

May 9, 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 thanking teachers of all kinds*



**Drive Through/Walk Up  
Communion and Prayers**  
continues every Sunday  
**10-11am**

**ALL are Welcome!**

*We're having a  
Planting Party*

ALL are Welcome  
to join in the FUN!

This Saturday, 5/8  
starting at 8:30am

We will provide all the plants. We  
just need willing hands to help!



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.



# The Baptismal Font

Font: the term comes from the Latin fons, “spring of water,” and designates a receptacle for baptismal water. Fonts in the early church were pools or sunken basins, often in the shape of a cross, in which candidates were immersed in running water. In fact, Baptism is a Greek word meaning “to immerse”. Many fonts remained large even after infant baptism became the norm, but they were raised above ground for convenience. Eventually the typical font was the size of a wash basin, and even adult candidates were baptized by pouring a little water on their heads. The ancient practice never died out, however, and the BCP lists immersion as a method of baptizing. Today some new or renovated church buildings have a large font, suitable for immersion, located where the people can easily see it or gather around it.



On Sunday, May 16, we will celebrate Noah's Holy Baptism, and renew our own baptismal promises. The familiar wooden font will be present, but in its every-day place in the back of the sanctuary. A glass basin stand-in font will be used for the actual baptism, to best care for the safety of all during this pandemic.

It is not random that our font stands in the back. In the 19th century, it was the custom in the Anglican tradition to push the Baptistry off to one side, where Baptism was practiced primarily as a ‘family affair’ for a small gathering on Sunday afternoons after church. The Liturgical Renewal Movement of the 20th century has restored the Sacrament of Baptism to its primary role as an action of the whole Christian community. It expresses God's personal love and the community's welcome in God's name. We have been cleansed by the outpouring of God's Spirit in Baptism. Because Baptism is the means by which we enter the church, it makes sense to position the font by where we enter the sanctuary as a reminder of this truth. Each week as we enter for worship, passing by the font helps us to remember that we are God's baptized people.



Baptism removes the stain of Original Sin, and it clothes us with the grace. We are objectively changed when we are baptized. Baptism leaves an indelible mark upon our souls. We are claimed as God's own. Initiation into the Church is entrance into a Eucharistic community.

Because the rites of initiation of the Church begin with Baptism and are completed by the reception of the Eucharist, the Baptismal font and its location reflect the Christian's journey through the waters of Baptism to the altar. This integral relationship between the Baptismal font and the altar can be demonstrated in a variety of ways, such as placing the font and altar on the same architectural axis, as it is here at St Thomas. We are reminded of our Christian pilgrimage each week as we pass the Font on our way to the altar.

## Baptism and Confirmation

On May 16th at the 9am service, Bishop Kevin will be visiting St Thomas. He will be baptizing and confirming those who have been faithfully waiting, during this pandemic, for a safe time. This will be a service of celebration! We will also be reaffirming our own baptismal promises. If you have questions about baptism or confirmation, please reach out to Fr Howie.

