

# THE CORNERSTONE

*Doesn't Wisdom cry out and Understanding shout? Atop the heights along the path, at the crossroads she takes her stand. By the gate before the city, at the entrances she shouts: I cry out to you, people; my voice goes out to all of humanity. (Proverbs 8: 1-4)*

*"What is sane leadership? It is the unshakeable faith in people's capacity to be generous and kind. ... even in the most dire circumstances, more becomes possible as people engage together with compassion and discernment, self-determining their best way forward." (Wheatley, 2017, p. 32)*

Episcopalians use the term "[Ordinary Time](#)" to describe the Season after Pentecost (usually from May until November). The Episcopal Church defines this timeframe as "living out of Christian faith and the meaning of Christ's resurrection in ordinary life." (The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 2019)

I suppose whether a person defines this summer as "ordinary" depends upon her or his point of view.

The Environmental Defense Fund tells us that our planet's well-being is imperiled. There are already three "[tipping elements](#)." Arctic Summer Sea Ice is disappearing. The Greenland and West Antarctic Ice Sheets are melting. Potentially disastrous elements such as the dieback of the Amazon and Boreal forests will lead to further catastrophe. (Ivanovich, 2017)

Ethicist and Methodist Pastor [Dr. Robin Lovin](#) suggests that contemporary American society has reached tipping points of its own. Lovin writes:

*"The realist will see that the dysfunctions evident across the range of different kinds of institutions are reflected in the political unrest now evident in many of the world's*



**"The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."  
Psalm 118:22**



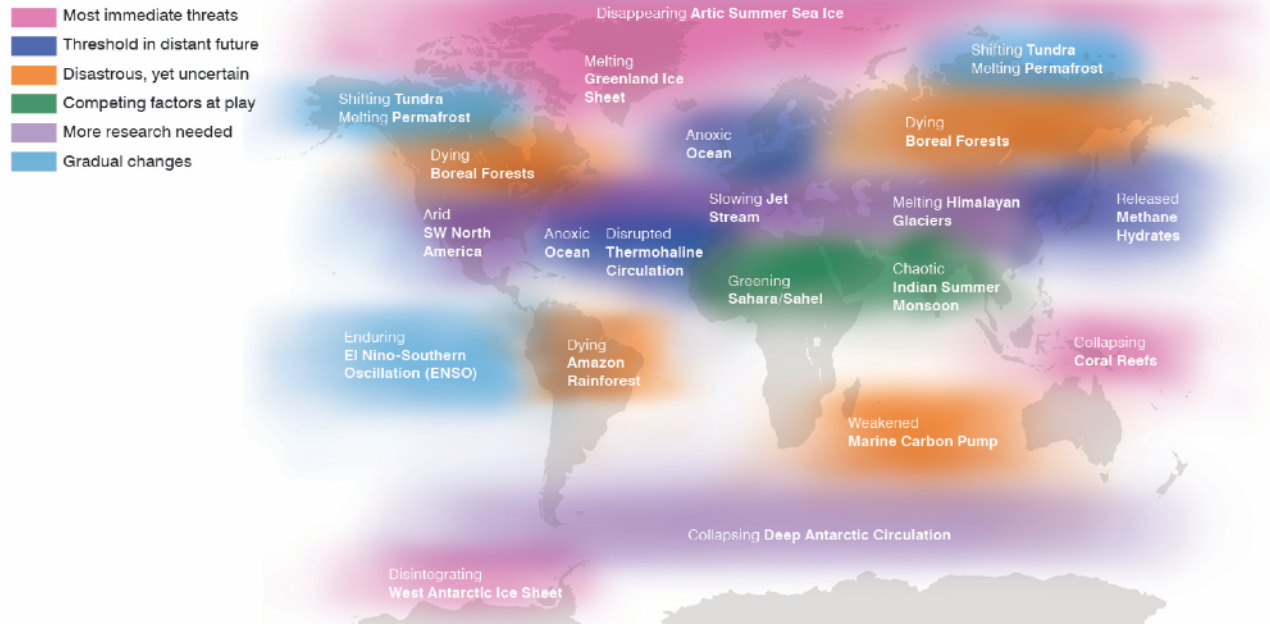
Figure 1 Seven Pillars of Wisdom  
Illumination - [The Saint John's Bible](#)

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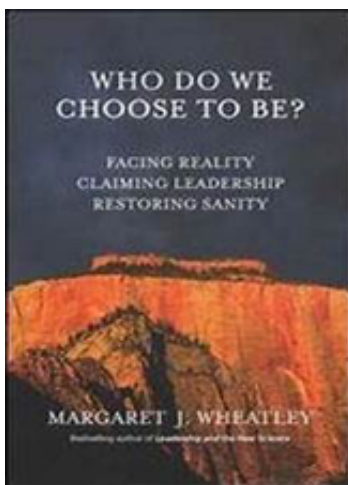
most economically developed and politically experienced democracies. People are losing their connections to the activities and places that gave them a sense of identity and purpose.” (Lovin, 2019)

## Climate tipping elements:

What are they and how worried should we be?



Climate Tipping Elements - [Environmental Defense Fund](#)



[Who do We choose to Be](#) - A  
Must read by [Margaret Wheatley](#)

One of my favorite leaders— [Margaret Wheatley](#) summarizes these trends well when she declares that we are surviving in an “Age of Decadence.” This ordinary season is evidenced by inordinate displays of human narcissism, consumerism, and high levels of frivolity. Elected officials, religious authoritarians, and economic powerbrokers act as if they are impervious and will govern forever. (Wheatley, 2017)

This is not the first time that human beings have acted in this way. In fact, we are witnessing and participating in a historical pattern that is thousands of years old. This age of decadence, if we survive it, will be the wellspring for an “Age of Pioneering.”

Our efforts today will inspire our offspring and/or other human beings to bring a new (not necessarily improved) way of life into being.

For today, Wheatley recommends that leaders strive to become warriors for The Human Spirit by contemplating and incarnating acts of service and relational well-being. Such warriors create “islands of sanity.” We consciously reframe from supplementing to the aggression and overwhelming fear that

people and the planet are (sub)consciously experiencing. And, we don't deny the factual devastations that are occurring. (Wheatley, 2017).

I recall that Early Christians created small, interdependent, relational communities of faith. [Pentecost](#) initiated this social change. They worked across socio-economic boundaries and cultural differences because of their shared belief in Christ's Resurrection and The Holy Spirit's presence in their midst. They prayed and acted throughout the Roman Empire's decadent ages. Christians didn't evangelize their beliefs by demanding that newcomers simply adopt a strict set of rules; they engaged one another sacramentally. They remembered Jesus's sacrificial love, acts of kindness, and proclamation God's reign in contrast with Caesar's Empire. They ate bread and drank wine as Jesus and his disciples did prior to his crucifixion and resurrection. Many of them became martyrs because they refused to deny their allegiance to The Triune God. Others lived out their lives because they were warriors in preserving God's love for people and this planet.



One of the things that I most love about Christ Memorial is this community's extraordinary willingness to engage the realities of our time honestly and compassionately. You possess open hearts and hands despite differences of opinion and political affiliations. You are willing to create positive social and spiritual changes in this church and its surrounding community. I was reminded again yesterday of how this parish's and The Episcopal Church's public proclamations of inclusivity and practicing [The Way of Love](#) positively impact and ignites the imagination of spiritual seekers and folks

looking for a place to be well while calming down – regardless of who they are.

It does not take a massive effort to provoke social change. In fact, [a mere 25%](#) of a population who advocate wisely for transforming their local surroundings and way of life. Tipping points do exist. Realistically understanding a social system's values and associated behaviors enables leaders to identify where the tipping points for social change exist and can be nudged. (Damon Centola, 2019). I would add that sharing in faithful prayer, sacraments, and trust in God's advocacy for us promotes, sacrificial acts of kindness, well-being and higher levels of sanity.

I pray that this church will continue flourishing as the flood waters of rain continue to fall. I look forward to communing with you in the coming weeks while wishing you joyful and reflective travels when you're away from Danville. Thanks for supporting this church and its ministries. May Christ continue to support us and The Holy Spirit lead us in tipping the scales in favor of a healthier planet and a (w)holier community of God's beloved people.

Blessings along The Way, Jim

## Announcements and Upcoming Events:

**Food Bank:** Over the Memorial Day weekend, a nightly national news channel shared an interesting but sad story that 1 in 5 children in this country will go to bed hungry. This is a very disturbing thought... a child in this "land of plenty" hungry! Over the last 5 years Mark and I have made a financial commitment to the Central PA Food Bank. For our \$50.00 monthly check 300 nutritional meals are given. If you are interested, please see their website (<https://www.centralpafoodbank.org>). Perhaps you may know personally a local opportunity in the Danville to serve this need. I will close with a very simple Bible verse from Matthew, "I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Peace be with you my friends, Deb Shipe.

**The Sunday School is looking for assistance.** There are too many children! While this is a wonderful problem, help is needed. If you can help out with this important ministry, either with the little ones in the Nursery or with the Elementary aged children in the classroom, please talk to **Susan Nunan** or **Father Jim**.

**Tea and Testament** time will be **June 2nd at 2:00 PM** at the Altenbach home.

**The Way of the Rosary** will be **June 18th at 6:00pm** at the Altenbach home.

<b>Birthdays in June</b>	<b>Anniversaries in June</b>
8- Molly Bomboy Jacks	1- Dave and Pamela Salwocki
9- Kevin Bleistein	7- Jason and Judy Clapp
11- Van Rockie Sutherland	17- Robbi and Deb Bleistein
16- Jonathan Nunan	19- George and Diana Reabuck
19- Robbi Bleistein	21- George and Kathy Smith
26- Barbara Rhoades	
27- Cynthia Cornelison	
28- Ryder Chapin	



## **A Pilgrimage to Bethlehem!**

On Saturday, May 25th members from St. Paul's and Christ Memorial Episcopal Churches went on a pilgrimage to Bethlehem, *Pennsylvania*, that is! Fr. Jim Strader-Sasser and Deacon Jim joined the group as well! The pilgrimage's purpose was to experience the evening Celtic Spirituality worship service at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity, (Episcopal Church). This church serves as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Bethlehem, which includes Wilkes Barre/Scranton. The Gothic Revival church first began regularly welcoming worshippers in 1864 and later was raised to its current status as a Cathedral shortly after 1890. The cathedral is jaw-droppingly beautiful and well suited as an unmistakably sacred space for worshipping and feeling the greatness of God!

The current Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Rev. Anthony Pompa, welcomed our pilgrims as well as a large number of other worshippers to the Saturday evening Celtic Spirituality Night's service. Dean Pompa told us later that, *"more than 70% of Celtic service worshippers do not attend other cathedral services and few have any connection to the Episcopal Church."* Most observed that a sense of kinship or community has developed with those who attend this service making for another way to create a spiritual home for worshippers from different walks of life and traditions.

The Cathedral describes their Celtic service as, *"an opportunity to gather for peaceful, hope-filled reflection, meditation and prayer in the Celtic Spirit."* The hour long service included Celtic inspired musical interludes provided by two local artists playing the violin and guitar. A worshipper offered a personal reflection of how she has felt the presence of the Trinity God in her life, especially during a recent serious medical issue with her daughter. Worshippers were then offered to participate, as they felt moved, in worship stations including a Map of Prayer, Prayer Candles, prayers of healing and anointing with a Healing Ministers and lastly, to spend time with the Icon of the Welsh Saint, St. Melangell, whose Feast Day is May 27th. The spoken prayers that began and ended the service emphasized the Trinity God who is present everywhere and in all walks of our lives. The candle lit, quiet and meditative service with reflective string music was thoroughly enjoyed and most felt it was a meaningful experience in their life!

After the service, the pilgrims went into Historic Downtown Bethlehem to enjoy fellowship and a meal together. It was a very pleasant experience that will hopefully be repeated again!

The Cathedral offers their Celtic Spirituality Night service on the last Saturday of every month. Their next service is June 29th. Here at St. Paul's, there seems to be interest in pursuing the viability of holding a Celtic Service. If you have interest in helping brainstorm on the idea and/or

to possibly join a group of pilgrims going to experience another service at the Cathedral please contact a member of the St. Paul's Worship Committee, (Deacon Jim, Doug Hippensteil or David Sole).



## Susquehanna Convocation 2019 Summer Visitation Schedule

Hey there – The churches of the Susquehanna Convocation are teaming up to worship with one another this summer. Here's the calendar of events:

*June 23- All Saints, Selinsgrove 10:00 AM*

*June 30- St. Andrew's, Lewisburg 10:00 AM*

*July 7- Resurrection Mission- Mt. Carmel 10:00 AM*

*July 14- St. Matthew's, Sunbury- 8:00 and 10:30 AM*

*July 21- St. Mark's, Northumberland- 9:00 AM*

*July 28- Christ, Milton- 10:45 AM*

*August 11- St. Paul's Bloomsburg- 10:30 AM*

*August 18- Christ, Berwick- 9:30 AM*

There's a little bit of an assignment for you to complete when you go. First, have fun! Second, be willing to share what you appreciate about their worship and their Christian offerings. Also, let them know of one thing that you think that all of us would be able to do better if we did it with one another. Listen to them too And, finally – let all of us know what surprised and invited you more deeply into your Christian faith.

There will be another signup sheet in the Community Room for our folks to visit the other churches. We're asking for two people from CMEC to visit the other churches as listed. It's cool if a bigger group wants to go! Let [Jim](#) know if and when you'll volunteer.

## **CMEC Vestry Meeting**

**April 14, 2019**

**Present:** Father Jim, Dave Peterson, Erin Ryan, Michelle Walczak, Tom Dulsky, Kathy Sidler, Doug Cummings

**Opening:** Father Jim opened with prayer and explained "The Circle Way".

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the March meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup> were previously distributed. Motion made by Dave and seconded by Erin to accept minutes as submitted. Motion passed 5/0/0.

### **Reports:**

#### **1. Rectors Report:**

##### **b. Life in Community:**

- Father Jim mentioned the story that WNEP did to recognize both our train and diaper bank outreach.
- Father Jim commended the collaborative efforts of the congregation and the way in which we work together.

##### **a. St. John's Bible:**

- Father Jim proposed the date: May 12<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am
- Father Jim suggested a hospitality gathering the night of May 11<sup>th</sup>.

##### **a. Day of Discovery:**

- The event was held on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Two or three representatives from St. Paul's and CMEC went to Stevens School.

##### **a. Yoking/Collaborating:**

- Dave hosted a meeting with representatives from St. Paul's and one representative from Berwick.
- Father Jim reported that the Bishop was made aware of this meeting and the conversation that took place.
- Father Jim and Dave became aware of individuals who left St. Luke's Bloomsburg. They are meeting with these individuals who no longer attend St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

##### **a. Pastoral Care:**

- Father Jim is aware of homebound individuals and will reach out and check in with them.

##### **b. What am I thinking/praying about for Holy Week:**

- Meditating in the church

#### **1. Senior Warden:**

##### **b. Circle:**

- Conversations about the collaboration of churches will continue to occur.

#### **3.**

##### **d.**

- The church doors will be open from 7:30am-12:00pm each Sunday. Michelle suggested that individuals should give us a 24 hour notice of times that doors need to be open rather than propping doors open.

##### **a.**

- Michelle commented on the great work that Jon Vella has done on the landscaping around the church.
- Three trees were planted by Jon Vella.

##### **a.**

- Dave may have a spare grill to donate for the rectory. If not, one will be purchased.

##### **a.**

- Michelle will purchase a larger circle table on Amazon for our meetings.

##### **a.**

- Lay House complete the installation of the systems.

a.

- Michelle will purchase a laptop that can be used by both the diaper bank and Sunday school.

**1.Cemetery:**

- An individual called about a plot that they would like open.
- Church website should be changed to reflect that Dave Richardson is no longer the contact person.

**1.Advertising:**

- Weekly traffic on our Facebook page is about 20-30 people.
- Father Jim shared and distributed cards that can be scanned by a smartphone. Scanning the card will take the individual right to our church website.

1.

- Hoagie sale for Ray was a huge success! 55 hoagies were purchased!
- A meeting will be held in May to discuss upcoming events.

1.

- Doug shared that a Charitable Trust is closing. We will receive 1% of that trust which comes out to \$20,000. Dave will go to the bank next week to get the notary completed.

- Doug received the first invoice from Becky for the mausoleum stain glass project.
- Doug reported that he is working on building up information in the Realm Connect System (Online Church Directory).

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1.St. Paul's/CMEC/Christ Church-Berwick/Mission Mt. Carmel Circle-**

- More meetings will occur in this collaborative effort.

**2.Good Friday Acolytes-**

- Jen is getting the young adults together for Friday.

**3.Parish Administrator-**

- The applicant will know that this is a temporary position. Father Jim suggested that Patty from St. Paul's Bloomsburg may be interested depending on future decisions made by St. Paul's.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1.Monies-**

- Next meeting, we will continue to discuss whether or not to invest money in CDs for interest.

**2.Easter Flower Donations:**

- Father Jim will ensure that Easter Flower Contributions are noted in the bulletin.

**1.ADT:**

- An ADT will be placed in the sanctuary where it can be easily accessed if needed.

**1.Next Meeting: May 14, 2019 @ 6:00 PM**

Dave made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Michelle. Motion passed 5/0/0.

Respectfully Submitted by:  
Tom Dulsky



June 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10:00-12:00 Trains
2 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Christian Formation 9:30 AM Choir 10:30 AM Eucharist 2:00 PM Tea and Testament	3 7:00-9:00 PM Frosty Friends (Community Room)	4	5 7:00 PM Penn Writers	6	7	8 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
9 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Christian Formation 10:30 AM Eucharist 6:00 PM Vestry Meeting	10	11	12	13	14	15 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
16 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Christian Formation 10:30 AM Eucharist	17	18 6:00 PM Way of the Rosary (Altenbach's)	19	20	21	22 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
23 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Christian Formation 10:00 AM Selinsgrove Visit 10:30 AM Eucharist	24	25	26	27	28	29 10:00-12:00 Trains
30 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Christian Formation 10:00 AM Lewisburg Visit 10:30 AM Eucharist						