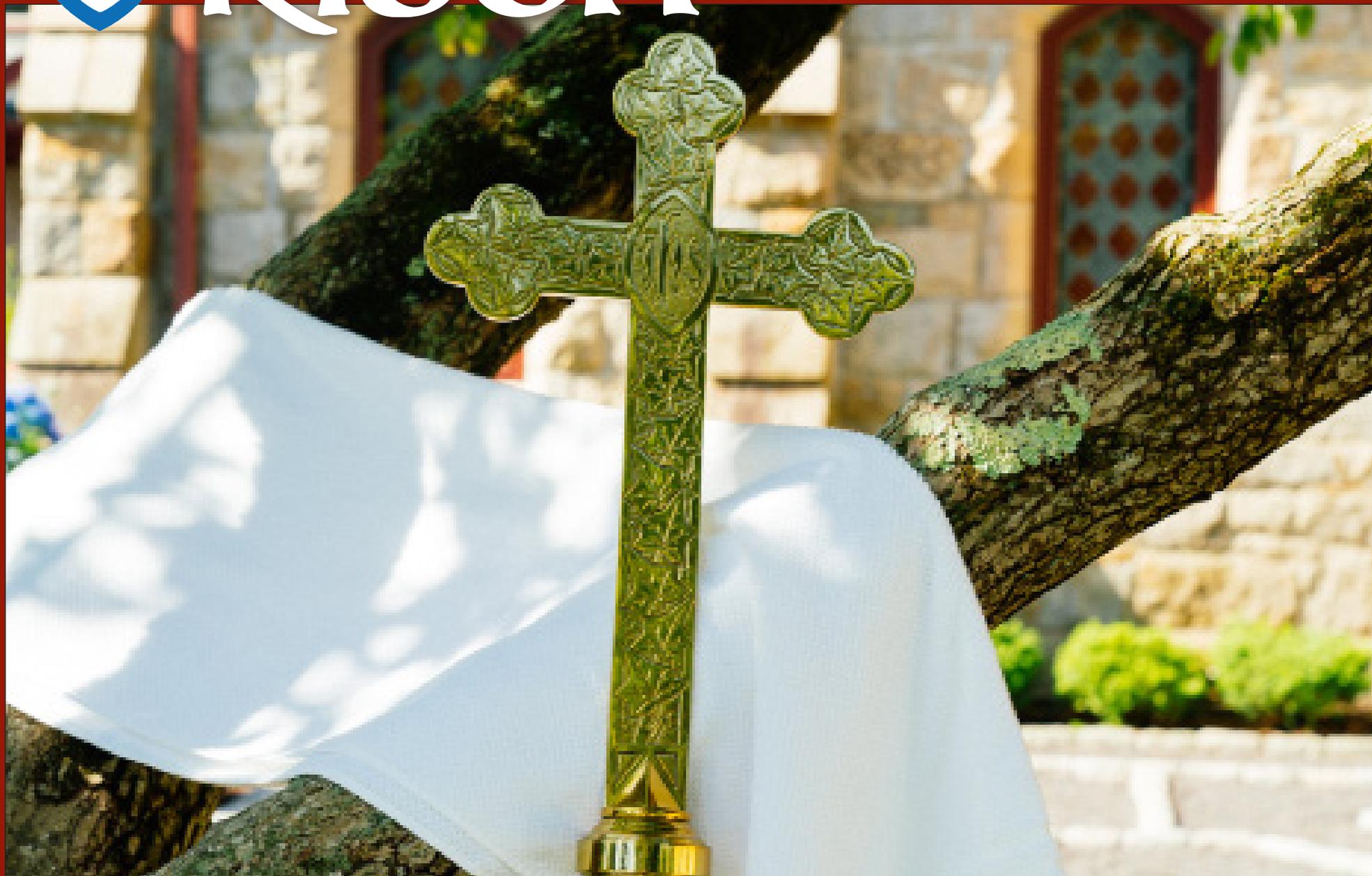




Risen

SUMMER 2021

Rhode Island's Source for Episcopal News



Bishop's Message ■ Around the Church ■ Tech Thoughts ■ Tea Time Theology ■ Emmanuel, Newport ■ Clergy Q&A

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Being the Church in Extraordinary Time

We are in the long green season of the Church, the Sundays after Pentecost, that some denominations call “Ordinary Time.” But this moment in our ministry is anything but ordinary. I’m sure, like me, you wish that it was.

We have been dealing with a global pandemic for more than a year now. Things that would have seemed unthinkable, like closing churches and worshipping primarily online, are currently not just thinkable but part of our everyday experience. We have learned much in the past year, even as we grieve all that we’ve lost.

These past few months have seen a rollercoaster swing of emotions. We’ve gone from hoping that this was going to end this summer and that we’d get back to normal, to the dread realization that normal might not be coming back, and now a fear that we need to go backward because of the new Delta variant, rather than going forward. People have told me that they’re exhausted and that they are losing hope. I get that — and there are times when I’m right there with them.

But I believe that God has not abandoned us and that there is essential work to do. I don’t know when things will finally

get back to normal, but given the miraculous vaccines and a growing set of skills at managing public health crises, I believe that day will come. In the meantime, I am clinging to faith — faith in God, and faith in all of you.

Jesus promised to be always with us. I believe him. I believe that he is present with us, especially now, just as I have felt his presence in times of dire emergencies in hospitals and disasters before. Knowing that presence gives us the strength to keep moving, not always in the direction we want to move, but

moving in hopes that the path will take us there eventually.

The Presiding Bishop often quotes from an old Black spiritual: “Don’t get weary children, keep your hand on the plow and your eyes on the prize.” That is as powerful a word from those who have gone before us as I can think of today. They and their people kept walking, and by God’s grace and through Jesus’ love, we shall too.

— *The Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely,
Episcopal Bishop of Rhode Island*

General Convention, Lambeth delayed to 2022

Every three years, the governing body of the Episcopal Church gathers for meetings and decisions — except in 2021. And about every 10 years, Anglican bishops meet in England— except in 2020. The Covid pandemic forced postponement of both key events.

General Convention

The 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church now will take place July 7 – 14, 2022, in Baltimore. It consists of two houses of representatives:

- The House of Bishops — all bishops in the Episcopal Church, whether active or retired.
- The House of Deputies — more than 800 laypeople, deacons and priests. Each diocese is entitled to four lay deputies and four clergy deputies (plus alternates who can substitute if necessary).

Bishop Knisely will represent the Diocese of Rhode Island in the House of Bishops. Retired bishops the Rt. Rev. GERALYN WOLF (now an assistant bishop in the Diocese of Long Island) and the Rt. Rev. David Joslin also have seats in the house.

Rhode Island elected its deputation to the House of Deputies at the 2019 Diocesan Convention. Clergy: The Rev. Sunil Chandy, Christ Church, Westerly; the Rev. Patrick Greene, St. John's, Barrington; the Ven. Jan Grinnell, St. Luke's, East Greenwich; the Rev. Dante A. Tavolaro, St. Thomas', Greenville; Alternates: The Rev. Veronica Tierney; the Rev. Beth Sherman, St. Augustine's, Kingston. Lay: Scott Avedisian, Trinity, Cranston; Lora MacFall, St. Andrew's, Little Compton; Olive Swinski, Redeemer, Providence; and Laura Clarke, St. Matthew's, Jamestown. Alternate: Dave Seifert, Grace, Providence.

The event's website notes that the work began this summer in new ways, including an online convocation of worship and prayer to help deputies and bishops "hear what the Spirit is saying to the church as we prepare to gather at General Convention." Virtual work will start in November for appointed legislative committees made up of deputies and bishops.

Members of a Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop were elected online to



ensure ample time to complete its work before the 2024 General Convention, when the church will choose a new presiding bishop.

Lambeth Conference

The 15th Lambeth Conference will take place July 27 through August 8, 2022, at its traditional venues at the University of Kent, Canterbury Cathedral, and Lambeth Palace.

Bishop Knisely and his wife, Karen, plan to attend and have already started preparatory work with other bishops and spouses.

The conference is convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury and brings together Anglican bishops to discuss together church and world affairs and the global mission for the Anglican Communion for the next decade.

Last month, online "Bishops' Conversations" began to start exploring

the conference theme of "God's Church for God's World."

The event website notes that participants will reflect on themes from 1 Peter, incorporating time for prayer and Bible study, sharing ministry experiences and stories, and "discussing what it means for the Anglican Communion to be responsive to the needs of a fast-changing world."

The Mothers' Union of the Anglican Communion has begun similar conversations among the bishops' spouses, and Karen is planning to participate.

All bishops are invited to be part of the online conversations — including those who were not initially invited to the in-person conference that had been scheduled for 2020. And all spouses are being invited by the Mothers' Union to participate.

— Dave Seifert

Tech Thoughts from David Brookhart

David Brookhart is the senior warden at St. Martin's, Providence, and one of the volunteer consultants helping churches around the diocese to think about their equipment needs for digital ministry.

I've been thinking about our experience during the past year at St. Martin's as we initiated livestreaming and video recording our church services.

Sure, getting the right equipment is important. But that's just the start.

In fact, in many ways the purchase and installation of a video system for use in church is the easier part of livestreaming. **What truly makes your livestreams successful is coordination** among clergy, a technical team, volunteers, and the parish. Let me use St. Martin's as an example.

This time last year we agreed that livestreaming would need to be part of our present, and our future. We believed that we had to find a way to continue to reach our church community where they were — at home, on vacation, somewhere in the world. We started with prerecorded audio podcasts as we contacted a consultant to lead us toward implementing a video system and integrating it with our audio system. Now we have participants from all over the nation and the world.

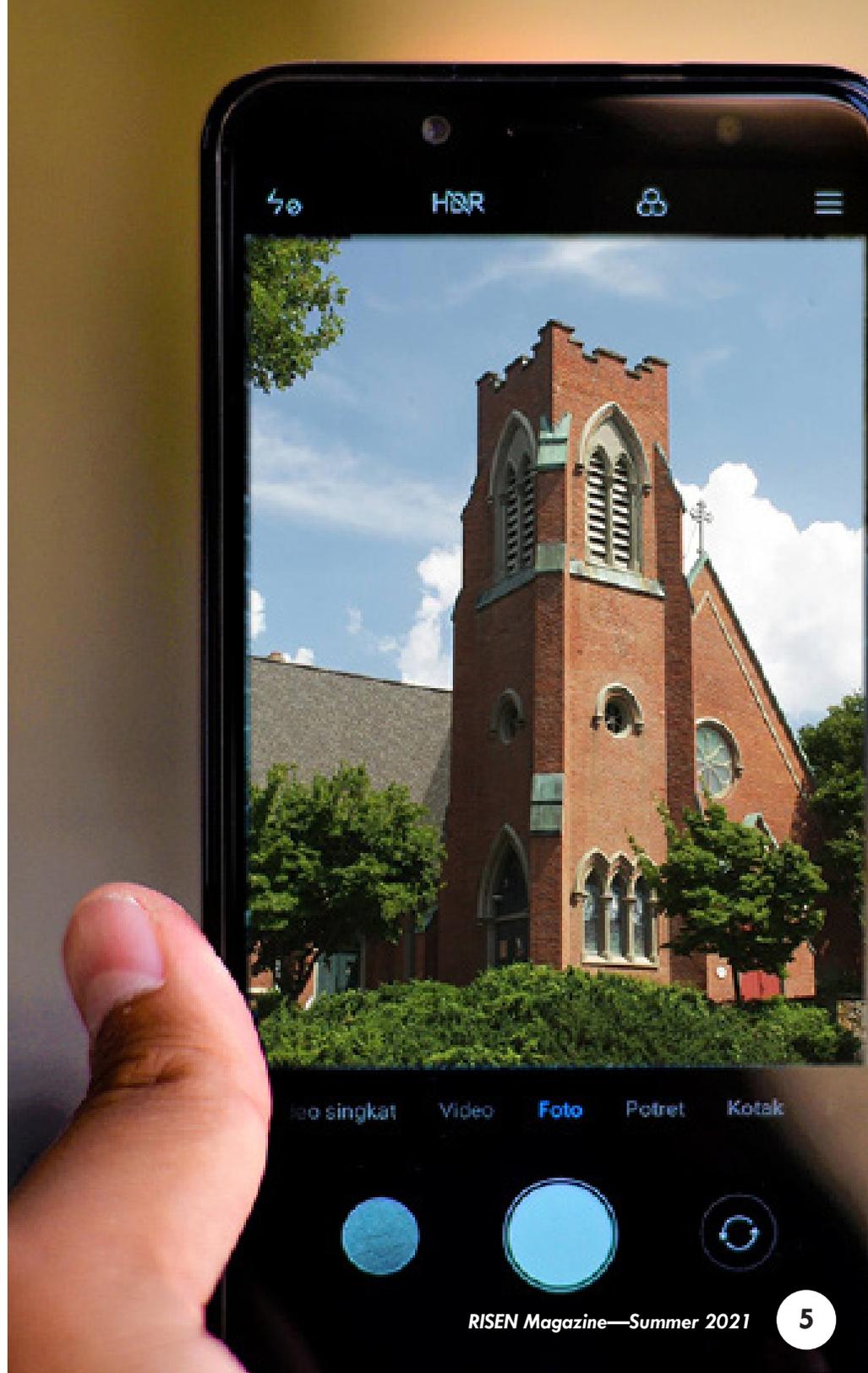
With Vestry approval we moved ahead. We got the equipment — and **didn't really know how to make it work.**

Luckily we had a bit of experience between us, and a young parishioner had an experienced friend who agreed to help set up our system in a portable configuration outside during the summer. Even as we livestreamed outside, we selected and **dedicated space** in our sanctuary to be the tech center. It's important for the **tech crew to be able to see beyond what is on the cameras** so they can readily anticipate what is going on and be prepared. (More about this in a moment). Then, we started building our tech expertise.

By working and learning together outside, we had come to understand that many hands are necessary to make this work. We had to arrive early to set up. We needed leaders (we pay this individual like you might pay an organist or choir leader), assistants, and volunteers. Like most new teams we “faked it” until we made it. We were all driven to improve. Each week we did **a post-service critique and analysis** among the team, with the priest, other participants and our audience. With this drive, our streams improved from week to week. We also came to understand that we had to prepare to move beyond having just the core team manage our equipment and livestream.

Part of what we all came to understand was that aspects of the typical service did not show well “on TV.” In church

article continues on next page



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we understand it when the priest or lay reader moves at a stately pace from one place to another — say from a pew to the lectern. As one watches the service from outside, this is a tremendous waste of time and one loses interest. We had to reposition where the priests and readers were seated (closer), and had them stage themselves in place prior to the actual presentation of their reading on camera. Instead of a 10- to 30-second delay, we now have a one- or two-second delay. We also shortened our typical service to fit within a normal adult attention span — about one hour.

We also learned that **audio is just as important as video** — and maybe more important. We have an excellent audio system in the sanctuary. We tied that system into our video feed and sent it out. Unfortunately, what sounded great in church didn't sound so great in the livestream. We got many complaints. To “send” the proper audio, we had to create a second channel and tune it to livestream audio. This took a bit of practice, but it's more than worth the effort. There are no more complaints!

Fortunately, church services in general follow a relatively consistent pattern. Using church bulletins and the prayer book, in consultation with leaders, **we created a script for the service.** This includes the action (such as the prelude), a description (music start, clergy enter and positioning), camera positions (wide shot (camera 1) for entry,

close-up position (camera 2, position 1) next . . .), and comments. Sure, those of us who are consistently working on the service have gotten to know these things, but we have a constant need and desire to incorporate more volunteers into our team. By having a script, we can easily integrate new volunteers. We train them to use the equipment and they can follow the script to help us provide a consistent livestream.

We are in process of creating a **training manual** to help us put all our important information and guidance in one place. This includes tech specs and reference materials on all the equipment and connections, a “shot sheet” that shows each programmed or intended camera position, directions on how to set up the equipment and connect to YouTube and the audio system.

On a typical Sunday we have two individuals managing the livestream and audio. On a more complicated service we might have three people actively involved and a “runner” in case something happens. Each person is prepped for his or her role, understands his or her responsibility, and is comfortable completing the task. In an important way **we are creating a ministry.** Teenagers helped us get up and running at the beginning. Teenagers (and others) are volunteering to help us continue. This trained team means we can joyfully share the work and the ministry from week to week.

MINISTRY UPDATE

Tea Time Theology Podcast

Tea Time Theology is working on producing its third season. This season will be talking about God in popular culture. Each episode of Tea Time features an interview and discussion around some aspect of faith and Christian life. This season's guests have been asked to choose and watch a movie or an episode of a TV show that has a basis in religion or scripture. Discussions will revolve around the religious implications of the movie or episode: how it was or was not faithful to scripture, or how its moral message relates to religion.

The podcast idea was brought to the diocese by Ivy Swinski, who hosted the first season. She has been working with Mo Akande, music director and host of season two, and Taylor Wilkey, producer and host of season three. Our guests have included clergy and lay leaders from around the Diocese, and this season will include Canon Alan Bentrup of South Carolina, who connected with us online.

This podcast utilizes a true “come as you are” approach and can be used as a tool for evangelism in your own church and in the diocese as a whole. It has been a great tool during the social distancing time, as it was created with the intention to be an activity done

in one's own space. Podcasts are a way to connect with people without ever needing to come into physical contact with them. The connection comes online, through social media channels, where people can leave messages on pictures and interact with each other in a different way. The model was taken from how fandoms interact on social media sites — and how that could be reworked to fit the Church's mission.

Please look for Tea Time Theology wherever you get your podcasts, and follow on social media! We are @teatimetheology on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. If you have any questions, feel free to send an email to teatime@episcopalri.org.

— *Kristin Knudson-Groh
and Ivy Swinski*





CHURCH PROFILE ■ Emmanuel, Newport

A smaller and older congregation with resulting reduced financial capacity combined with an oversized historic building could have led the Emmanuel, Newport, congregation to see only limitations. Instead they found opportunities to operate in new ways.

“We used the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) model from the Episcopal Church that teaches communities to give thanks for what they do have,” said the Rev. Della Wager Wells, rector, “to look at our resources and think in new ways about how God might be calling us to serve the wider community.”

Those resources include vast, historic and acoustically significant indoor spaces —

and more than 40 parking spaces — in downtown Newport.

“We realized we could better fulfill our mission of welcoming all people in all places in all seasons if we collaborated with another community entity engaged in lifting up the human spirit,” Wells explained.

The result was a partnership with the world-renowned Newport Music Festival (NMF), which was looking for space that would accommodate year-round programming. The NMF now has its offices in former Sunday School rooms and will use the parish auditorium (with stage), the nave, and the library for performances, artist talks, and educational programming — while

maintaining its traditional summer classical music concerts at historic venues around Newport.

The new collaboration built on earlier efforts that include an indoor hydroponics program. Assisted by Episcopal Charities NOW grants Emmanuel expanded that program to enable the MLK Community Center to offer fresh produce year-round to people needing nutrition in Newport County. The church is also bringing its kitchen up to current codes for its “Soup’s On” community meal ministry and other community meals and church use.

Beyond that, Wells says, “we have learned a lot about staying together while staying apart — with online

worship, book groups, and Bible study. We’ve also used this time to re-imagine our administrative function.”

All these initiatives, Wells adds, help Emmanuel focus on “nourishing our community — with produce we grow, indoors and outdoors, with food we prepare, with the worship and music we engage, and with the connection that comes from community nurtured in these ways.”

Emmanuel Church
42 Dearborn Street, Newport
401-847-0675
The Rev. Della Wager Wells, Rector
emmanuelnewport.org

— Dave Seifert

Transitions: Clergy Profiles & New Calls

The Rev. Anne Bolles-Beaven, Rector, St. Columba's, Middletown



What called you to ministry?

I took a creative writing class at the beginning of my junior year in college. The writing prompt was: My last hour. I took it very seriously. I would be dead at the end of this hour. I found myself writing about the kingdom of God—God's love reaching out toward us like the sea reaches toward a shell it finds impossible to leave. I changed my major to religion that very day.

Did you attend an Episcopal church while growing up? If not, what brought you to the Episcopal Church?

My dad was an Episcopal priest and a Navy chaplain. I was raised on sea stories and gospel stories — on service, glorious and costing. We went to church on base with my dad. When he was on a tour of duty, we attended the local Episcopal Church. I've always had a broad and varied experience of the Episcopal Church; it has always been home to me.

Did you go to seminary right out of college or start in a different career?

When I felt called to be ordained, Rhode Island had an ordination process that required two years "in the world" following college, as well as a year's internship in a parish other than the sponsoring one. I went as soon as I could. The priesthood has been my only career.

How are you getting to know your new parish and new state, given all the current difficulties?

I had six weeks as priest-in-charge of my parish before the pandemic shut us down. We only just reopened a few weeks ago. I think we've all learned how important the community is to us and, at the same time, that Jesus' circle of concern lies beyond the walls. I think I've helped my parishioners learn how deeply God loves them — loves us all — and how faith can change our lives and other's lives through us.

What are your interests/hobbies?

I love to read, to pick and deadhead flowers in my garden, to float on my back in the water — pool or sea — and look up at the sky, and to connect in thoughtful conversation.



Changes

The Rev. James Jacobs is serving as long-term supply at St. David's.

The Rev. Susan Carpenter was called to serve at Holy Cross, Middletown.

The Rev. Dr. Michele Matott is no longer at Church of the Transfiguration, Cranston. She has been called to All Saints Church in Whitman, Massachusetts.

The Rev. Alan Neale is no longer at Trinity Church, Newport.

The Rev. Nathan J.A. Humphrey is no longer rector at the Zabriskie Memorial Church of St. John the Evangelist, Newport. He has been called to St. Thomas's Church, Huron Street, in Toronto, Canada.

The Rev. Kevin Beesley has been called to the Zabriskie Memorial Church of St. John the Evangelist, Newport.

Death

The Rev. Robert Reuss, former rector of St. David's-on-the-Hill. July 2021.

The Rev. Tanya Watt, Associate Rector, St. Luke's, East Greenwich



What called you to ministry?

In some ways my call to ministry was a complete surprise, but when I reflect, it is clear I have been called to ministry my entire life. The formal “call” happened while I was working at what was supposed to be a temporary job at St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. I was in the midst of a Ph.D program and my husband was in seminary. As I worked with the clergy at St. John's—all women—the ways I naturally approached my work began to be named as gifts of ministry. As time went by, my work at the church became increasingly life-giving and energizing. It was clear that I needed to enter into a formal discernment process.

Did you attend an Episcopal church while growing up? If not, what brought you to the Episcopal Church?

My dad's family is Roman Catholic, and while I was growing up, we attended the Catholic Church. But over time, it became increasingly

difficult to reconcile many of the church's positions with what we were experiencing. It all finally became too much, and I realized I could no longer be part of the Catholic Church. We were adrift for awhile, and my husband suggested we go to a service at the local Episcopal cathedral. The first service we attended, then-Canon Debbie Noonan celebrated the Eucharist. My husband was delighted—a woman at the altar! I was suspicious—a woman at the altar! He was received the following spring, but it took me two years. I needed more time to appreciate that our faith is alive and best expressed not through adherence to rigid common dogma but rather through shared commitment to common prayer.

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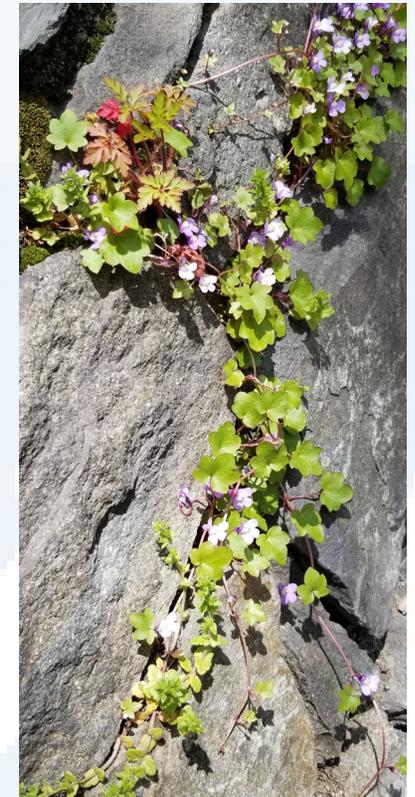
I worked in higher education administration, then as an instructor and research assistant during graduate studies, before going to seminary.

How are you getting to know your new parish and new state, given all the current difficulties?

I love St. Luke's, and I'm grateful to be part of such a vibrant parish. We have used Zoom for an adult formation, for Sunday social hours, and for a service for kids in the spirit of compline—it's been fun to get to know some of our youngest members and their families. On Ash Wednesday, I imposed ashes outside the church and got to meet people who knew me from our virtual worship. I coordinate our blog, and it has been a joy to read reflections parishioners have written and to connect with people in a unique way. I'm also the chaplain at Rhode Island College. Although it has been difficult to get to know folks, since things are largely closed, I have been able to participate in a few events, including a post-election event where I offered some tools for prayer and meditation. My husband and I love Rhode Island already and know it will just continue to get better as time goes by and we are able to safely visit the many places recommended to us.

What are your interests/hobbies?

I love our dog; I love working the *New York Times* puzzles; I love being near the water and walking along the beach; I like taking pictures, and I like reading. I'm also a big fan of eating whatever delicious thing my husband makes for us!





The cross is my anchor

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