

## RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear friends,

Growing up, I always thought of August as a “last dance” – the final month to check off my bucket list before the start of the school year. Many years later, and no longer a student, I still think of August as a final window of time to get things done. From vacations to outside projects, August often functions as a last call before we put away our summer plans until next year.



However, this August will be unlike any other. My vacation and summer plans have been altered, postponed, or simply cancelled. Maybe you've run into this as well. But six months into this global pandemic, I have learned to mourn and readjust; I think we all have.

I miss not being able to travel and visit family and friends. Yet, I have found ways to readjust and enjoy the warmth of summer while staying in place. Not only that, I have found ways to give thanks for it—to be thankful for life, even amidst a global pandemic.

While the list of difficulties and fears might be long, they do not overshadow God's goodness and faithfulness. Even as we face a great amount of uncertainty, Christ has been with us, carrying us through our most difficult days. All the more,



he continues to be with us just as he promised: “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

At the start of the pandemic, I began reciting “A General Thanksgiving” from the Book of Common Prayer. Unlike many of the prayers in our tradition, which have a long and rich history, this prayer was written for the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Father Charles Price, a longtime professor at my alma mater, Virginia Seminary, and a primary architect of the Prayer Book, composed a prayer after his daughter's tragic death.

In the midst of deep mourning and tremendous change, Father Price found himself giving thanks to God, not as an act of blind obedience or a sick form of self-infliction, but as an act of self-emptying and acceptance. Rather than grasping for things to give thanks for or pretending that everything is fine, Father Price offers a prayer that gives thanks for everything that encompasses our lives, even our disappointments and failures. Accepting that we are not in control, while holding onto the divine truth that God is actively working in and through us. That our lives, its joys and challenges, matter to God, and for this we can give thanks.

### A General Thanksgiving

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Carlos†

### FROM THE DEACON'S PERCH

*“Blessed be God the Father, Blessed be God the Son, Blessed be God, the Holy Spirit, The Most Holy Blessed Trinity, One in Three and Three in One, Have Mercy upon me a sinner.”*



I have been using this prayer lately during my nighttime walks, as I look at the universe, the stars, the heavens, and the dark path before me. I try not to use lights of any kind because they take away from the real light of night. During this pandemic, I find that walking in solitude takes away the fear of social interaction, especially since Ellen and I are trying to keep safe distances from people and are using a mask if we must interact. I use this prayer and that of confession

because like many of us, we are not able to fully grasp the turmoil we are living in. By this, I mean job losses, lack of income, political policies, protests of different sorts, rebellion over mask/no mask, social distancing, natural disasters . . . wow! I can go on and on. I am not trying to paint a doomsday picture, but instead, I quote from the author Joseph Campbell:

***“Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come to life when life seems most challenging.”***

Our church family is very fortunate to have Fr. Carlos as our shepherd. He is on the front line in his awareness of what is going on in our community and church family, and he can be of comfort to you. As he and I are involved in community affairs, we are made aware of opportunities to reach out and help others in this time of turmoil. Through his St. Christopher Fund and my discretionary fund, we have been able to help many people with food, gas, and utilities. Fr. Carlos and I want to help you realize the importance of our church in the community, as well as our own spiritual growth, and to help you explore ways you can volunteer safely if you are comfortable doing so.

Going back to the original Celtic prayer above, that’s where we start, knowing that we are sinners, but saved through God’s loving grace and death on the cross so that we may have the light and love of Christ in us. With that abundance we find it easy to give and give more to others because we are of one body. In Native American spirituality, we are one and are

interconnected, so pray and let the Holy Spirit guide us and Christ sustain us in our pandemic journey, knowing full well that he is with us. Amen.

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On July 6, I attended the graduation of 12 nurses from the Central PA Institute of Technology, where I did the Invocation, Blessing of



hands, and Benediction. It was held outdoors at Bald Eagle State Park for safety. This was a first for the school, and it went very well. Although the heat was brutal, it gave me great joy to see the students graduate. I hold classes at CPI on spirituality and health care, as well as classes on communicating with terminally ill patients. This is my 12<sup>th</sup> year as Chaplain to the nursing program, and it is an honor.



Our food program continues to coordinate with the Bellefonte food bank, and we call each month to see what shortages

they are experiencing. Fr. Carlos and I sometimes have to go shopping to help fill the void. We asked the Weis Markets headquarters to help, and they gave us a \$500 gift card, which we used to purchase 78 pounds of frozen ground beef. This ministry is obviously proceeding very well.

If anybody in our church family needs assistance—even if it’s temporary—please contact Fr. Carlos or me.

Dear Friends, even though we cannot socialize at this time, and we wear masks and distance ourselves, I want you to know that I pray every day for each of you and your families that we might get safely through this pandemic. One day we will be at home and at church and enjoying coffee hours again; but in the meantime, pray for me as I pray for you. ~Deacon Alex†

### **AROUND THE PARISH FAMILY TABLE**



*Erik & Rebecca Clayton* celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on August 14.



*David & Deb Cree* will celebrate their 45<sup>th</sup> on August 23.

Congratulations on these milestones!

### **VESTRY NEWS**

Our most recent vestry meeting was held online via Zoom on July 15.



### **Rector’s Report:**

- Traditional summer VBS will not be held; Ellen and Father Carlos will send notice to families.
- In-person worship continues; thanks to the team for making this happen.
- Bishop Scanlan sent an email regarding Governor Wolf’s newest mitigation efforts: maximum of 25 attendees at in-person worship will now include servers.
- If we go “red,” we will return to online-only services.

### **Financial:**

- Still on target for where we should be 6 months into the year.
- Father Carlos thanked the parish for keeping up with financial support.
- PPP loan: Father Carlos and Barbara are investigating loan forgiveness.

## Property:

- Fire-proofing related to next-door neighbors (Dartt House) is moving forward with architect Bob Hoffman.
- Question about how much their project will affect our kitchen (firewall, repointing, chimney removal).
- We hope to approach HARB for approval by end of year, then apply for permits, with potential spring construction.

## Vestry Members:

Larry Roberson [plroberson@comcast.net](mailto:plroberson@comcast.net) (Sr. Warden)

Matthew Perkins [clarion0215@yahoo.com](mailto:clarion0215@yahoo.com) (Jr. Warden)

Peggy Jackson [jimpegjacks@gmail.com](mailto:jimpegjacks@gmail.com)

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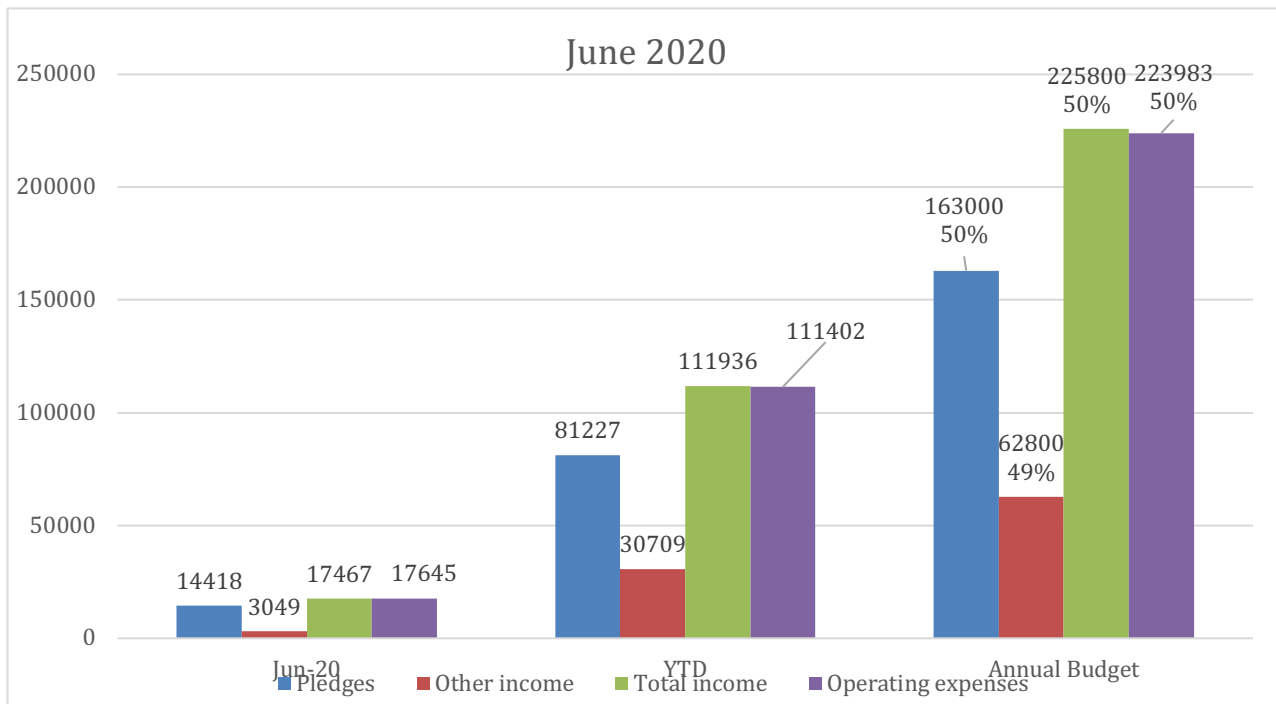
Susan Christy [christylamb1@hotmail.com](mailto:christylamb1@hotmail.com)

Charlotte Zmyslo [principallyspeaking@yahoo.com](mailto:principallyspeaking@yahoo.com)



## Some Photos of our Beautiful Properties in Summer

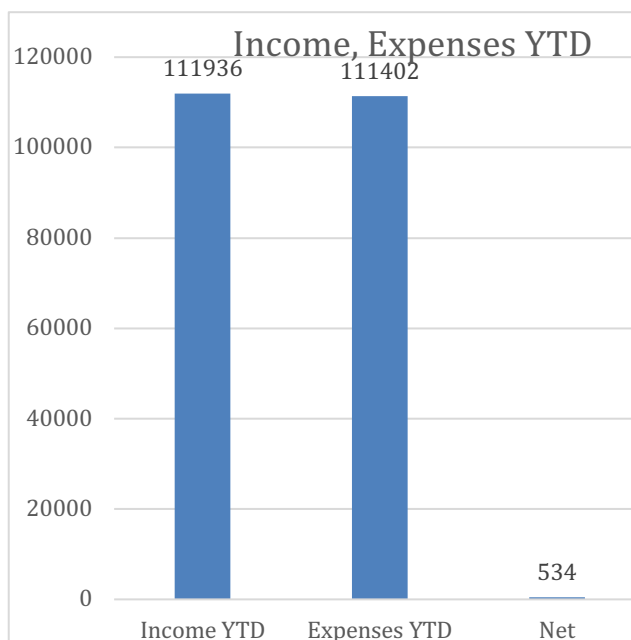




|                     | Jun-20       | YTD           | Annual Budget | YTD % of Budget |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Pledges             | 14418        | 81227         | 163000        | 50%             |
| Other income        | 3049         | 30709         | 62800         | 49%             |
| <b>Total income</b> | <b>17467</b> | <b>111936</b> | <b>225800</b> | <b>50%</b>      |
| Operating expenses  | 17645        | 111402        | 223983        | 50%             |
| <b>Net</b>          | <b>-178</b>  | <b>534</b>    | <b>1817</b>   | <b>29%</b>      |

| Income YTD    | Expenses YTD  | Net        |
|---------------|---------------|------------|
| <b>111936</b> | <b>111402</b> | <b>534</b> |

Numbers do not include investments, savings, or checking acct balance.



# August 2020

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday | Friday | Saturday                                     |
|---|---|--|---|----------|--------|--|
|   |   |  |   |          |        | 1  |
| 2<br>The Ninth<br>Sunday after<br>Pentecost<br>9:00 am<br>Low Mass<br>10:30 am<br>Sung Mass   | 3<br>5:00pm<br>Centre Cty<br>Youth Srvc<br>Bureau<br>ART<br>Program                                     | 4<br>10:00 am<br>Virtual<br>Coffee Hour<br>via Zoom  | 5<br>9:30 am<br>Monthly Parish<br>Requiem via<br>Facebook<br><br>5:00 pm CCYSB<br>ART Program | 6        | 7      | 8<br><br><b>Birthdays:</b><br>Sydney Fetters |
| 9<br>The Tenth<br>Sunday after<br>Pentecost<br>9:00 am<br>Low Mass<br>10:30 am<br>Sung Mass   | 10<br>5:00pm<br>Centre Cty<br>Youth Srvc<br>Bureau<br>ART<br>Program                                    | 11<br>10:00 am<br>Virtual<br>Coffee Hour<br>via Zoom<br><br><b>Birthdays:</b><br>Billie Jo North | 12<br>9:30 am Low<br>Mass via<br>Facebook<br><br>5:00 pm CCYSB<br>ART Program                 | 13       | 14     | 15   |
| 16<br>The Eleventh<br>Sunday after<br>Pentecost<br>9:00 am<br>Low Mass<br>10:30 am<br>Sung Mass   | 17<br>5:00pm<br>Centre Cty<br>Youth Srvc<br>Bureau<br>ART<br>Program                                    | 18<br>10:00 am<br>Virtual<br>Coffee Hour<br>via Zoom   | 19<br>9:30 am Low<br>Mass via<br>Facebook<br><br>5:00 pm CCYSB<br>ART Program                 | 20       | 21     | 22   |
| 23<br>The Twelfth<br>Sunday after<br>Pentecost<br>9:00 am<br>Low Mass<br>10:30 am<br>Sung Mass  | 24<br>5:00pm<br>Centre Cty<br>Youth Srvc<br>Bureau<br>ART Prgm<br><b>Birthdays:</b><br>Nancy<br>Andrews | 25<br>10:00 am<br>Virtual<br>Coffee Hour<br>via Zoom<br>David King                               | 26<br>9:30 am Low<br>Mass via<br>Facebook<br><br>5:00 pm CCYSB<br>ART Program                 | 27       | 28     | 29   |
| 30<br>The Thirteenth<br>Sunday after<br>Pentecost<br>9:00 am<br>Low Mass<br>10:30 am<br>Sung Mass<br><br><b>Birthdays:</b><br>Ruth Eby<br>Elizabeth Pifer | 31  |  |   |          |        |  |