

THE HOPE JOURNAL

LEARNING TO LOVE, TOGETHER



**EASTER +
PENTECOST**

WHAT'S NEXT

WHAT TO EXPECT

IN THE NEXT FEW
WEEKS

GATHERING NOW

How COVID Year Two effects us

by Drew Downs

In COVID's first year, we faced a novel coronavirus. So we followed the practices health experts suggest for any similar pandemic. This meant that we moved quickly to close our church building and move our worship online. We began wearing masks and practicing social distancing.

By the end of Year One, this February, we have developed a pretty good pattern of expectations. And vaccines certainly help.

As Year Two began this March, we found ourselves with a new knowledge base and renewed hope. And new uncertainties.

As our congregation begins to gather in-person, first in Deming Park, and soon, in our beloved church building, I invite us to do so with generosity and courage. We will also continue to offer worship online. But most importantly, we will continue to celebrate the risen Christ, together.

EASTER AND PENTECOST

April 4 - May 23

WHAT'S NEXT

Baptisms

We are excited by the opportunity to introduce a whole host of new members into the Body of Christ this spring. Our first will be Sunday, May 9th in the Mabley Garden. If you want to discuss baptism, visit with the rector!

Preparing our Building for Worship

While we have not gathered in our building for worship since early 2020, our building has been a site for ministry throughout the pandemic. Manna From Seven has fed thousands throughout the past year. And for two weeks, we hosted a warming shelter during an incredibly cold winter storm. And even as we haven't gathered here for worship, our wardens and staff have kept our space secure.

We are sprucing up the floor in the Great Hall, contracting to have our stained glass preserved, and planning for our return to the building for Pentecost on May 23rd at 10:00.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Finding something new and normalish

Gathering for worship in our church building will feel good and sort of normal.

What you can expect:

- An online sign-up.
- Masks are required.
- We will start with a single service on Sunday mornings at 10:00.
- Pews will be marked off to maintain distancing.
- Eucharist (bread only).
- No congregational singing.
- Coffee hour in the garden (Weather permitting)

And we will continue to offer online worship!

EASTER AND PENTECOST

April 4 - May 23

IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

Baptism of Lucy Bayles - May 9

We will welcome Lucy into the church through baptism at our regular service on May 9th. The service will be in the garden. Sign up information is below.

Limit - 40 people

Last Gathering in the Park - May 16

Our last gathering at Deming Park for the spring will be May 16 at 10:00. This outside service and location has allowed us to gather in varieties of weather as our in-person gathering plans have continued.

Limit - 100 people

Pentecost in the Nave - May 23

We are planning to return to the church building for worship to celebrate one of the church's principal feasts: Pentecost. Masks are required. Sign up information is below.

Limit - 65 people

Joanna Benskin's Ordination - June 5

Joanna Benskin, our candidate for ordination to the priesthood, is finishing her final semester at Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP), a seminary of The Episcopal Church. She has been called to serve as our diocese's third Pathways to Vitality Priest. God willing and the people consenting, she will be ordained June 5. She will be serving in Evansville.

How to sign up

We will follow the Diocesan guidelines for in-person gathering and the suggestions from the CDC. Masks will be required inside the building, singing remains restricted, and we will limit our time in the building. When weather permits, we will have coffee hour in the garden.

If you plan to attend, please visit <https://rsvp.church/r/bz1nK6kj> to sign up!

EASTER + PENTECOST 2021

PENTECOST + PANDEMIC

Being the church in COVID Year Two

by Drew Downs

People liked comparing 2020 to a dumpster fire. Heading into 2021, we just knew this year would be better than the last.

As I recently said at the United Campus Ministries economics and ethics panel, we've learned a **ton** about how to deal with COVID in its first year as a global pandemic. But the second year is writing new rules. Which means we have a lot we must *continue* to wrestle with.

It seems that we will be living with a virtual + in-person church for awhile. *This* is the closest thing we will have to a normal. As imperfect and frustratingly human as it is.

I can't help but dwell on how especially poignant this is with the Pentecost story. When a mighty wind, the *breath* of God comes with *tongues* of fire and people shouting in crowds. It is totally a super-spreader event! But rather than passing on a virus that tears at our lungs and incapacitates even the strongest, the Spirit compels people to *communicate*.

This is a far deeper irony. For as hard as it has been to deal with the pandemic, to communicate our needs to each other, and to live with a new normal we compare to a dumpster fire, we have poorly communicated to each other how traumatized we all are.

At the heart of the Pentecost story is a divine moment of communication that transcends every individual's need and speaks to something we all have in common.

As people of faith in a time of both individual and collective trauma, we are invited to experience truly uncommon grace. And to join into making **that** into a new normal.

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