



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — April 13, 2022

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From Our Bishop & Our Presiding Bishop

A message from Bishop Hughes for Easter 2022

Dear Companions on the Journey,

Suddenly it is Holy Week! What a gift and blessing to observe Holy Week services in person this year. As importantly, we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a changed people. God has been generous, and we are grateful.

We have learned a new appreciation for the gift of time with family, friends, and our faith community. We have become more aware of God's presence in our daily lives. Our sacred texts, the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*, have seen regular usage and study. The way we pray has expanded, taken deep root, and informed our response to the troubles of these times. We are a changed people and a changed church.

I am confident that, as we observe Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection this year, we are more able to see, hear, and know God's leading for our lives and our churches. The changes and pressures we face may be relentless, but God is steadfast.

May Jesus' ferocious love of all God's people fill us and propel us into the world, generously sharing the abundance of God's love, mercy, and compassion with a hurting world.

You have my prayers for a blessed Holy Week and a glorious Easter.

Grace and peace,
Bishop Hughes

Presiding Bishop Curry: Easter 2022 Message

In Matthew's gospel, the resurrection of Jesus is introduced this way: "After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, came and rolled back the stone before the tomb until it was open."

A number of years ago, when I was serving as the bishop of North Carolina, one of our clergy, the Rev. James Melnyk, offered a workshop on the Saturday before Palm Sunday on how to design, and color, and make Easter eggs.

I attended the workshop with a number of other people from around the Raleigh area and did my best to make an Easter egg. But Jim was a master at doing so. You see, Jim's family hailed from Ukraine, and he had been making those Easter eggs from childhood, and spoke of his grandmother and the family tradition that hailed from Ukraine, the making of those Easter eggs. I knew the significance of the Easter egg and Easter. I knew the stories and the truth and the teachings about the coming of new life into the world, and the connection of life emerging from an egg, and Jesus rising from the dead, bringing new life and hope into our world.

But it became clear to me, in the last month or so, in this time when the people of the Ukraine are struggling for their freedom, struggling to be what God intends for all people to be, free people, that that egg, which is deeply embedded in the life and the consciousness of the people of Ukraine, that those Easter eggs are not just mere symbols, but reminders of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. Think back. On Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem, as we know, riding on a donkey. That was a deliberate act on his part.

He entered Jerusalem at about same time that Pontius Pilate, the governor of Rome, would've been entering the city from the other side, from the other gate. Pilate would've been riding a war horse, accompanied by a cavalry and infantry. He would've been riding in the streets of Jerusalem at this, the dawn of the Passover, which was a celebration of Jewish freedom. Harking back to the days of Moses and the Exodus, Pilate knew that the people would remember that God decreed freedom for all people, and that the Roman empire, which held Judea as a colony, would need to put down, by brute force, any attempt to strike a blow for their freedom.

So, Pilate entered Jerusalem on a war horse, and Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. The way of humility, the way of the love that we know from the God who is love, the way of truth, the way of compassion, the way of justice, the way of God, the way of love. That way faced the way of the world, brute force, totalitarian power, injustice, bigotry, violence, embodied in Pontius Pilate, governor of Rome. And the rest of the week was a conflict between the way of the empire and the way of the kingdom or the reign of God's love.

On Friday, the empire struck. Jesus was executed on the orders of the governor of Rome. He was killed, and hope seemed to die with him. His followers fled, save those few women who stood by the cross, and save old Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who provided a tomb for the body of Jesus. The Scripture says they placed his body in

the tomb and rolled the stone in front of the tomb. And there he lay dead, lifeless. There their hopes dashed on the altars of reality, their truth was crushed to earth. Their love itself seemed to die.

Then early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, and at least one other, and maybe a few other women, went to the tomb to anoint his body, to do the rites of burial that were customary. But when they got there, they realized that there had been an earthquake, that the earth, if you will, had been cracked open, and that the tomb was empty. The tomb was open and empty. The earth had been cracked open, and they would soon discover that Jesus had been raised from the dead. The earth cracking open, the tomb opening like an egg cracked open, and new life emerging from it.

That is the victory of life. That is the victory of love. That is the victory of God. The resurrection of Jesus is the victory that we can believe in and live by.

Many years before South Africa ever saw its new day of freedom, I heard Desmond Tutu in Columbus, Ohio. This was in the mid-1980s. This was while Nelson Mandela was still in prison, while there was no hope of deliverance. I heard him say in his speech that I believe that one day my beloved South Africa will be free for all of her children, Black, white, colored, Asian, Indian, all of her children.

I believe it, because I believe that God has a dream for South Africa, and nothing can stop God's dream. And I believe that because I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, and nothing can stop God. Easter is the celebration of the victory of God. The earth, like an egg, has been cracked open, and Jesus has been raised alive and new, and love is victorious.

In the year 2020, in that first Easter during the pandemic, when our church buildings were closed, we broadcast an Easter service from the National Cathedral, and members of our communication team organized for, what may have been the first

time in our church's history, organized an online choir.

And they sang an ancient Easter hymn. It sings of this victory, this victory of love of God. The strife is o'er, the battle done. The victory of life is won. The sound of triumph has begun. Alleluia, alleluia. The victory is won. Our task is to live in that victory, to live out that love until the prayer that Jesus taught us, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And so this Easter, behold, the Ukrainian Easter egg, for the victory of love and life is one.

Features

April update from our diocesan Good News Gardens

By Julie Crawford

With the call of Spring, activities moved forward at the Garden of Hope at the Community of St. John Baptist (CSJB) in Mendham. The mission of the Good News Gardens movement, as led by The Episcopal Church, is to partner with people in transformational agrarian ministry that feeds body, mind, and spirit. Good News Gardens is a church-wide movement of individuals, congregations, schools, colleges, seminaries, monasteries, camps and conference centers involved in a variety of food and creation care ministries – gardening, farming, beekeeping, composting, gleaning, feeding, and food justice advocacy. Collectively Good News Gardens share their abundance, their prayers, and the Way of Love in their communities and beyond.

CSJB has been blessed with the presence of Mendham Boy Scout Troop 1. In March, Eagle Scout Candidate Bret Kiefer of Chester mobilized three different work teams to make progress on a number of tasks: garden house foundation and framing; compost bin construction; hedge trimming; demolition of rotting boards; ground preparation for new beds; and leaf blowing and

black walnut nut collection around the Community's St. Marguerite's Retreat Center. The Scouts ages 8 to 19 participated, and their efforts so far have earned them over 200 hours of community service credit for their advancement in scout levels. Kudos to Bret for his leadership skills.

The Scouts will return in April to install a different type of bed at the garden, one rooted in agrarian practices for over a century in England. The Troop will also complete the garden path mulching and fencing restoration. The Scouts also did some leaf blowing and black walnut nut removal, and spent some time clearing the labyrinth of sticks and leaves.

One goal of Good News Gardens is placement of spaces for contemplative gardening. The Convent has an old patio in need of restoration and is in search of options for restoration of this Sacred Space. The Rev. Pamela Dolan, an Episcopal priest in California and author of *Contemplative Gardening*, recently presented for Good News Gardens on that topic.

Upcoming work at The Garden of Hope will involve volunteers from Holy Trinity, West Orange who are scheduling a work day this Spring to help with garden preparations in Mendham. Holy Trinity maintains an active Food Pantry. Other active registered gardens with the diocese include St. Gregory's, Parsippany and St. Andrews and Holy Communion, South Orange. Consider asking members of your congregations to come forth for this Creation Care ministry.

This past year the Garden of Hope, Church of the Messiah, Chester and St. Peter's, Morristown registered for the Agrarian Ministries program which provides an abundance of support towards the mission of providing food security and biodiversity.

The Goods News Gardens initiative, which is identified under Creation Care Agrarian Ministries, now has been added to the Episcopal Asset Map. If

your congregation or institution has a garden, consider registering for the national program.

Julie Crawford is an Associate of the Community of St. John Baptist, Mendham, and a parishioner of Church of the Messiah, Chester.

Diocesan Announcements

Clergy ministry transitions

Arrivals

- **Apr. 1 - The Rev. Deacon Danielle Baker,**
Clergy-in-Charge, St. Paul's, Morris Plains

Retirements

- **May 1 - The Rev. Michael Gerhardt,**
Priest-in-Residence, Christ Church,
Hackensack

148th Annual Diocesan Convention

On **Saturday, May 7**, we are eagerly anticipating our first fully in-person Diocesan Convention since February 2020! While deputies are meeting in person, guests are invited to watch from home as Convention is live streamed to the diocesan YouTube channel,
<https://youtube.com/c/dionewark>.

Key Convention events to watch:

9:30 AM - Diocesan Worship Service

11:15 AM - Special Presentation:
Myth-Busting Diocesan Finances

12 PM - Diocesan Budget Overview