



The Family

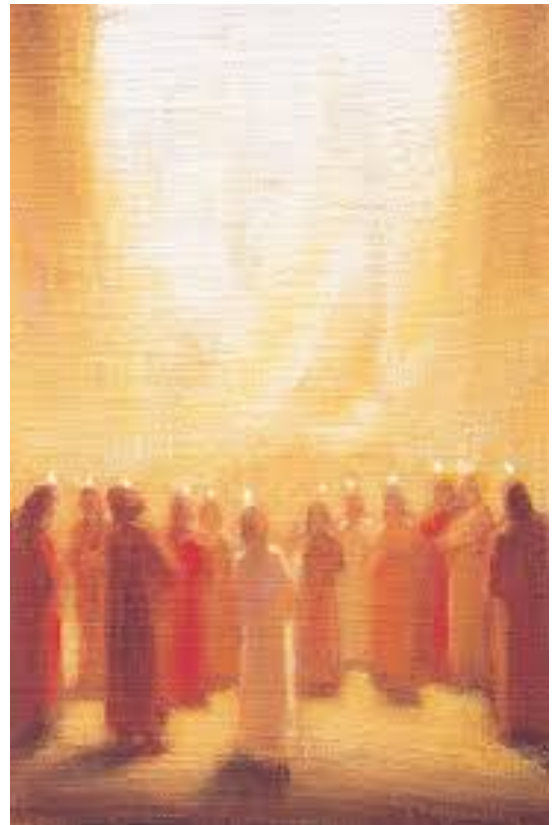
St. Michael's Episcopal Church on
the Naugatuck Green

The Season of Pentecost
May 2020

Pentecost is a special day of worship. The feast (May 31, 2020) marks the end of the Easter season and commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the early followers of Jesus Christ. The Church of God, which began on Pentecost which we read about in Acts 2 is given the mission of preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God.

“And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues of fire, distributed and resting on each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:2-4).

On the Feast of Pentecost, Christians around the world will celebrate this holy day, marked with symbols of flames, a dove and wind. Christ had promised His Apostles that He would send His Holy Spirit, and on Pentecost they were granted this gift. The Apostles went out and began to preach the Gospel in all the languages that the Jews who were gathered there spoke and many were converted and baptized that day. From an historical point of view, Pentecost is the day on which the Church was started. This is also true from a spiritual perspective since the Spirit brings the Church into existence and enlivens it.



On Reopening Worship

My Dear Family of St. Michael's,

The suspension of public gatherings to help mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus has now stretched to well over two months. This long, but necessary response to the pandemic has however undermined the very essence of what it is to be a congregation: **to assemble!** It has been especially difficult for those of us who live our faith according to the liturgical rhythms of Christian life. The irony of the time passed is that the very thing most necessary for Christians in a time of crisis has been most problematic: which is fellowship.

I am very pleased to share that in accordance with recent pastoral protocols discussed and offered by The Episcopal Church in Connecticut, as well as varying sets of local and state guidelines, **St. Michael's will likely resume in-person public worship beginning Sunday, June 21, 2020.** We will be offering three services of Holy Eucharist beginning in June: **Saturdays at 5:00 pm., and Sundays at 8:00 am. and 10:00 am.** More information about each service offering will be forthcoming. Here again, we will abide by specific guidelines for in-person gatherings as we slowly "phase-in" our return to in-person worship. We must observe social distancing, and attendees must wear masks. While it may seem odd, with limited seating capacity we will have to ask for your consideration in adjusting to three services in order to share our space in consideration to each person's worship preference.

While the resumption of in-person public worship is a welcome step, I must strongly communicate guidelines that will govern our public worship for the foreseeable future. I also urge anyone, and especially our senior adults, who have pre-existing medical conditions to refrain from attending services for a while to come. The challenges of smaller children, especially those with medical conditions or those who may be too young to keep a mask on during the entirety of a service should also be considered. Neither of these cautions feels good for me to communicate, but they are necessary.

Be assured that the church will do all we can to ensure a sanitary and safe worship space. However, we are not able to guarantee your health. You will have to take responsibility for yourself. In short, if anyone has any reservations whatsoever about gathering in-person for public worship at St. Michael's, I recommend you remain at home and participate in the continuing live-streamed worship offerings.

I am very grateful for the wisdom discerned from seemingly endless conversations with our senior leadership, our vestry, my clergy colleagues, our staff, our bishops, and other area clergy. I understand that we may learn new things in the days to come that will alter the shape of this re-opening to in-person worship. We are trying hard to balance prudence with our call to worship.

St. Paul writes to his beloved protégé Timothy; "I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy" (2 Tim. 1:4). I trust we can all relate to his words as never before. The suspension of our liturgical life has only increased our desire for it. We are Christians. We are people of hope. We are people of new life. I long to be with you again in the weeks ahead, and I thank you in advance for your loving patience and understanding with these plans, guidelines, and recommendations.

Yours in Christ,

Jules+

General Guidelines for Reopening Worship

St. Michael's is committed to mapping a responsible return to in-person worship within the guidelines provided by state and local government, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and our Bishops Ian and Laura. Our primary concern is the health and well-being of our community and parish family. To that end, the following recommendations and practices for in-person worship are necessary and will serve as a guide for in-person gathering. Please remember that these are a work in process and will dynamically change as time goes by.

1. Public spaces in the church will be cleaned according to CDC guidelines.
2. Keep a social distance of 6 feet between you and individuals outside your household.
3. Masks should be worn by all who attend worship services, group meetings, and staff meetings. Masks prevent the spread of the virus. In a recent New England Journal of Medicine study, half of the patients who tested positive for Covid-19 had no symptoms at the time of testing. A mask will not protect you from getting the virus, but it will assist you from transmitting the virus to someone else.
4. Wash hands thoroughly (for 20 seconds or more) with soap and warm water before coming to St. Michael's. If soap is unavailable, hand sanitizer is an effective alternative.
5. Parishioners—adults and children— diagnosed with chronic lung disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or those who are immunocompromised or significantly overweight should stay at home. These conditions significantly increase the risk of hospitalization and death from Covid-19.
6. Parishioners over the age of 65 should consult with their personal physician for guidance before attending a public worship service. While age alone has not been identified as an independent risk factor, it is known that immunity decreases with age. Individuals over the age of 65 who have one of the conditions mentioned above are at increased risk.
7. Parishioners who have exhibited signs of illness within the last 48 hours such as a fever, cough, aches, or other symptoms of Covid-19 should stay home. For an updated list of Covid-19 symptoms visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).
8. Parishioners who have been exposed to someone with Covid-19 within the last 14 days should stay home.
9. Children over 2 who are unable to reliably wear a mask and maintain distancing should stay at home.

During Worship

1. Household groups should be kept 6 ft. apart and allowed approximately 200 sq. ft. of space.
2. No choral/congregational singing – singing significantly increases the risk of the spread of respiratory droplets and possible infection.
3. No Cup (Blood of Christ) will be offered during Communion. Communion will consist of the Bread (Body of Christ) which is considered full communion.
4. At the Peace, no touching will be permitted between individuals outside of your household.
5. We will not pass the plate during the Offertory. Plates will be located at the exit(s) for your weekly gift.
6. Masks should be pulled away from the mouth for Communion and put back in place once you have received the Bread.

7. Hand sanitizer is located throughout the building and in worship spaces for your use.
8. Volunteers will be posted at restrooms to ensure that access is limited to a number that allows for 6 ft. of social distancing.

After Worship

1. No coffee, water, or baked goods will be available.
2. Parishioners are asked to leave the building immediately and gather outside, if necessary.
3. We are working to create a process for entry and exit to and from the worship space to reduce contact with others.



(What follows is a message from Bart Geissinger, Executive Director Camp Washington)



Dear Camp Washington Family,

For more than 100 years, Camp Washington has been a place of welcome, joy, friendship, peace, and renewal. A safe place for all God's people to come together and celebrate the beauty of creation- the simple joys of life. These last few months have left us isolated, socially distanced, unable to gather at camp, church, schools, or anywhere else. As we learned to cope with the uncertainties of life, the anticipation of summer camp and outdoor activities at Camp Washington promised hope and excitement to our campers and staff. And now, after much discussion, listening, conversation and prayer, I write to you to share the news that no one wants to hear.

In light of the current guidelines that are necessary to keep everyone safe, it is in the best interest of our community and beyond to not open camp this summer. The safety of the campers, staff, and families must be our priority, and I do not feel we could guarantee that. This is one of the

hardest decisions I have had to make, but I know it is the right decision. Further, if he hasn't done so by the time you read this letter, we expect Governor Lamont to direct residential summer camps to close this summer. I know this news is hard to hear, and it breaks my heart to write these words. I know that CW is a brave space for our campers and staff to come and be themselves- a place where they are accepted for who they are- a place where they are loved and valued without exception. We know that many of our campers and staff wait all year to return "home" to Camp Washington each summer, with lots of excitement and some nervousness, they pack their bags and count the days until they are reunited with old friends- rushing into the cabins to claim their bunk. We will miss these things this summer- we will miss being together- laughing, singing, playing, eating, camping, gazing at the stars, swimming, and sitting around the campfire. But when we considered putting the regulations into practice, we quickly realized that camp this year would look very different from the Camp Washington we love...and we were not willing to compromise that. So, for now, we will need to wait until it is safe for all of us to be together again.

If you have already registered for camp this summer, you will receive an email in the coming days with refund options. Also, we are working on ways for you to stay connected with Camp Washington this summer and will share those exciting plans with you on June 1st. In the meantime, I hope you will make Camp a part of your days- Be kind to each other: send a card, text or email to a friend. Make a meal and deliver it to someone. Make a friendship bracelet and send it to a friend. Sing camp songs. Teach your family a campfire skit. Make s'mores. Practice ORT at meals and sing the ORT Report. Go outside and gaze at the night sky. Tell someone you love them. Say please and thank you. Respect differences and stand up for those who are not able.

I find courage and hope in the lyrics of *Nothing More*- a favorite song we sing at worship:

*To be humble- to be kind, it is a giving of the peace in your mind, to a stranger- to a friend,
to give in such a way that has no end-*

We are Love, we are One, we are how we treat each other when the day is done.

We are peace, we are war, we are how we treat each other, and nothing more.

*To be bold- to be brave, it is a thinking that the heart can still be saved, and the darkness
can come quick- the dangers in the anger and the hanging on to it.*

*And tell me what is it that you see- a world that's full of endless possibilities, and heroes
don't look like they used to. They look like you do.*

On behalf of Kris Martin our Camp Director, program directors: Janette, Katie and Victor, the entire summer staff and everyone here at Camp Washington- please know that we are praying for you and ask that you hold us and our beloved Camp Washington in your prayers and heart.

Until we are together again, may God bless you with abundant love, grace, and hope.

Peace,
Bart Geissinger





IN REMEMBRANCE FOR MEMORIAL DAY

O Judge of the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Congratulations to all our Graduates!

Even though the ceremony may be different, we celebrate your accomplishment and commitment!

Antjuan Kizzee
Aaron Lapham
Devin Millette
Ethan Puc
Veronique Recile

Michael Newman
Alexis Simko
Finbar Galvin
Daniel Speer



2020 Census forms due

The 2020 census shapes our communities by determining the allocation of government funding and support. Do your part by participating today. [See a guide to the census here.](#)





Senior Warden's Corner

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Always strive to do what is good for each other and everyone else. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Many years ago, I started a GRATITUDE journal. I wrote in it every day for one year. Then life changed and I stopped journaling. I was reading an Oprah magazine several months ago and Oprah wrote that she finds five things that happened during the day that she was grateful for. I decided to give that a try. So, what are some of the things I am grateful for?

- The men and women fighting to keep me free
- The healthcare professionals working to care for those who are ill and for those working to find a cure for COVID 19
- All the faithful of St. Michael's
- Our tech savvy Rector
- Blood work that came back normal
- A warm, sunny spring day
- Going for a walk
- A safe flight home from vacation
- Bonnie, who did an outstanding job painting my condo
- A phone call from an old friend
- Getting the laundry done
- Washing the kitchen floor

Even during this uncertain and scary time, I can find at least five blessings every day. I truly hope you can say the same.

Until we can all worship together again, be well, stay safe, wear a mask and wash your hands frequently.

Lois Benis



A View From the Pew



We are going on two months now of virtual service. I cannot be prouder of the dedicated crew that joins us every Sunday Morning via Facebook or Nest Cam. Jules has put a tremendous amount of resources and energy into pulling this weekly service off along with Morning Prayer and Compline. If you have not joined us for any of these services, please do. If you have any suggestions regarding these services, do not be afraid to share them.

Even though the campus is closed, we are still cleaning and updating. Our internet capabilities have been increased so that we can live stream services even when we are able to return to the church. Jules has sent out a survey via email for those signed up through our member website page regarding Services after the Stay-At-Home Order is lifted. Following Health Department and Diocesan guidelines, the Church will have a different feel. We will institute a seating policy with social distancing in mind. Due to the lack of adequate spacing on the altar, the choir will be dissembled and brought back into the regular pews. Everyone will be required to wear masks. There will be hand sanitizer and some sort of pew wipe down measures for when you arrive. During service, the Peace will have to be a friendly wave or a separated high five. As far as receiving the sacraments, as of this writing, we are thinking of individual servings of the Body of Christ. This means that there will not be a cup to drink from and communion will be delivered to your pew instead of going to the communion rail. After service, we will require that everyone leave the building and observe social distancing in our parking lot or the beautiful new gazebo on the green. Coffee hour will not happen, sorry John.

With the constant change of information from the world around us, these plans are not set in stone. There is no firm date as far as when we will all be back inside the church. We are going to try, hopefully, a drive-in service in our parking lot. Details are still being worked on, but it might be fun not going to church in our pajamas. When we finally are able to look at the present as the past with a smile on our faces, we are GOING to have a in person pajama service.

Continuing with the updates that have occurred since Quarantine began, we have not shut down our campus safety activity. We have installed new Parish doors with new controllable locking systems. The Fire Department has required that we update our Hall Kitchen with new fire extinguishers and hire a certified hood cleaning specialist. After we received the notice, we immediately followed all the Fire Department guidelines ensuring we can have a safe campus. In the church, the windows are still being fixed. Although we did not yet receive a firm date of when they will be re-installed. They were delayed because they were being repaired in the heart of New York City.

Unfortunately, with a sad heart, we will not be hosting our Pancake Breakfast on Memorial Day and as of now there will not be a Parish Picnic. BUT, I am working my donkey off to make sure we have some sort of Social Distanced St. Michael's Village Green Fair. It will look nothing like we have ever put on before but if we can, it will be the best in these uncertain times. In addition to fundraising for the church, I have decided to donate the price to get my hair cut over the last three months to NEON. I am challenging you to do the same as we all have hair as long as Jesus.

I could not be prouder to be your Junior Warden at this time. The feedback and commitment that the parish has displayed is truly a gift from God. St. Michael's, the town of Naugatuck, and you have stepped up to the plate and shown true love. They KNOW we are Christians by our love.

With a view from the pew,
Rick Brodeur
Junior Warden





Parish Nurse Tidbits

Looking at things you probably haven't done before.....or probably never thought about !!! How about 1. Chair exercises 2. Eating less but better 3. Bird watching 4. Live cams 5. Window sill/patio plants

1. Chair exercises are simple, easy, and help make you feel better. If you have health issues or are elderly; please obtain an OK from your doctor.

A. Knee Lifts help work stomach muscles that flex the hips and the quads; which are important muscles for sitting & standing. To perform lifts, elevate your right knee slowly towards your chest & then slowly lower that knee back to its normal position. repeat with left knee. Alternate the legs & repeat up to 8-10 times each leg. Don't push yourself or overdo.
B. Knee Extensions help to strengthen multiple muscles in the legs. Sit near edge of chair with knees bent & straight posture. Hold onto sides of the chair. The right knee should be extended out pointing toes toward the ceiling. The knee should be slightly bent & not locked into position. Lower the leg to starting position & repeat up to 8-10 times. Switch to the left knee & repeat.
C. Seated Row helps to work upper back & chest muscles. Sit on edge of chair to improve range of motion. Hold arms out in front of you with elbows bent & thumbs pointing toward the ceiling. Draw elbows back squeezing shoulder blades together. Return to normal position & repeat 8-10 times. Now you've completed a few chair exercises. Do them daily, if possible.

2. Eating less but eating better can be so easy. Instead of drinking fruit juices, eat the whole fruit. Example: orange juice has 112 calories in an 8 ounce glass versus 65 calories if you eat a medium size orange. Did you know the best beverage boost is water? Being dehydrated may lead to lack of energy, fatigue, loss of concentration, & irritability. If you are finicky about eating fish; try eating walnuts instead which gives you omega 3 fatty acids for your heart. Remember eat less, small portions are a must.

3. Have you ever done any bird watching? Before you get out of bed in the morning, do you listen to the birds singing; especially between 5 AM & 7 AM or at sunset? Can you ID the bird by its song? During the day try to ID various birds you may see. Do you have a bird feeder or bird bath? Enjoy the birds that God gave us.

4. What about Live Cam ??? You can visit various places by typing in the name on your computer. Visit the Menunkatuck's West River Memorial Park osprey nest in New Haven---- Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport---- Mystic Aquarium in Mystic or check out the Northern Lights on Explore.org or Polar Bears on Polar Bears International. There are some really neat places to visit while relaxing at home.

5. Flowers, vegetables, & herbs can be enjoyed all summer. Visit Window sill plants on your computer where you can purchase the makings for window sill / patio plants. They come with everything you need to make your mini garden in pots. A little easy gardening. These are just a few healthy / fun things for all to take part in. Enjoy and remember to stay healthy, be patient, & pray often.

God Bless.

Carolyn Schuster Parish Nurse



St. Michael's Youth Connection (SMYC)

First, I want to extend a thank you to everyone who donated egg dying kits and offered to make hard boiled eggs for our annual Easter Egg dying activity. I will be putting the kits aside for use for next year. I also wanted to extend a big thank you to Patti Osborne who made up dozens and dozens of eggs for our Easter Egg Hunt. After the Easter Egg Hunt was cancelled, she made them available to NEON and our SMYC kids for pick-up. I appreciate all her hard work on this event. At the time of this writing, all in-person SMYC activities have been cancelled for the remainder of the school year. As such, Jules, Lois and I have been discussing ways to keep the kids of our parish engaged in church during this time of online worship and social distancing. We are working on having a "Kids Chapel" that will be broadcast and hopefully recorded so that it can be accessed if the kids are not able watch during the live broadcast. We are working on the details, so keep an eye out for updates! We are also looking for individuals who may be interested in becoming teachers for SMYC during the upcoming school year (2020-20201). No teaching experience is necessary. If you are interested or have questions about becoming a teacher (i.e., time commitment, resources) please let either Jules, Lois or myself know. To that end, we are exploring the idea of having an informational session (most likely a virtual one) in order to answer any questions or concerns. Details to follow. We are also investigating ways to better support our teachers and provide some training. Once things begin to open again and we can come together in person, we will also look at how best to fit SMYC into any changes that will be made into our in-person worship schedules. Please stay tuned to any Facebook or email updates as things change rapidly. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions either via phone (203-685-0629) or email Melissa.zaldo@gmail.com. And again, a big thank you to our dedicated teachers, parents and kids of SMYC for all your support!

Stay safe and healthy!

Melissa Zaldo,
Vestry Liaison for Christian Youth Formation



A Message From Our Deacon

Jesus breathes on the apostles and sends them out with the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit is with us each and every day as we journey through life. It was only through the power of the Spirit that the apostles came to see and understand that they had to continue in the mission which Jesus started. And this applies to us as well. We all have the responsibility of continuing to be partners in God's mission for all creation. We are not only the temple of the Holy Spirit but we are also the Body of Christ in the world.

In the end, it is important to always remember that the resurrection of Jesus sends each of us into creation to see its beauty, as well as its messiness and problems. We are sent out in hope and confidence that we can make Christ present to all we meet. We are called to live out our role as a resurrection people who are sent out into the world to be the hands and feet of God.

This call to be sent out into the world applies to me as well. I have been blessed to have the opportunity to serve as your Regional Deacon here at St. Michael's for close to 5 years, even though the usual practice is for Deacons to be moved every 3 years. When I met with Bishop Laura at the end of March, the decision was made that it is time for me to move on. These past 5 years have been a time of growth for me in getting to know St. Michael's and trying to work for positive change in the Naugatuck Community. I will be sad to leave, but I know that this is a new faith journey that I am being called to walk. My last Sunday here will be Pentecost Sunday, May 31. I hope that we will all be back together before then, so I can bid farewell to each of you in person.

For now, let us always remember the Easter greeting:

Alleluia, Christ is Risen

The Lord is Risen Indeed, Alleluia

Rev. Thomas Mariconda



The Wardens, Vestry, and staff of St. Michael's Church sincerely thank you for your kindness and generosity during these most trying times. Even though you have been affected in one way or another by the COVID-19 Pandemic, you have found it in your hearts to continue supporting your family of St. Michael's. We indeed would be incapable of achieving a fraction of what we do without your participation and your gifts. Our programs and ministries would not be possible without your generous support. Know that we will continue to hold each of you and your families in our prayers. We also continue to support our neighbors and school children through our Naugatuck Ecumenical Outreach Network (NEON) supplemented by our collection of canned and packaged food products to assist those in our community through the Naugatuck Foodbank.

We Thank You and We Love You All

THE CHURCH NEVER CLOSED.

WE ADAPTED!

**RATHER THAN BEING A PART OF THE
PROBLEM, WE BECAME PART OF THE SOLUTION.**

**WE FOUND NEW WAYS TO WORSHIP AND NEW
WAYS TO SERVE A BROKEN WORLD.**

