

The Rev. Phillip Parker, Rector  
The Rev. Dr. Billy Walton, Deacon

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In common mission with



*The Cross and Crown*

**JULY 2020**

## **\*\* IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES SUSPENDED EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY \*\***

Along with Bishop Seage, the All Saints' leadership have been monitoring the rise in the number of COVID-19 cases and reviewing information coming from the CDC, the Mississippi Department of Health and other organizations. After much deliberation and prayer, the decision has been made to suspend all in-person services of public worship at All Saints', effective immediately.

This is not a decision that was made lightly, but one that we believe is justified given the gravity of the circumstances of the moment. This action is taken to protect and promote the health and safety of our communicants.

We will continue to live stream the services on our Facebook page, Sundays at 10:00 a.m. and Wednesdays at Noon. We will be working on ways to improve the quality of our live streamed services and ask for your patience and understanding as we work through these issues.

## **FROM THE RECTOR**

A few weeks ago, I started watching the show Downton Abbey. Downton Abbey is a historical drama set in early 20<sup>th</sup> century England that follows the lives of an aristocratic British family and their servants as they struggle with the "changing of the times" that took place during and after World War I. One of the great facets that I love about this show is the characters. And, the interesting thing is that the main character is not a person, but the Abbey. This giant mansion where the Crawley family has lived for over a century.

This show is centered around how this family will maintain this great estate that they love and hold deep while others see it as a relic of a time that is passing by. In one scene Robert Crawley, the Earl of Grantham, comments to the new heir of the Estate, "you don't love this place yet. You may only see bricks that will crumble and pipes that may leak. I see my life's work." Later Robert is talking to his oldest daughter about the estate and as he is looking at the abbey he comments, "My fortune is the work of others who have built a great dynasty. I am a custodian, not an owner."

We here at All Saints' and Christ the King love this place as much as Robert Crawley loves Downton Abbey. I hope that when you look at this building, you not only see bricks that will crumble, paint that will fade, and a roof that will leak, but see the life-giving work that takes place in this building. I hope you see the love that those who came before us had for this place. I hope that you hear the countless prayers that have been said within these walls. Prayers said in joy for thanksgivings and prayers said in sadness for hope and healing. I also hope you experience the love that those who will come after us will have for this place. To know that prayers will continue in this place after we are no longer here to hear them.

We are in the midst of a transformation that will continue to shape our understanding of community, of church, and of our life with Christ. I pray that we understand that we are much like the character of Sir Robert

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# PARISH MINISTRIES

*From the Rector continued...*

Crawley on Downton Abbey. That like him, we are not the owners of this wonderful estate here on Jefferson Street. We are the custodians of this place. God is the true owner of this church. Our fortune is the work of others.

We were to spend this year celebrating our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of All Saints' Episcopal Church here in Tupelo. While we had hoped for a year of celebrations, that has not been the case. Instead of celebrations, we are having to practice social distancing. We had to transform with this changing world in ways that we would never have expected just a few months ago. However, we have not lost sight of our true mission, the mission of God. Instead of feeling saddened by what we have experienced over the last several months, we should be encouraged about the possibilities of what All Saints' and Christ the King can do within the next 150 years. It is up to us to listen to God as we move into the future. It is up to us to maintain this gift for those who will come after us so that they may encounter God's life changing love and grace.

For us to do this, we must remember our promise that was made when All Saints' discerned the need to improve our buildings and campus. Great care has been made to build a beautiful place to worship and grow with God. A beautiful place that was laid on a foundation that started 150 years ago. A beautiful place that will be the foundation for future growth as we enter our next 150 years. We need to be true custodians of All Saints' and Christ the King and envision a strong future for this Church. A Church that will strive to shine Christ's light wide across this world. We all will be custodians of this wonderful place. We all will do this out of our love for this place and our love for God.

God be with you, God bless you, and may Christ's peace be with you, **Phillip+**



Our love and sympathy to:  
David, Eileen and Claire Bailey on the death of David's brother Paul.  
Kamme Riddle on the death of her aunt, Betty Jane Mathews.  
*"Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them."*



**In June**  
**132 faithful volunteers**  
**served 1,376 meals**

to individuals, families with children, those employed who are food insecure, those unemployed due to COVID-19 and homeless persons.

**Our immediate needs** are coffee, and any type of individually wrapped breakfast items such as, cereal bars, muffins, Pop-Tarts or applesauce.



The CARE Team assists the Priest and Deacon with the pastoral care needs

of the parish. Service is organized into teams that serve once every 6 weeks. If you are interested in serving with this ministry, contact the office at 842-4386, Vickie Vance or Joellen Murphree.

Last month, the Care Team made 24+ visits, 2 food deliveries, 2 flower deliveries, sent 2 notes and made many check-in phone calls.



For those interested in a weekly adult Christian formation opportunity, the Sunday Lectionary Class continues undeterred in the form of podcasts. Each week class leaders Les Alvis and Caleb Bedillion present selected lectionary texts as we move through the long green Season after Pentecost. Links to the podcasts and to the week's readings are in parish-wide emails sent out every Saturday evening and posted to the All Saints' Facebook page on Sunday morning and again in the Saints' News emails on Tuesdays. These podcasts offer a great way to stay engaged with locally grown Christian education until we're fully able to gather again.

# FROM THE OFFICE

For more information, visit our website [www.allsaintstupelo.org](http://www.allsaintstupelo.org)



<https://facebook.com/AllSaintstupelo/>

God, who is the giver of every good gift, you are ever present in our lives and in the world. You act through us, your people, to care for and provide for everyone. We pray for the courage to break out of our insecurity and fear around money as we deepen our understanding of our relationship to you and how we use our financial resources to do your work in the world. We pray these things that we might know you better, that you will increase our desire and ability to give and help others through ministry and friendship and to gratefully commit ourselves to the work you have given us to do. Amen. *Borrowed from Trinity Episcopal Church, Swanton, Vermont*

## OPERATING – JUNE 2020

Revenue:	Actual	Budget
Pledge	\$44,633	\$39,442
All other sources	<u>\$ 2,163</u>	<u>\$ 4,731</u>
Total	\$46,796	\$44,173
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Clergy	\$10,247	\$10,687
Staff	\$12,676	\$13,466
Office	\$ 723	\$ 1,367
Physical Plant	\$ 4,827	\$ 8,758
Community Outreach	\$ 8,214	\$ 8,339
Worship/Programs	<u>\$ 1,293</u>	<u>\$ 2,461</u>
Total	\$37,979	\$45,079
<b>Net Total</b>	\$ 8,817	(\$ 906)
<b>Year-to-date operating surplus</b>	(\$ 8,250)	

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – JUNE 2020

Actual Revenue	\$ 9,256
Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 17,158</u>
Net	(\$ 7,902)
Cash Balance at month end	\$ 122,721

## From the Treasurer...

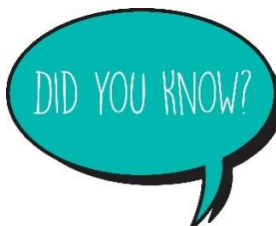
I'm pleased to tell you that All Saints' saw an uptick in pledge giving in June, with receipts against pledged commitments exceeding budget by approximately \$5,000. Thank you all for continuing to support our parish financially. While this is good news we continue to see shortfalls to budget in plate collections and non-pledge offerings. While attendance was limited at our in-person services, giving typically received at those services naturally suffered. For those households that typically give in person, please consider our online giving options.

**Via mail:** All Saints' Episcopal Church, 608 W Jefferson St., Tupelo, MS 38804

[www.allsaintstupelo.org](http://www.allsaintstupelo.org)

Click on "Giving to All Saints" in the blue ribbon just below the logo under "Quick Links" click on "Giving to All Saints Online". Halfway down this page on the left, select "Click HERE to Give to All Saints' Online!". On this page type in a dollar amount and your email address and click "Continue" If you have already setup an ACS access then login or click to the right "Continue as Guest." This will take you to a screen where you can enter your card information or bank account for an eCheck. Then click "Give" at the bottom

**Or text** ALLSAINTSTUPELO TO 73256. You will receive a text with a link that will take you directly to the online giving screens just described above



you can check your giving records, update your contact info and download a parish directory online? If you don't already have a login set up, here's how:

1. Go to [www.allsaintstupelo.org](http://www.allsaintstupelo.org)
2. Click on "Login to My All Saints" on the right-hand side of every page (close to the bottom).
3. Click on "Need a Login? Click here". The screen will prompt you to enter your email address and your name. You will receive an email with a link to set your password. Once you have set your password, you will be logged in. From there, you can view the options available.

# FROM BISHOP SEAGE

July 11, 2020

Dear Friends,

We find ourselves at a moment in time that requires action by our Diocese and her leadership. The COVID-19 pandemic and crisis has forced some longstanding issues to the forefront of my concerns. The financial history of Gray Center, our camp and conference facility, is a troubled one. Well-intentioned, but unsuccessful programs and management practices allowed the accumulation of significant debt to the Trustees of the Diocese as well as other Diocesan and private entities. With the cancellation of virtually all income producing events for the year 2020, and little light at the end of the tunnel for months to come, the survival of the original mission of the Gray Center, Camp Bratton-Green, was in jeopardy without consideration of significant restructuring of Gray Center operations.

In order to meet these challenges, the leadership of the Diocese has decided upon the following course of action: Gray Center operations will be immediately suspended. Our plan and sincere hopes are that Bratton-Green will be able to reopen in the Spring of 2021. We will immediately begin a process of discernment regarding the Conference Center and the 550 acres on which it is situated. The simplest and most efficient solution would be the sale of some or all of the properties on which Conference Center operations are located. But all options will be explored and evaluated. This was an incredibly difficult and emotional decision. I am grateful for the elected leadership of the Diocese and the Board of Managers who joined me in this initial discernment. The Executive Committee of our Diocese partnered with me in making the final decision.

In part, the suspension of operations at Gray Center has been taken to preserve and ensure the sustainability of the camping ministry of the Diocese for future generations of children and youth. It is my sincere hope and prayer that a vaccine for COVID-19 soon will be widely available so that campers, staff, and volunteers may gather and make lasting memories at Camp Bratton-Green in the summer of 2021 and beyond.

To that end, net proceeds of the *Seeds You Sow* capital campaign, which as of July 9 equaled \$454,316.42, have been set aside and designated solely for improvements and construction at Camp Bratton-Green. To be sure, none of the *Seeds You Sow* monies will be used to settle the financial affairs of Gray Center. The gifts offered through this campaign are an extraordinary example of generosity and Gray Center stewardship. We could have never foreseen the crisis created by COVID-19. Please know that your gifts, present and past, will be preserved, honored and used for the continuance and preservation of the mission God is calling us to redefine on Way Road.

You should also know that the Capital Campaign Task Force, created by the Diocesan Executive Committee in December of 2019 with representatives appointed by me, continues its work. It is preparing a full accounting of the contributions, pledges and expenses of the campaign. Using the Interim Report presented earlier this year at Annual Council as the starting point, the final report will be shared with the Diocese at large after it is submitted and approved by the Executive Committee later this year. The final report no doubt will show that we fell significantly short of our campaign goal

campaign as being received. Rest assured, we will work diligently to leverage your generous contributions and gifts to the campaign so that Camp Bratton-Green will better accommodate camping programs and activities for years to come.

I realize this may come as a shock to many of you, but we are at the point of triage. These decisions are being made in order to save our primary mission – Camp Bratton-Green. Concerns about Gray Center have been an ongoing struggle for many years. Ironically, 2020 looked to be the best financial year for Gray Center in history before the impacts of COVID. The Gray Center staff, led by Susan Merrill, are to be commended for those efforts. I speak for myself and other Diocesan leadership about how we deeply appreciate the hard work that went into making that a possibility. We share a deep concern for those individuals that will be financially impacted by these decisions, as well as the future uncertainty this creates for them. We will work hard to mitigate this for our current employees and will offer support to them going forward.

As we move forward with this new vision of Bratton-Green we hope to create a system that is financially sustainable, and the leadership of the Diocese is committed to learning from past mistakes and creating better oversight and management. This may require new management structures, or oversight in the future. We ask your prayers for diocesan leadership, employees of Gray Center, and all those affected by these changes. Prayers for guidance, wisdom, understanding, and perseverance are greatly appreciated.

We are Easter people. Our faith rests on the belief that from death comes resurrection, new life and hope. Gray Center's ministry is in the process of being made new.

"Behold, I make all things new. And he said to me, "Write for these words are true and faithful." Rev 21:5


May the peace of Christ be always with you, **+Brian**



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### MISSION STATEMENT

To equip ourselves for Christ's service by gathering for worship, fellowship, prayer, and study; To minister to and support each other, and to welcome all who walk through our doors; To act as responsible stewards of God's gifts to us; And to do God's work in the world by seeking and serving Christ in all persons.

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**Blood**  
**DRIVE**

**SUNDAY, JULY 26**  
**9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

We are partnering with Vitalant (formerly United Blood Services) to do our part to ensure that a safe blood supply is ready and available when patients need it. During the Pandemic, blood supplies have been stretched and hosting a Blood Drive is one of the ways we can help our community. Masks will be required for the Vitalant staff and donors, social distancing will be practiced and all surfaces will be sanitized before and after donations. We will be able to take 2 people every 15 minutes. Screening will be done in the Sr. High Sunday School room and donations will be taken in the Children's Choir room. If you would like to donate blood, please email [tommie@allsaintstupelo.org](mailto:tommie@allsaintstupelo.org) with the time you are available. Time slots are first come-first served; the next open time slot is 10:45 a.m. You will receive a free COVID-19 antibody test when you donate. Thank you for considering this way of helping those in our community who need this service.