

A Message from Your Wardens

Here we are a year after Margaret's retirement. I'm sure a lot of you are wondering when will we be getting a new rector. Unfortunately, we are one of the approximately 50% of churches in our diocese that are currently without a priest. At this time in church history, there are very few available priests to even consider - fewer people are choosing to go into the priesthood. Consequently, priests who do graduate or choose to move, frequently have their choice of parishes. Add to this the fact that there are even fewer priests looking for part-time positions and, as you know, when we evaluated our budget, we came to the realization that we do not have the necessary funds to pay for a full-time priest.

The vestry has read and is discussing a book recommended by Bishop Hughes and Canon Clark titled *Part-time is Plenty: Thriving Without Full-Time Clergy* by G. Jeffrey MacDonald and we highly recommend that every parishioner reads it as well. It explains what is happening out in the "church world" and how churches can thrive and flourish with part-time clergy. We continue to meet regularly and are currently discerning what we believe will be best for us here at Messiah. This is not an easy time for the congregation, the vestry, our diocese or the greater religious community. Please continue praying for Messiah and accepting that God's time is not our time. It is also difficult to get supply priests but we have been fortunate to have been able to schedule a priest to celebrate Eucharist with us twice a month.

On the positive side, we have had several very productive parishioner work days led by Craig and Sue to eliminate invasive and non-native plants and to improve the overall appearance of our outside property. The rectory is ready to go, including an insulated attic and new roof. We have had 2 new furnaces and 2 new air conditioners installed, a new portico built over the thrift shop, 4 new windows installed, and upgraded the WiFi throughout the church. Messiah was awarded a Ward J. Herbert Grant to cover half of the cost of the new rectory roof and many of these projects have been paid for by the Messiah Forever Fund.

Dani and John Pietrowski have been providing the Facebook Live Sunday services every week since early 2020. Bernadette, Kathy and Hans have consistently been our officiants to provide us with Morning Prayer and Sue Carlton has been reading Prayers of the People every Sunday that she is available. Many people have stepped up to assure that we have regular worship services and Laura has been there to provide us with our wonderful music program. Linda and Elizabeth have assured that Sunday School continues and many others have done their part to assure that the ministries that are important to the people of Messiah continue.

Debbie and Merica