

April 18, 2021

St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish  
276 S. College Ave Newark, DE  
302.368.4644 StThomasParish.org

weekly newsletter

# The Carpenter's Helper

*This Week...we are soaking in the fresh rain of April showers*

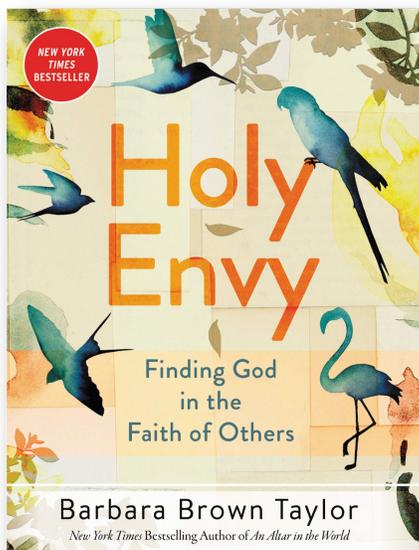


## Drive Through/Walk Up Communion and Prayers

continues every Sunday

10-11am

**ALL are Welcome!**



## 2 Saints Readers

Tuesdays at 10am

LIVE via Zoom

*ALL are Welcome!*

*"The only clear line I draw these days is this: when my religion tries to come between me and my neighbor, I will choose my neighbor...Jesus never commanded me to love my religion."*

**—Barbara Brown Taylor**



Thank you for wearing a mask in the church building. It protects those who are worshiping, and communing. Your mask protects the clergy, staff, faith family members, and community. Let's keep our church building safe, healthy, open, and a respectful place for all.

## During the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Thomas's is alive and well.

We are worshiping via live streaming on YouTube (See our YouTube Channel and hit Subscribe!). The full-text bulletins for our services can be found on our website, and by email request.

We also continue to respond to the needs of the Newark community through our collaboration with the Newark Empowerment Center and others. Those who would like to support our work may do so by going to our "Giving to St Thomas's" page.

Our prayers are with all those who are ill, all who are caring for them, and all who are striving to hear the voice of God in these challenging times. May God bless you and keep you, now and always. For more, see the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware COVID-19 site.



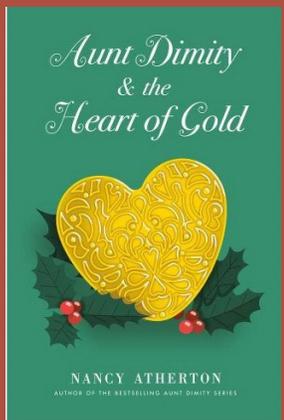
# April Novel Theology

Sunday the 18th

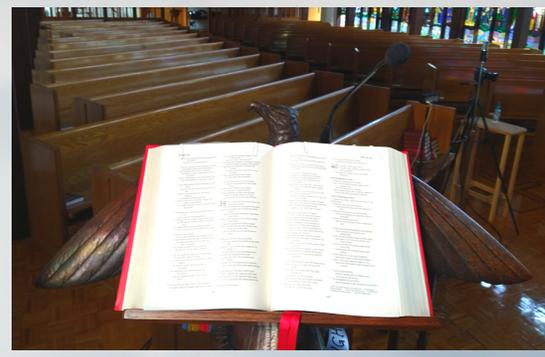
10:30am

via Zoom

*ALL are Welcome*



## An Eagle in church?



One of our parishioners, Bob Gilley, is a fantastic photographer. Many have come to look forward to seeing his amazing photos of birds, on facebook. This past Sunday, Bob shared a picture of our lectern, which is shaped like an eagle. It got me thinking, why an eagle? It's such a predominant feature in the sanctuary, so it must have some importance. The only thing that came to my mind was the hymn "On Eagle's Wings", but that wasn't written until 1976 and the lectern is definitely older than that. In my research, I found some interesting ideas, but the explanation that hit home for me was from a retired priest from the UK, Rev Alec Mitchell:

The eagle is a symbol of the fourth evangelist, John, and presumably became associated with his gospel because of the many links between "the Word of God" of which he writes (made flesh in Christ, made real in preaching) and the Bible as being, almost literally, God's word. The eagle soars upwards; it is strong, direct in its flight and inspiring in its over-arching majesty. Just like good public reading of scripture or oratory!

There are 32 references to eagles in the Bible, all but four of them in the Old Testament, and most of them positive. According to Isaiah: "Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength (and) mount up with wings like eagles"; and Psalm 103 blesses the Lord "who satisfies you with good... so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

The eagle is also one of the four "living creatures" around God's throne, according to Revelation 4:7. As early as the second century (CE), these four creatures had been linked to the four gospels (the other three being, respectively, Mark, Luke and Matthew), while also becoming symbols of four events in the life of Christ - the Nativity (man), his sacrificial death (ox), the Resurrection (lion) and the Ascension - represented by a flying eagle. Occasionally, an eagle is used as a symbol for the Holy Spirit, but usually the more gentle dove is employed. For lectern purposes, however, an eagle certainly has bigger wings than a dove on which to rest large books!

The carved lectern in St Thomas is engraved "in memoriam Waldron Shapleigh". I was able to find some small traces of a Rev D.W. Shapleigh in Delaware in the 1800s. I don't know if it is him, but it might be interesting to look into!