

WARDEN'S MESSAGE - JULY 15, 2020

Back in March, the Instagram account of Pluto, a 13-year old talking Schnauzer, (@pluto.living for those of you on Instagram), went viral. This little dog, with the help of her owner, a talented wildlife photographer, dispenses bits of wisdom, jokes, and trivia for encouragement, as we try to navigate the uncertainties of life with Covid. Pluto's "you've got this" positive attitude has struck a chord with folks worldwide, especially those on the medical front lines.

Recently, Pluto did a short video about change and flux. As she describes it, change can be really hard, and stressful. Sometimes though, we can use change as a chance for "needed newness." Flux is a state of uncertainty, a "continuous succession of changes."

The phrases "needed newness" and "continuous succession of changes" really seemed apt. They accurately describe the transformations happening at Holy Spirit. We have been forced to re-evaluate every aspect of church as we know it, and some really exciting changes, or needed newness, is coming out of our state of flux. Even ideas we were hesitant to explore prior to Covid, we have now embraced, and they have added richness to our church community.

For example, our tech-savvy clerk, Jack Gentile, has been attempting for *years* to get us to just try and experiment with virtual meetings. We were resistant, convinced that it was not something our parish would ever be comfortable with. Look at us now! Many of our committees, ministries, and study groups are meeting virtually, and doing amazing work. We are averaging 50 people at our Sunday Zoom worship morning prayer. For the past two Sundays, Nancy Ludwig has set up the computer at The Terraces for our parishioners, and a few other residents have joined them. Yesterday was our first Zoom healing service (join us next week, Tuesday at 10:00 am). We are in the process of taking things to the next level, working with tech experts to help us gear-up so we can start live streaming our services.

Our search process is also in a state of flux. Obviously, this environment is new for everyone. The old way of doing things is not possible right now. The wardens and the vestry have been working to determine the right next step for our parish during this time of Covid and uncertainty. The wardens have been meeting with Canon Kelly O'Connell and talking through the logistics and trying to figure out, together, what the best next step is for Holy Spirit.

While the search process may be in flux, Holy Spirit's pastoral and worship needs continue to be in the very capable hands of Gail Smith+. We are so blessed to have Gail's steady clergy leadership during this time. She has been a source of strength and calm. Gail's enthusiasm for trying new things, thinking outside the box, and embracing technology has brought more needed newness to our parish.

Flux has become our new normal, and while at times it can be stressful, it can also be exciting. If we continue to welcome our new normal and embrace flux and change, there are many exciting possibilities for what comes next for our beloved parish.

Stay well and please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any thoughts, concerns, or questions.

Melissa Keeffe and Steve Koehler