

May 5 Update and an Announcement about Sunday Worship

Dear Friends,

Clean-up and damage assessment from the weekend's flooding continue today at St. George's. Though the interior of our facility has undergone a distressing and disorienting transformation, I am impressed with the speed and diligence of the professional crews hired to do this necessary job.

I am also impressed by the numbers of parishioners who have communicated with the church to express support and encouragement, share prayers, and offer to volunteer in the clean-up efforts. **A volunteer response program** has been organized, and detailed information will be forthcoming tomorrow. Already, however, leaders had been able to identify specific projects and needs at the church that require volunteer help. On behalf of the entire parish leadership team, I share my profound gratitude for the efforts and generosity of those who have responded.

In the midst of our survey of the church's damage, however, we are called to reach out as well to our parishioners and others in distress. A colleague said it very wisely today: "we need to be more than merely church-centric in our response to this disaster." Agreed. Help us to discern how we might offer practical help and Christian love to others affected by the floods, and communicate with us *via* the St. George's website.

I am very pleased to report that **we will worship in the church this coming Sunday, May 9**. A key goal for the week was to accomplish sufficient work in our church nave for us to gather on Sunday to celebrate our common life in Christ. Even in the midst of severe challenge and sadness, there is no more important ministry than worship. I have felt it important that we not only worship on Sunday but that, if possible, we do so in our own church. We will.

As per our normal Sunday morning schedule, we will have services of **Holy Eucharist at 7:30 and 8:45** in the church. No other space will be available or open other than the church itself except the men's and women's bathrooms on the lower level hallway. Sunday morning will not be an occasion to view the damage to the remainder of the facility. But we hope for robust attendance as we give thanks for the Lord's many continued blessings upon us.

A Note on Childcare and Parking: Due to flood damage, we will not be able to open the nursery area as usual this Sunday. The Temple at 5015 Harding Road has graciously offered to host our children and nursery staff Sunday morning, May 9, from 8:00am-10:30am. Our regular childcare workers, Miss Lucy and Miss Ida, will be watching your children. Please let us know if you plan to use childcare, so we can plan accordingly. RSVP to rebecca.teel@stgeorgesnashville.org.

A majority of our parking spaces will also be unavailable on Sunday. We are strongly encouraging parishioners to park at the Nashville Bank and Trust building just down the street across from the Belle Meade Shopping Center where we will have two shuttle buses operating continuously from 7:00am to 1:00pm.

At 11:15 this Sunday, we will give thanks for the life of **Bill and Frankie Rutledge**. While it is not our custom to conduct funeral services on Sunday, given the unusual circumstances of this week, as well as the nature of when and how these two beloved members perished, it is felt that this Sunday morning will be a very special time and way to honor the Rutledges. The shape of our liturgy will follow The Burial of the Dead, Rite II with Holy Eucharist. Again, we appreciate your utilizing the parking spaces offered by Nashville Bank and Trust. No childcare will be provided for this service.

I also regret having to inform you of the passing this past weekend of long-time member **Harry Johnson** following a courageous battle with cancer. The funeral service for Harry will be this Sunday, May 9, at 2:00pm in the church. We pray that Harry, being raised with Christ, may know the strength of his eternal presence and rejoice in his eternal glory. Pray also for Mary and the rest of the Johnson family.

Because our chapel remains in considerable disrepair, **we will not have our usual 5:00pm service this Sunday**. Our daily morning services of Holy Eucharist in the chapel are temporarily canceled until further notice.

Below you are encouraged to read the gracious words of one of our key lay leaders, John Fitzgerald, currently serving on the Executive Committee overseeing Worship and Discipleship. His testimony is so faithful and strong, and it is representative of the kinds of witnesses I have heard from members here throughout the week. As I shared yesterday, I have never been more impressed or proud of any church to which I have belonged. I am humbled and deeply touched by the outpouring of love and generosity. It is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit that make such witness possible. Thank you for being those through whom God has been so clearly at work.

RLS+