

Covid Update

The Diocese has stated that each Church may establish its own Covid protocols. Our Vestry has voted to return to the full Eucharist. We may now go to the altar for the bread and wine, however, this is optional. If you wish Father Lockwood to come to your pew, please let him know. The “Peace” will still be exchanged from our pews. No hugging for the time being. We will continue to monitor Covid activity in Columbia County and update as necessary.

Church Calendar:

All Sunday Church Services Begin at 8:30 AM

Holy Week:

April 2	Palm Sunday	Service at 8:30am with distribution of palms
April 6	Maundy Thursday	Service at 7:30 pm with stripping of altar
April 7	Good Friday	Service at Noon
April 9	EASTER	Service 8:30am with Holy Eucharist

Bible Study:

March 1, 22, 29th

April 5th

Wednesdays at 5:30 pm

We are currently studying the book of Proverbs. We begin at 5:30 with a light meal and study to follow. Also available on Zoom – link in the Sunday readings schedule

Climate Smart:

March 8th

5:30 pm

Representatives from the Climate Smart committee from the Town of New Lebanon will be at the Fellowship Hall to discuss how Church of Our Saviour may benefit from new sources of energy that are being used here in town. All invited.

Vestry Meetings:

March 15th

April 19th

Wednesdays 6pm

Save the Date:

June 10 and 11th

New Lebanon Library Book Sale at Church of Our Saviour Fellowship Hall

Programs:

Climate Smart Meeting: March 8 at 5:30 pm. Representatives from the Climate Smart committee from the Town of New Lebanon will be at the Fellowship Hall to discuss how Church of Our Saviour may benefit from new sources of energy that are being used here in Town. Everyone is invited to hear the presentation. The Vestry will be considering options and look for the Lord's leading in this endeavor. We are looking to be good stewards of our world and our finances now and in the future.

New Lebanon Library Book Sale: June 10 and 11, times to be announced.

The Library will be using our Hall for their book sale this year. Watch the newspaper and the Trumpet for times and how you may help.

Charlies Pantry: Our members give nonperishable food items and household supplies as well as support the fuel fund. A food basket for donations is located in the back of the sanctuary. Eugenia delivers the food twice a month to Charlie's Pantry for distribution. This Pantry is open to the community in need on Saturdays.

Domestic Shelters: Members give personal hygiene products for the residents of the shelter to use. In addition, this month we are collecting blankets, sheets, and towels for the shelter to use.

Animal Assistance: We are partnering with a group of young people whom Bitsy has been teaching. We are helping with their service project collecting items that might be used in an animal shelter. Food, toys, blankets, soap, brushes, and combs to name a few. The students will give these items to the Pittsfield animal shelter.

Bates Fund Raiser: The Bruce Bates family home was destroyed by fire on February 11th. We thank God that no one was hurt, but everything is gone. The Bates have been members of our parish and they and their children and grandchildren were active members. Right now, until further information can be obtained, a financial collection is being made. You may drop off a financial contribution at Mavericks in New Lebanon, send a check to the town clerk or donate on the Go-Fund-Me page set up by their son on Facebook. The Town will be opening the free store and the Columbia County Burned-out Victims Fund will be available, if needed.

Building Fund: Money Needed for Sanctuary Repairs

We plan to paint and repair our Sanctuary in 2023. Please think about donating to our Building Fund. Also, as we all know, the price of fuel oil has increased, so please keep that in mind. Thanks again for all your generosity during 2022. With your help we are continuing to provide worship and fellowship in these difficult times.

New Lebanon Flyer- Invitation Ed Curtin, Richard Dauchy, Mary Young & Father Lockwood created a Flyer that was distributed to the local community this month. Special thanks to Ed Curtin for his excellent proof reading skills...as well as a generous donation towards the mailing costs.

Hopefully, this flyer/ invitation will help increase awareness of Church Of Our Saviour

Vestry Notes:

Next Vestry Meetings: Wednesdays at 6pm on March 15th and April 19th.

Diocesan Convention: June 10th, times and venue information to be announced. Mary Young is our representative.

Deanery: Services for the Deanery Parishes and the Cathedral are listed on their websites. The next Deanery meeting will be in the spring. Date and time to be announced.

Music Update: Earlier in the fall a part of the organ's amplifier blew -- thankfully the breaker worked and there was no fire. Organ should be repaired by March 10th.

Buildings and Grounds: Vestry is reviewing the condition of the cellar due to the water which continues to run through it, and we want to be sure there is no mold buildup. Tony Winig continues to help us keep our facilities safe and properly cared for. Thank you, Tony

Bishop Search Update: The Bishop Profile and Search Committee is now conducting initial zoom interviews with the first set of applicants whose names were discerned at the retreat in January. These interviews will expand on the applicants' written statements and responses. Once that is done the interviews will be reviewed by all members of the committee and they will come together for a time of prayerful discernment.

Sometime in March the committee will invite semi-finalists to Christ the King for in-person interviews. Background investigations, reference checks, and follow up research will follow. An additional prayer is being asked of us as a parish for the Profile and Search Committee. This prayer will be added to the Prayers of the People along with the Transition Prayer. Further updates will be given as information is available and will be posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall with the Standing Committee reports.

From the Senior Warden – Elizabeth Sheffer-Winig

Yesterday in church, my thoughts turned to those I love. February is a good month for reflecting on love and the heart. It is Wear Red for Heart Health month. It's the month of Valentine's Day, the month my Abby and Anthony were married, the month of my grandmother's, favorite aunt's and my father's birthdays. My heart is full of love for my husband Tony, my wonderful children Melissa, Jane, Molly, Robert, and Abigail. And the most love of all for my precious grandchildren Neely, Gracie, Olivia, Alora, Evelyn, and Freya. But there is one love that surpasses all and that is the love of our Saviour and of our God - steadfast, never failing, constant, and abiding love. Happy Heart month everyone.

From Father Frank Lockwood

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

Welcome to Lent. I am writing this the morning of Ash Wednesday so I am uncertain if I am going to make the deadline for the newsletter. One of my faults is getting distracted by tasks in the moment. I will often have in mind to complete the article. Unfortunately, this often comes while I'm driving someplace. I even have great ideas for what to write only to arrive at whatever destination and get pulled into something else and lose track of what I was going to do.

So, here I am.

I have tried to come up with something profound to write about for you all this month. I have been unable to do so. Well, that's not completely true. I do have much to write, however, much of it would likely be controversial.

Today, instead, I would like to simply offer a personal insight. My favorite time of the day is the morning. I absolutely love the sunrise. Today as I was driving it was so beautiful. Sunrise is so simple a time of day. The way the light breaks out orange to start. As the rise progresses the color changes to gold as the tops of the trees and the tops of hills are lit up. I so enjoy the feeling of the warming as the light intensifies.

The world begins to stir and waken. Not in a rush but ever so slowly. When I go hunting, it isn't anywhere near as much as about the hunt, as it is about sitting there while the woods awake around me. I love the feeling of sitting there watching as things begin to stir.

I also love the smell of the frost as the sun hits it. Even the smell of the dew as it begins to warm up and rise. The smell is one of comfort, invitation, as the temperatures continue to rise there is a wonderful warmth that begins to surround me. It almost feels like a warm robe covering me.

Sounds are so soft at the first. Little rustles of leaves from smaller animals. The soft chirp of a bird. The wing flap as one takes to flight. Combine that with a cup of coffee, preferably a Columbian blend or even an espresso, and I feel such peace.

It is that peace that attracts me most to the early morning hours. It isn't a time of reflection. It isn't a time of planning. It is simply a time of "stretching". Emotionally, spiritually, maybe even a bit of physical stretching as well. It is a slow stretch. It builds and the inner self begins to pull and flex. The mind touches on so many things all at once without commitment to any, just allowing them to flit across the inner screen like a chipmunk through leaves, peaking up its head every so often only to scamper off some place else.

I don't even mind company during these times. My only request being not much in the way of conversation so that the flow of the sunrise is not interrupted.

Just thinking of it gives me a sense of peace.

Thank you for letting me share.

May we enter into this new year with renewed joy and hope for what it is that may come next.

In the love of Christ,
Fr Frank

Prayer for Profile and Search Committee, written by Janet Papa:

Heavenly Father, graciously guide the minds and hearts of the Profile and Search Committee as they conduct and review interviews and collect follow-up information in this phase of our search for the next Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany.

Grant them such trust in you that whatever might keep them from following the process put in place through the Holy Spirit's guidance of Christ's church will be overwhelmed by faith and love. Give them clarity and courage to acknowledge and to release into your loving hands any anxiety or fear; protect them from anger, bias, agendas, or particular expectations that threaten to distort their understanding of your will or interfere with their unity, good will, and devotion. Heal them of any wounds and enable them to discern your voice amid the voices of personal needs and concerns that would make it hard for them to hear or follow you.

We ask you, Holy Spirit, to give them humility, trust, wisdom, clarity, and your overall guidance. Give them all true discernment of your voice, your ways, and your will, in Christ our Great Shepherd, to the glory of the Father. Let them follow in the examples of faith set forth by Jesus Christ to trust you to provide the candidate whom you desire to fill this office. Lord bless and guard the candidates, so that, from among them, we will receive the shepherd who, by your power, will protect, feed and tend the flock of Christ.

Grant us all grace to obediently follow Jesus, and to receive, in unity, your chosen leader. We pray for discernment to choose a leader who hears your Word, lives your love, and keeps in the ways of your truth; who follows in the steps of Jesus, and will continue the work you have prepared for them to do, so that we, your Diocese of Albany, may bring honor and glory to your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer in a Time of Transition

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for this, your diocese of Albany. Inspire and sustain us in this time of transition.

Incline our hearts to do your will, and so direct us in your ways that the leader you are raising up to be our Bishop will find here joyful disciples, making disciples, united in faith, unflagging in hope, and steeped in mutual charity.

In your mercy, accept our repentance, and grant us peace; look with patience on our enthusiasms; and pour rich gifts and grace upon all who are entrusted with the ongoing work of your church; so that, with diligence and charity, we may discern correctly and walk righteously in your ways.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

