

THE NATIVITY SCENE September 2020



Do you remember the phrase "Absence makes the heart grow fonder"? Thomas Haynes Bayly used this phrase in the last line of a song in his 1850 work, *Isle of Beauty*. I was thinking about this phrase while being quarantined over these last six months.

It will be great to be able to see each other FINALLY beginning September 13 at 7 am for outdoor worship in front of the church. We will utilize an online reservation form, so that we can ensure up to 50 people will be gathered.

The online reservation system will open Monday morning at 9 am and close Saturday at 5 pm. If you have trouble making a reservation, please contact Parish Administrator Mina Rafferty or me.

We will ask you to bring the following for the outdoor worship service:

- --a mask, which covers your nose and mouth, to wear during the entire service
- --a filled water bottle as it will be outside worship (the restrooms will be open)
- --your own chair (camping chair, lawn chair, etc.)
- --a *Book of Common Prayer* if you wish (although we will have bulletins containing most of the service)

We will offer Holy Communion (bread only) according to Rite 1 in the *Book of Common Prayer*, as we have done pre-Covid at the 8:30 service. There will be one reader for the Scripture lessons (again, like pre-Covid times). If you are interested in being a reader, please contact Fr. Wayne Whitney.

We will continue to offer our pre-recorded Live-Stream services at 10 am every Sunday morning for those who do not wish to, or who cannot, attend the outdoor service. The Sunday 10 am service will continue to be pre-recorded, as we have been doing since March, and will be recorded for online viewing when we eventually gather back inside. Covid has provided many churches the opportunity to realize that streaming church services is essential to the present and future of the church.

I have missed seeing so many of you over this six month absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As Thomas Haynes Bayly's quotes, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," it is my prayer that your heart will be even fonder, caring and loving toward your Nativity church family more than ever. See you at church in person or online!

Faithfully in Christ,

The Reverend Scot McComas Rector

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Sundays, 9:30 am Children's Chapel Live

Sundays, 10:00 am Sunday Service

Sundays, 11:00 am Virtual Coffee Hour

Sundays, 11:00 am Middle School Zoom

Sundays, 11:20 am Power Bible Study

Sundays, 11:30 am High School Zoom Mondays, 7:00 pm Story Sharing

1st Tuesdays 6:00 pm Outreach Meeting

<u>Tuesdays, 6:00 pm</u> Centering Prayer

Wednesdays, 10:30 am Fr. Scot's Book Group

Wednesdays, 5:30 pm Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, 6:00 pm Bible Study with Dr. Wayne

Wednesdays, 7:00 pm Virtual Choir Meeting

<u>Thursdays</u>, 10:00 am Knitting Group

Fridays, 10:00 am Story Sharing

If you would information on the meeting or would like to join, please contact Fr. Scot at scotmccomas@thenativity.net.



We are happy to welcome Jean Hawkins to Nativity!



A few months ago, I received a call from the diocese asking if Nativity would be a "host parish" for someone who would be learning how to be a deacon in a parish setting. Without hesitation, I said, "Of course, we'd be honored." We are delighted to welcome Jean Hawkins to The Episcopal Church of the Nativity who will serve on staff (non-stipendiary, as all deacons are) for six months in an internship, beginning September 1. Jean will "shadow" Martha and learn the ins and outs of what a deacon is and does. She will read Scripture and the prayers of the people, call us to confession, preach, serve at the altar, attend monthly outreach meetings, co-facilitate an Advent Quiet Day, visit the children's chapel, work with the clergy doing pastoral care for the parish, and a few other ministries that we will discern this fall. Please welcome Jean to Nativity. — Fr. Scot McComas



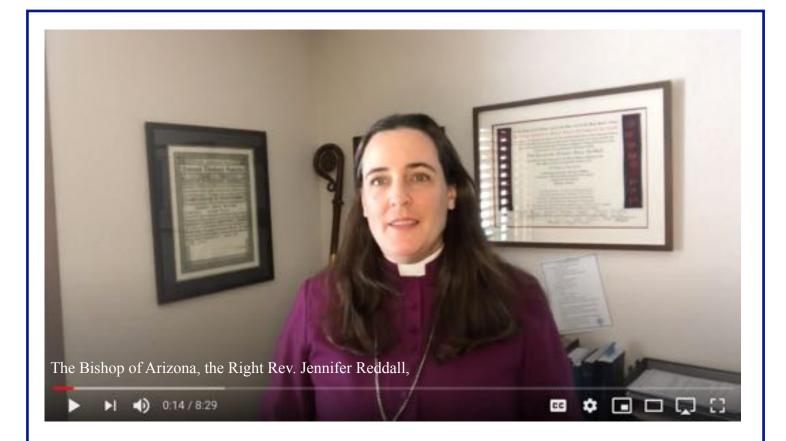
Jean Hawkins is a cradle Episcopalian born in Detroit, Michigan. As a child, her family moved around the Midwest and the Mid-Atlantic states, moving from church to church. She was confirmed in Greensburg, PA (near Pittsburgh). Jean graduated high school in West Virginia and engineering school at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

She married her college sweetheart weeks after graduation and took an engineering job at Motorola's semiconductor business in Phoenix. Mark and Jean have two grown daughters, Elizabeth and Aynsley, who live out of state. Currently, Jean works full time for HonorHealth in Information Technology.

The family found a spiritual home at Christ Church of the Ascension (CCA) where they have belonged for 25 years. Jean served two terms on the Vestry, taught Sunday School (grades 5-12) and confirmation class. After completing Education for Ministry (EfM) in 2013, she became a mentor for EfM in 2017. Jean co-chaired the Rector Search Committee in 2015.

Serving at the altar is a privilege for her. On any given Sunday, she will be either serving chalice or reading the lessons. Coordinating the Lectors, Vergers and Eucharistic Ministers was her job as well at CCA. On Pentecost of 2019, she became a Daughter of the King. Typically, at CCA, the Daughters of the King host two quiet days: one in Advent and one in Lent. As a Lay Eucharistic Minister, she enjoys serving communion to those who are home or hospital bound. In the summer of 2019, she completed the training for Community of Hope International to start a chapter at Christ Church of the Ascension.

Her diaconal studies began in the Spring of 2019. As a candidate for Holy Orders as a Deacon, Jean is looking forward to her internship at The Episcopal Church of the Nativity.



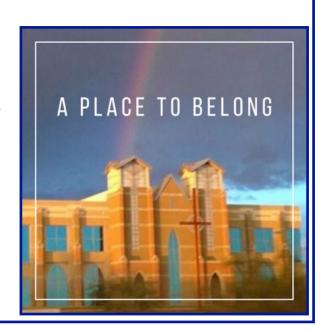
The Bishop of Arizona, the Right Rev. Jennifer Reddall, has informed the diocese of church reopening guidelines in order to continue to follow safe and healthy practices during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please click **here** or on the picture to be redirected to the Bishop's message.

Also, please click <u>here</u> for the official diocesan statement and guidelines on reopening churches.

May we continue to pray for each other, for those on the front lines of this pandemic, and for the whole world. May we remember to trust in God our Creator, in Christ our Redeemer, and in the Holy Spirit, who is in each of us. And may Christ's love and light shine within you forever!

I look forward to seeing y'all online in church!

Blessings and Peace, The Reverend Scot McComas Rector



From our Associate Rector



Wayne's World September 2020

I find it ironic that of all the Bibles I own the one I bought most recently, about 5 years ago or so, is already being worn out from use. The hardback cover is beginning to dangle by a thread!

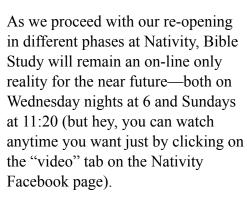
When some parishioners encouraged me to teach "through" the Bible about 4 years ago I took it on as a worthy challenge. Bible Study Wednesday has been precisely that. Regarding the narrative genre of biblical writings, we are in the midst of the time of the monarchy of Israel when David was king.

His reign will serve to be the model of what the faithful would eventually hold as the gold standard of kingship. His time as king represented the farthest expanse of Israel's borders, and the most cooperation from old enemies, like the Philistines.

The hope in a messiah that came later was modeled after King David's glory. It was always a hope that there could be a reclaiming of what was —that the past could be reclaimed and reappropriated.

When Jesus entered the scene he couldn't fulfill popular expectations because the people had collapsed their hope for a Davidic Messiah with a return to the good ol' days. Jesus said that those days of the past pale in comparison to the future that God has in mind for his faithful people. It was for this message that the power-brokers in his own religion had him killed.

So, why study the scriptures of old? They help us to sort out our own motivations in life. They provide a mirror for self-reflection and growth. They help us reclaim our heritage as God's own with a brutally honest look at the ideals that drive us. Bible Study is a key element in living a life of transformation.



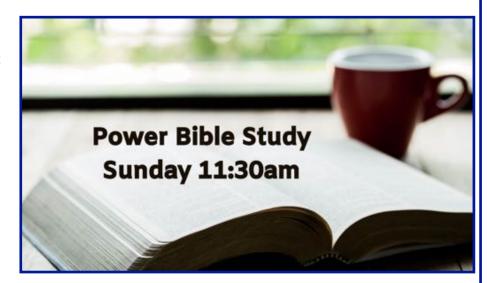
I sure hope the binding on my Bible cover holds up.

Dr. W+ The Rev. Wayne V. Whitney, Ph.D.



Bible Study

Power Bible Study with Dr. Wayne continues on the Facebook feed at 11:20 Sunday mornings. These next several weeks we're looking at the high moments in the book of Exodus. It's all about the seminal event in the faith of our spiritual forebears without which there would be no paradigm of salvation—the manumission through turbulent waters toward the promised land. Go to nativityscottsdale.org and click on "Join us Online" to get connected.



Bible Study Wednesday

Bible Study Wednesday is in the midst of trekking through the entire biblical narrative. Currently we're in II Samuel seeing how God uses King David's monarchy to set expectations for the future. Tune in to the Facebook feed at 6:00 pm Wednesday nights. Each night Dr. Wayne closes with the prayers of Compline. Evening Prayer is offered at 5:30 on Facebook Live.

Wednesday Evening Prayer

Tune in to Nativity's Facebook page for live Evening Prayer Rite II every Wednesday at 5:30 pm. This layled service features a weekly commemoration of Christian witness. More lay leaders willing to take a spot in the rotation are welcome. Simply email **waynewhitney@thenativity.net** or text or call Dr. Wayne at 303-809-1458 to get primed in how you can participate as a lay leader of this historic liturgy of prayer in the church.

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer meets Tuesday evenings at 6 pm via Zoom. Contact Margaret Cohea for a zoom invitation. Contact mycohea246@gmail.com for further details or questions.

Deacon's Corner



I hope, I pray, that this pandemic time is coming to a time of less isolation, a time that is changed for sure, but one where we can begin to be together in different ways. I am often asked what have you done for church during this pandemic? I shudder and almost don't know how to answer because at once I have done everything, but the time feels like a fog. So, while in the fog, my days were filled with keeping in touch with parishioners, well-known and brand new. I reached out to those who are alone, or living in communities, but isolated behind their apartment doors.

I called those who asked to be called, and those who were silent. I reached out, period. All whom I called were glad for the connection, and once again I saw those tenuous threads that connect us through the Holy Spirit. Those threads thrive when nourished, and that was my work. My work was to strengthen our ties as we were secluded.

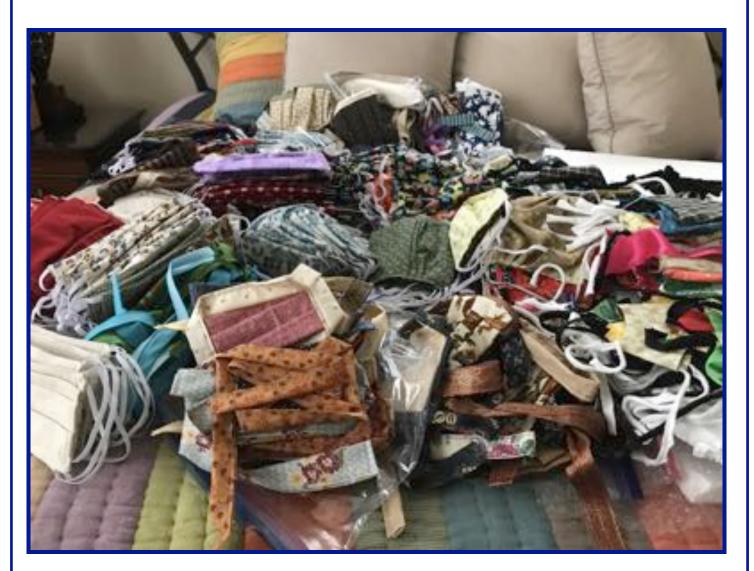
A group of us met through zoom every Thursday. We knit, but mostly we just enjoyed being together. Truth be told there were several who joined us who don't knit. We just strengthened those ties between us. Look at the smiles in this zoom shot:

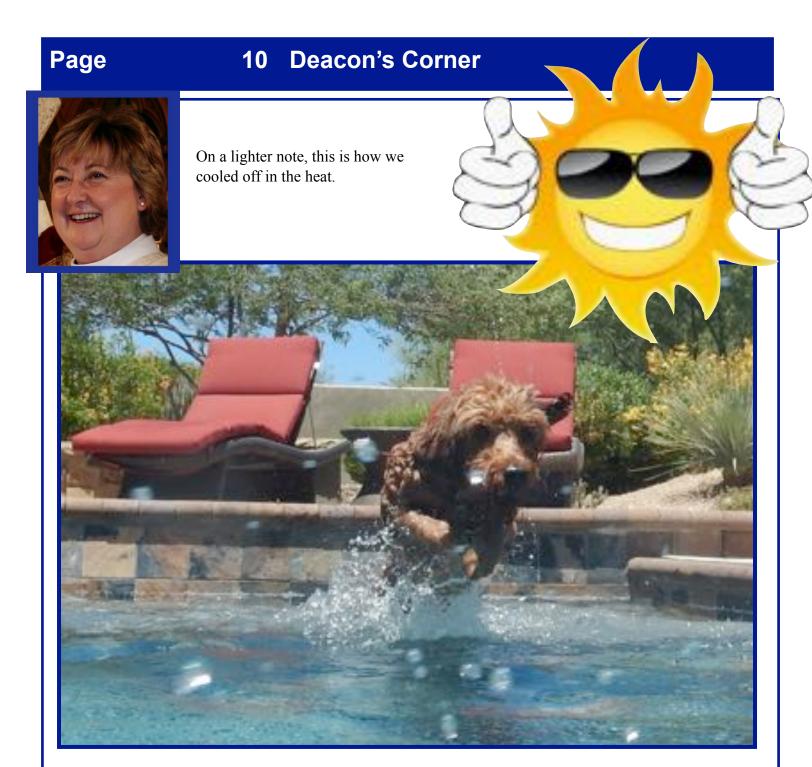


I had several people join me for spiritual direction over the summer. I spent zoom time with staff from Nativity, and with Deacons from the Diocese. The Outreach committee stayed in touch and figured out new ways of work for new situations. My husband ran in the primary for City Council, and there were many new ties made with people in our broader community. It was a spring and summer of quarantine and aloneness met with contact and relationship. I was reminded over and over, the church is not the building, it is the people.



And speaking of keeping relationships, here's a picture of part of the 568 cloth masks made by our parishioners for the Native American tribes and the people of Nativity.





As August rolls to a close I attended the Deacon's Conference for Province VIII and VI. It was planned to happen in Phoenix, but we met on Zoom. These Provinces span from Taiwan and Guam to Minnesota - with all the California fires in the middle. The conference, *Our Fragile Island: Protecting God's Creation*, was dynamic, relevant, hopeful and exhausting. Our presenters included: The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Sheila Moore Andrus, PhD, Lisa Altieri, The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus, and Katharine Hayhoe, PhD. I returned to ordinary life with many resources and ideas for our Nativity Community. I hope to have fun exploring them with you, I'll tell you more about them this fall.



Music & Arts

at Nativity

IOIN CHOIR!

Meeting virtually every Wednesday at 7:00 PM



A Spirit of Love

Dr. Juliana Witt, Music Director

I am beyond excited to begin our small outdoor meetings in September. Gathering in person comes with so many combined feelings of excitement, anxiety, anticipation and fear. I've been drawn back to Paul's exhortation to Timothy that God has given us not a spirit of fear, but of love and power and of self-control. It's interesting that if you take any one of these elements, balance is instantly lost. Power with no love equals oppression. Love with no self-control is not love at all. Self-control with no power or love to contain is purposeless. Together, power, love and self-control show a presence of Divine Love, and I'm reminded daily as we prepare to re-gather that we need all three to care for each other and successfully come back together in community. May the Spirit reign in our hearts every step of the way.



Everyone is invited!

Friday, September 18th, 2020, 7:00 PM

Arts at Nativity's 3rd Annual Gala will be hosted online and open to all! Admission to this event, which includes the big reveal and preview of our 2020-2021 season, is FREE, so please save the date and tell a friend!

This evening will include a fundraiser for our Community Engagement Program which this year includes: Residencies in the Expectant Mother's Unit at HonorHealth on Shea, residencies in schools virtually, supporting overwhelmed music teachers, and virtual residencies in local retirement communities.

Season tickets can be purchased at anytime at ArtatNativity.org.





Café Liturgy Speaker Series

Starting in October

Look out for our monthly Café Liturgy returning in October. We started these events back in 2018, and are now going to reboot them, exploring interesting and informative conversations around music and the arts.

Past topics have included hymn history, hymn format and meter, and text settings. We will expand this conversation to promote awareness for music and arts.



Handbells for Kids!

Starting Mid-September during Vivace Children's Chapel

We will be launching our adult handbell choir in September, and we know how enticing ringing these little bells can be! So we have purchased a set for kids that are color-coded!

We will start as a virtual ensemble, eventually moving to an in-person ensemble in the future. You will need to email <u>JulianaWitt@theNativity.net</u> to sign up your child and arrange a time to pick up your bell.

Children will learn to read music as they progress through the colors!





Everybody Ensemble

Sunday, September 13, 2020, 3-3:30 PM

Grab a spatula, tupperware, and some pots and pans for a whole lot of noise and fun! I challenge you to let go of the week's anxiety, tap your inner child, and come make some noise with us! No singing is required, and I promise you will walk away with a smile on your face!

Children and pets of all ages are welcome! This event will be short and sweet but a great way to engage with your community around sheer fun!





Children's Ministry News

While it's been since March that we last gathered for in-person Children's Ministry Events, we have certainly had some socially distanced fun these past few months! Enjoy these photos and recaps of Nativity's online gatherings with our favorite children...

Weekly Children's Chapel!

From video lessons to random acts of kindness to weekly Zoom gatherings, we have had some special moments at Children's Chapel each week. (All ages are welcome to join us online Sundays at 9:30am... visit nativityscottsdale.org/join-us-online)







Surprise Goodie Bag Delivery!

When you miss seeing your favorite bunch of kiddos and you want them to know, goodie bag deliveries are in order! We made stops for 14 Nativity children on April 50th to hopefully brighten their day and let them know we sure do miss them.











Staycation Bible School!

A major highlight of our long-distanced Children's Ministry was our "Staycation Bible School", which ran from July 6-10. We made s'mores, sang songs, and took on art projects. We learned about sharing, living peacefully, and appreciating our church family!





Page 16 Children & Youth Formation

Youth Ministry Update





Our youth group family has stayed in touch all these months

AND had some pretty great things to celebrate along the way!

Pictured (left) above, Ryan Murphy graduated from high school and we were able to coordinate with his family to pull off a drive by party! It was great to see youth leaders,

Aaron & Jillian Graves, Ryan Tritch, and Father Scot & Dennis while we wished Ryan the best on such a great accomplishment!

Not pictured, we also celebrated Ash Cramer's graduation.

We are so proud of Ash and all that lies ahead!

Our youth group family stays in touch each Sunday as we gather on Zoom at 11:50am.



So proud of this group!

From March 29 to May 30, we had 4 amazing junior high students complete our Youth Confirmation Program! We had wonderful conversations on life, faith, friendship, and tackled some big questions in the process. We had special guests join our calls (Fr. Scot, Dr. Juliana, Deacon Martha, & Sr. Warden Paul Rank)... and just so much fun!

We will keep everyone posted for when we hear details about the Diocesan Service.

Nativity helped feed 100's of families

Shout outs to Gayle, Jim, Ramona, Ron, Edward, Kay, Bob and Margaret for their sharing of gifts in our work Saturday, August 22 at St. Mary's Food Bank. In only 2 hours we helped pack 7 pallets of boxes full of melons, potatoes, carrots and oranges. It was our best turnout for St. Mary's ever.

—Jeff Jameson



(L to R)

Gayle Jameson, Jeff Jameson, Ramona Rusinak, Jim Graves, Margaret Cohea, Ron Rusinak, Kay Blinn, Edward James, Bob Blinn

St. Mary's Food Bank Needs Some Hands

The need for emergency food in our community has never been greater and St. Mary's is one of the best organizations addressing the need. If you would like to help in the future please contact Jeff Jameson Jeffjameson@cox.net or 480-262-7957 for more information.



CASA Academy update by Laura Dobbins

Even in these strange times that have the Nativity community worshipping from afar, the congregation came together and made a big difference in the lives of local socio-economically disadvantaged children by supporting the CASA Academy backpack and school supply drive with donations ranging from backpacks, crayons, pencils, notebooks and many other items. What an impressive demonstration of caring and support for our community.

Through your generosity members of our congregation delivered 44 backpacks filled with supplies, along with 30 supply pouches also filled with supplies, and an incredible amount of additional supplies for the students, teachers, and classrooms such as additional notebooks, bottles of glue, water color paints, electric pencil sharpeners, to only name a few. These items will allow the kindergarten through third grade scholars to have the tools to learn both at home and in the classroom. Thank you to the congregation for your incredible support and to Deacon Martha who so diligently brought in the supplies daily, due to her efforts no crayons were lost to the heat!

Immediately after the deliver we received the following from CASA Academy's Director of Students and Operations which I wanted to share with you all:

I want to take the time to thank you for the amazing donations that were dropped off today. Now more than ever our school and scholars are in need of these supplies and support. We are very fortunate to have your love and support.

Words cannot explain how much your support means to our school and scholars. Thank you very much, from the bottom of our hearts!





The Council for the Native American Ministries

On August 14 and 15, The Council for the Native American Ministries held their annual retreat. Due to Covid-19 and state gathering restrictions it was conducted via Zoom instead of at The Franciscan Center.

Participants were asked to review several videos and documents on the topic of the Doctrine of Discovery. It was very enlightening to learn about our country's history from a different perspective. The bulk of the retreat was a discussion on how we as a church can move forward and build a positive and lasting relationship with our Native American sisters and brothers. We did this by sharing information and spending time in reflection and prayer.

We were asked to create a sacred space for the retreat and perhaps setting up an altar that would reflect

some of the elements in our liturgies. My peers, Bill and Nancy Robinson, created a beautiful space as illustrated in the picture.

Many of the tribes have faced additional hardships due to Covid-19. The donations (home made masks, additional funds, etc...) you have provided have been put to use and are **greatly appreciated!**

I will continue to update Nativity on future prospects and opportunities to work with or help our Native American Ministry. Until then, as leader The Reverend Canon Debbie Royals likes to say:

Lios enchi hioide utteesia: Thank you and many blessings,

Thomasina Tafur



FEED THE HUNGRY

The pandemic may have kept us from serving our dinners to the men at the East Valley Men's Center but it has not stopped our support. The Church of the Nativity has honored their commitment and is donating money to the Men's Center, through their parent company A NEW LEAF who is then purchasing the food and preparing it themselves the best they can. The Men's Center is very appreciative of our outreach especially since many of their other donors have left them high and dry. Unfortunately, life for the homeless continues as does their hunger. If you would like to help as an individual, the following link will take you to their on-line donation access

https://www.turnanewleaf.org/make-difference/tax-credit.html

Like many of our Arizona based mission partners, A New Leaf is an Arizona Tax Credit charity so your donation is eligible for a tax credit from the state at the end of the year. So it is "free money" for you and hunger relief for the homeless.

On a very positive note, one of our parishioners, Simone Reynolds, has teamed up her company with A New Leaf to offer jobs for the men at the shelter. Her employer, Cavco Industries Incorporated, constructs affordable housing for both urban and rural families and has offered to hire 300+ men and women from the New Leaf shelters and other helping hand organizations around the valley, even providing transportation to and from work at their manufacturing plants here in the valley. Even more than the offer of employment is the chance for these men to learn a new trade and break the cycle of poverty that has hung over them. Please offer a congratulations and God-bless to Simone for her great efforts in doing the Lord's work here on earth. — Jon Bost



December 4, 2020

ADVENTURE 2020 is in the planning stages. Due to our current health restraints, this year's Outreach Fundraiser will be held as a Telethon. We will have a live Auction, a Raffle and *Give from the Heart* donations. There will be entertainment and videos about all the various ministries to which our Nativity Family so generously contributes.

Please Save The Date - Friday, December 4, 2020 at 6 pm

Any questions contact Cindy Cohen, scohensc@bellsouth.net

Claudia Castro is the director of the elementary home and school of El Hogar Projects in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. El Hogar is one of Nativity's ministry partners.







LOVE AGAINST PANDEMIC by Claudia Castro

As human beings, we are faced with different scenarios in our lives on a daily basis. Depending on the situation, it can unleash countless feelings in us, such as joy, sadness, hope, hopelessness and fear, among others. The way we react depends on experiences that we have had and the perceptions, attitudes and beliefs that we have formed throughout our lives. They are stored in our unconscious mind and affect our worldview. It's like when we wear red glasses, everything we see is red. In other words, my way of thinking determines my way of perceiving things.



Outreach

Times of crisis, such as the one we are currently experiencing with Covid-19, generate a feeling of fear. Every day the media tells us that the number of people who have lost the battle against the coronavirus continues to increase. The fear that this causes prevents us from seeing that not all the people who have been infected lose the battle, that there is a high percentage that recover. However, fear leads to panic and this causes us to focus on the negative. Fearful thoughts can generate high levels of cortisol in the body. This directly affects the nervous system, causing stress, which alters the normal functioning to the point of causing panic attacks, insomnia and other types of emotional disorders.



Although the current situation is not easy, we have to find strategies that help us stay healthy, happy and confident that this whole situation will pass and we will return to a new normal. Even if the night is dark there is always a sunrise. First, we can focus on seeking an intimate, real, true relationship with our Heavenly Father, who gives us the strength, the security that all this will pass and we know that He is in control.

In John 16:33 He says "In the world you will have affliction, but trust, I have overcome the world." We can clearly see his gesture of love for each of us, that in the midst of this health crisis there are so many wonderful things that follow their normal course; plants continue to bear fruit and flowers, the birds of the sky continue to sing, the sun heats up, the stars give us their light.

In conclusion, I wish that each of you who read this message be filled with the love of God, and that we can be strengthened every day to love God above all things and love our neighbor as ourselves. We put a lot of effort into protecting ourselves against Covid-19, with the use of masks or mouth covers, social distancing, among others. I am not saying that we shouldn't; of course we should, but we should also focus our thoughts on the positive, on love, which generates a hormone called Serotonin. It produces a

state of general well-being, peace and health and keeps our immune system strong to help prevent infections.

God is good and through this pandemic, we can see and feel his love manifested in each of us and his message of loving one another to keep us healthy.

- With love, Claudia Castro



Thank you for your continued support of El Hogar!

WELCOME!

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY

All are welcome. No exceptions.



Worship Sundays
7 & 10 am
www.nativityscottsdale.org/
Join us

Furry Family

Copper

Archie

Amy Joy

#1

Copper (5 yrs old) looks more concerned as they grow.

2020 has caused plenty of lifestyle changes - how did I cope with the social distancing? I added to our household!

Meet Archie and Amy Joy Rafferty -



Any additions to your household you'd like to share?
Send me a photo and info - it will make others smile too!

minarafferty@thenativity.net

www.nativityscottsdale.org