



# ADVENTures *a weekly newsletter*

July 16th, 2023 The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to Advent Episcopal Church and may God bless your worship today!

## **Bishop Anne Jolly Holds Diocesan Wide “Listening Sessions”**

To build and deepen relationships in the diocese and with the Bishop and her staff, Bishop Anne Jolly is inviting everyone in the diocese to participate in 18 Listening Sessions this summer. These will include facilitated discussions and table conversations about the vision for the diocese and how the Bishop and her staff can support congregations in living out their missions. The development of a Diocesan Strategic Plan is an expected outcome. On June 27 I attended a Session in Sandusky. I prayed about what I should say/not say and to be gracious in any remarks. I believe my words were not mine but Holy Spirit guided and I don't sense people heard judgment or condemnation.

The sessions included table conversations then reporting highlights to the plenary. Topics discussed included: strategies of a Diocesan Strategic Plan that might include congregational development; attracting families with children; church growth; building community across all in the diocese; fighting systemic racism; implementing technology across all congregations; prioritizing Bellwether Farm; and being attractive to the LGBTQ community. I recommended “spiritual formation” to be the #1 and central or core priority, which my table agreed with and which was positively received by the entire group. (My table was quite liberal.) We were asked to prioritize these strategies. Then, all discussed concerns/likes/dreams associated with implementing these strategies over the next 5 years. To the entire group, I expressed my dream that “The diocese, each congregation and each congregant would acknowledge Jesus as Lord and that making Him known and foremost would be the top priority for all in implementing any Strategic Plan.” The first thing Bp Jolly expressed in her closing remarks was her vision that that dream is hers also, and that that's what we should all strive for through the power of the Holy Spirit. I was blown away at how Christ-centered, Spirit-inspired and authentic were her impromptu remarks. Upon leaving, one-on-one, I commended her for her fervent, evangelical, and politically-risky remarks – “The first time in a long time I've heard what seemed to be a genuine commitment to Christ coming from an Episcopal bishop or even priest.” She was visibly moved. Pray for her leadership. I believe she would be warmly received by the Advent community.

## **Advent's Eliza Jennings Nursing Home Ministry**

Advent has been supporting a nursing home ministry since early 2014. That particular ministry is the Eliza Jennings Health Campus located at 10603 Detroit Avenue in Cleveland. The ministry was started by Advent's own David Luptak, when Rev. RJ Johnson was Advent's priest. The ministry group met the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. Each service lasted approximately 45 minutes and included a few hymns (using a boom box), scripture reading, prayer, a sermon, and Holy Eucharist. The volunteers included, David Luptak, Rev. RJ Johnson, Don Moore, Jane Meyer, Bob Schaffer, Marilyn Decker, Anne Crothall, Jason Evans, Bev Cummings, Max and Barbara Gage. Then the pandemic hit. The ministry was ceased from February of 2020 until October of 2021. When we finally received the ok to return, our ministry, began meeting once a month, the 2nd Monday of the month. Our current volunteers are Bill Benedict, who plays his guitar, Marilyn Decker, Dick McCormick and myself. If anyone from Advent feels a calling to join us, as we continue to minister to the residents of Eliza Jennings, we would love your presence. There's an awesome feeling knowing that you may have touched someone with your presence. Sometimes they touch you! God does some really amazing things when you serve Him. Please let me know!

-Max Gage

## **July Birthdays**

4 Paul Koszkalda Jr  
8 John Crothall & Paul Laursen  
14 Chelsea Boyce  
15 Stacie Smith  
17 Bruce Bunn III  
21 Teddi Augustine & Shirley Moore



## **July Anniversaries**

3 Dudley & Kay Blossom  
21 Max & Barbara Gage

