

NEWSLETTER

HOPE CLINTON

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



**Hope Clinton
introduces Life
Cafe series on
February 25**

Come join us as we discover the integration of body, mind, and spirit, and how the gentle power of healing arts can benefit the whole person with Holistic Practitioner Gail Wathen.



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Sometimes you have to break things.

by Meister Eckhart

Sometimes you have to break things. It's true: Sometimes you have to break things if you want to grasp God in them. In the breaking, we allow what's holy to take form in us.



By Vicar Eric Randolph

A couple weeks ago I had to break a window on one of the doors at my house. I had taken the dog out for a walk and locked myself out. Anyway, long story short, it was my only option as it was starting to rain, and the dog was getting antsy.

Sometimes you have to break things! So says Meister Eckhart a fourteenth century German theologian, mystic, and 'occasional' heretic. Eckhart's poem came to mind as I've looked

back at my first month serving as your vicar. His poetry, sayings, and surviving sermons are refreshing but they are also relevant to us today.

In the month among you, I've learned to break things other than a window at my house. I've learned to break down the barrier that has kept me from trying new ways of doing things church. The church finds change difficult, as do her people and, maybe more so, her leaders. Two-thousand years of history



have created a deep rut that getting out of often seems challenging.

The pandemic has been difficult for everyone on so many levels. Yet, the pandemic has also provided us with an opportunity (a holy opportunity) to reexamine what it means to be church today—to be church in the twenty-first century looking forward and not backwards. This holy opportunity has allowed us to reconcile with our past and envision a new, adaptable, and relational future that is not inspired by dogma, but is inspired by the authentic Jesus Christ. After all, relationships matter, and Jesus was all about relationships! Relationships are holy, and God's desire is not for exclusivity but inclusivity. The internet and social media have allowed us to expand the walls of the physical structure that sits on Coventry Way in Clinton, Maryland and engage with folk across the United States and around the world. The pandemic, in a sense, has helped churches find comfort in the discomfort technology once caused and propelled the church into a season of virtual discipleship. It's both exciting and scary.

The window of the door I broke was original to my house (built in the late 1950s) and Dennis and I have been contemplating replacing it for some time. Yet, every time the conversation came up, we each had reasons for not wanting to replace it... "it has character," "could be costly," "is this the right time," etc. Sometimes you have to break things! In breaking the window, we realized it was indeed time based on the condition of the door, and, when it was replaced, the condition of what

was hidden behind the frame.

Things were broken by Jesus and not always by mistake. He flipped tables at the temple and challenged us to think and redirect our attention differently. In the resurrection, by breaking the cycle of destruction, Jesus defied what was expected and gave us hope for a new and everlasting life. Hope Clinton, through our use of technology, but also because of your generous help through prayers, talent, and gifts, is experiencing a new life in exciting and transformative ways. A sacred life-giving opportunity is really what we are witnessing.

I want to help you lean into this holy adventure of breaking stuff over the next eleven months, so that we, as Hope Clinton, can grasp God and let the sacred take shape in us together!

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant us to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 15.5-6).

Grace and peace,

“The Church is the Church only when it exists for others...not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell [people] of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison

Hope Clinton Life Cafe

How well are we doing life together?

Are we walking well with each other?

Are we getting the kind of support that we need and are we supporting one another?

How do we navigate through the different stages and changes that are happening?

Please join Hope Clinton as we explore these and other topics during Life Cafe led by Holistic Practitioner Gail Wathen. Gail has been a dedicated practitioner of holistic health since 2002. She loves empowering others to discover the integration of body, mind, and spirit, and, how the gentle power of the healing arts can benefit the whole person.

As a Holistic Practitioner, Gail enjoys being able to bridge the gap between holistic and western medicine while providing a safe and nurturing atmosphere in which to heal.

Hope Clinton engages in conversation, shared experiences, and learns from each other in a safe and sacred space during Life Cafe!

Join us Thursday, February 25, 2021 via Zoom for Life Cafe.

“Sometimes the one thing you need for growth is the one thing you are afraid to do.”

-Shannon L. Adler



Gail Wathen
Holistic Practitioner



Church of the Holy Sepulchre | Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem

What is Lent?

Lent is the six week span leading up to Easter and begins on Ash Wednesday. It is one of the most significant times of year for Christians around the world and is a time of solemn observance and preparation for the celebration of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at Easter.

ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving Lent 2021 | What will it take to end hunger?

This year, our devotional series will follow the ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving Lent 2021 Study: "What Will It Take to End Hunger?" Over five weeks, the study combines scripture, prayer, and reflections by and about people who have experienced food scarcity. You can download a copy of the devotional booklet at community.elca.org/40days.

Ash Wednesday

We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. As we approach Ash Wednesday, you are invited to reflect on the past year and write down ways that have separated you from God. On Ash Wednesday, burn your slips of paper and, during online worship, mark the sign of the cross on your forehead with the ashes, remembering that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Join Pastor Karis at noon and 7:00 p.m. on Wed. February 17 for Ash Wednesday services on Facebook:
facebook.com/hopeclinton
facebook.com/pastorkaris.graham.5

Wendesdays in Lent

Join Pastor Karis at 7:00 p.m. every Wednesday during Lent on Facebook for Lenten devotions:
facebook.com/hopeclinton
facebook.com/pastorkaris.graham.5

Grocery Gift Cards

During Covid-19, food banks have been swamped, serving people who don't get SNAP benefits and millions more whose SNAP benefits don't provide enough food. Food insecurity is real and impacting our neighbors. Experts and advocates say the pandemic has exposed a system that is outdated and inadequate.

One easy way to help others with food is to support Hope Clinton's own Miss Stormy as she helps those that hunger by distributing food. Please consider sending any Amazon grocery store gift card to Hope Clinton so Miss Stormy can continue to feed those that hunger.

Please help Hope Clinton continue to be God's loving presence in a hurting world by sending a grocery gift card to:

Hope Lutheran Church
6201 Coventry Way
Clinton, MD 20735

Coming Soon! Sip of Hope

We are in the early stages of partnering with Sip of Hope Community Coffee Roasters. Sip of Hope is a Present Hope initiative that will help support local mental health and suicide prevention programming. More information coming soon!



Hope Clinton Legacy Group is invited to join Vicar Eric for weekly Bible study on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Over the next 22 weeks, we will explore the Book of Revelation, discerning God's message of hope for a broken and hurting world. Email Vicar Eric for more details.

vicar@erictomasrandolph.com

Church Council Corner

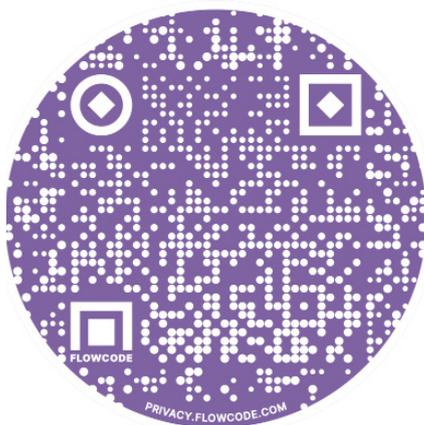
Alan Leaman was elected President of the Congregation at our congregational meeting on January 31.

We Need Your Help!

Discipleship involves each of us. Share with your family, friends and neighbors all that is happening at Hope Clinton and invite them to join us for e-worship on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. on Facebook Live.

Online worship is averaging 250+ visitor each week! This is exciting and a testament to the work of the Holy Spirit working through each of us.

The QR code can be shared within anyone and when scanned takes them to our Facebook page.



Did you invite someone to join us for worship? Let us know who by emailing pastor@hopeclinton.org so we can connect with them.



Hope Clinton Moving Forward

Earlier this month, Pastor Karis and Drew met an architect specializing in churches to discuss the refurbishment of the sanctuary, the altar backdrop and the entrance. These conversations are in their early stages, but so far they have produced both practical and creative ideas that will support the future of Hope Clinton.

In the coming weeks, the staff will meet again with the architect and other recommended resources to learn and understand the scope of this project.

“Imagine if every church became a place where everyone is safe, but no one is comfortable. Imagine if every church became a place where we told one another the truth. We might just create sanctuary.”

- Rachel Held Evans, *Searching for Sunday: Loving, Learning, and Finding the Church*



Happening at Hope

Online worship is averaging 250+ visitors each week!

Coat and Clothing Drive

Miss Stormy has been hard at work collecting coats for the unhoused and organizing suits, blouses, handbags and more for transgender women to wear to job interviews and jobs!

On February 6, Evelyn Crenshaw (pictured) dropped off coats with Miss Stormy for distribution to the unhoused in the area. "One person can make a difference in someone's life, but a group can change the world!"

Do you have clothing items to donate? Reach out to Pastor Karis or Vicar Eric to see if they fit the needs of this initiative.

Thank you, Miss Stormy and Ms. Evelyn for your hardwork and dedication! #GodsworkOurhands

Grocery Gift Cards

A more urgent way to help Miss Stormy is to send grocery gift cards for distribution to the unhoused in the area. These are a safe and vital way to help our neighbors. Please send gift cards to the church office.



"Being a Christian is not essentially about joining a church or being a nice person, but about following in the footsteps of Jesus, taking his teachings seriously, letting his Spirit take the lead in our lives, and in so doing helping to change the world from our nightmare into God's dream."

-Michael Curry, Crazy Christians: A Call to Follow Jesus



Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's Work, Our Hands

Synod News Highlights

Learn more about the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod and sign up for the Synod's newsletter at metrodcelca.org.

New Assistant to the Bishop for Youth + Family

The Metro D.C. and Delaware–Maryland synods have entered into a unique and innovative partnership to enhance its ministries with youth and families. Beginning February 1, Deacon Julie Stecker will serve as the Assistant to the Bishop for Youth + Family Ministry, bringing together the young people and those who work with them from both our synods to engage in faith formation, leadership development, and deep community. Deacon Julie earned a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry with a concentration in Youth Ministry from Messiah College (now Messiah University) in 2009 and a Master of Arts in Ministerial Studies in Christian Education with a concentration in Youth and Young Adult Ministry from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (now United Lutheran Seminary) in 2011.

2021 Synod Assembly

The Metro D.C. Synod will be hosting the virtual 2021 Synod Assembly from June 4-5, 2021. A Closing Worship Service will be held on Sunday, June 6 (time to be announced) that will be available to the entire synod. The synod is excited about the opportunities for increased engagement this new format will bring.

Virtual Interfaith Leadership Summit | Liberation in 2021: Interfaith Perspectives

The Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington will be hosting its very first virtual Interfaith Leadership Summit titled, "Liberation in 2021: Interfaith Perspectives" The event is scheduled to take place on February 27th from 6:00pm – 9:00pm and will feature religious, spiritual, and civic leaders from across the nation sharing their thoughts and insights on what Liberation means to them and their particular community of faith in an ever-changing society. As always, we welcome those ages 18-39 to join us for this event, which will serve as a community celebration of deliverance through diversity and inclusion and unite advocates and allies. Visit <https://ifcmw.org/programs/summit/> for more details and to register.

HOPE CLINTON CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4 Bible Study 7:00 pm (L) Zoom	5	6
7 eWorship 10:30 am FBL Group 11:15 am (L) Zoom	8	9	10	11 Bible Study 7:00 pm (L) Zoom	12	13
14 eWorship 10:30 am FBL Group 11:15 am (L) Zoom	15	16	17 Ash Wednesday 12 & 7:00 pm FBL	18 Bible Study 7:00 pm (L) Zoom	19	20
21 eWorship 10:30 am FBL Group 11:15 am (L) Zoom	22	23	24 Lent Devotions 7:00 pm FBL	25 Life Cafe (L) 2:00 pm (P) 7:00 pm Zoom Bible Study 7:00 pm (L) Zoom	26	27
28 eWorship 10:30 am FBL Group 11:15 am (L) Zoom	<p style="text-align: center;">KEY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(L) - Legacy Group (P) - Present Group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FBL - Facebook Live Event/Worship</p> <p style="text-align: center;">facebook.com/hopeclinton facebook.com/pastorkaris.graham.5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Zoom links available at hopeclinton.org</p>					



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