- **What is your favorite part of our Eucharist service?**
  - The Consecration/transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.
- **What is your favorite season, and what is your favorite activity in that season?**
  - Beginning of the fall season, and enjoying all the beautiful wonders of autumn.