

MY DEAR THEOPHILUS

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

The 2021 General Convention of the Episcopal Church has been officially postponed until July 2022, still in Baltimore.



Dear Parish Family:

Advent is upon us once again. It is a time of expectation and a time of reflection. It is a time when we look back, when we look at the present, and when we look toward the future. It is a time when we look for Jesus.

We recall the time when Jesus came among us as one of us some 2000 years ago. We look forward to the day when he will come again in power and great glory. It is a time when we look to see Christ in the here and now.

The Rev. Fleming Rutledge tells us that “[e]very year, Advent begins in the dark. ... Even as the season outside gets more exuberantly festive, those who observe Advent within the Christian community are convicted more and more each year by the truth of what is going on inside—inside the church as she refuses cheap comfort and sentimental good cheer. Advent begins in the dark.”

We are called to watch and wait for a miracle. Our faith requires it of us. “To be a Christian is to live every day of our lives in solidarity with those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,” Rutledge writes, “but to live in the unshakable hope of those who expect the dawn.”

Let us with hope watch and wait for a miracle, the miracle of all miracles, when God takes on our human flesh and existence and becomes one with us in the miracle of the Incarnation. Let us with hope watch and wait for a light in the darkness, and that the darkness cannot overcome. John 1:5.

Your servant in Christ,

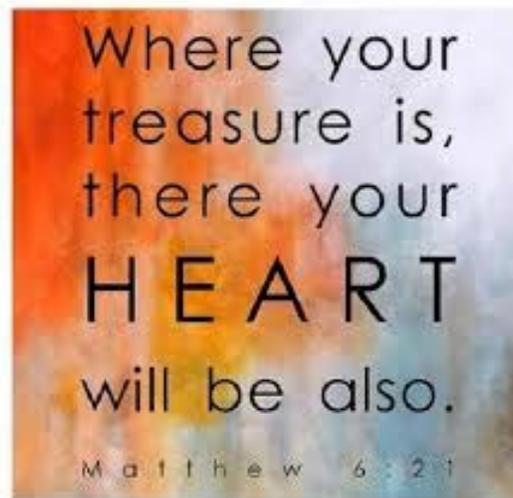
The Rev. Chester J. Makowski, Rector



***FEATURED HOLY PERSON OF
THE MONTH
ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
November 19
By James Kiefer***

The numerous "St. Elizabeth's Hospitals" throughout the world are for the most part named, not for the Biblical Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, but for this princess of Hungary. She was concerned for the relief of the poor and the sick, and with her husband's consent she used her dowry money for their relief. During a famine and epidemic in 1226, while her husband was away in Italy, she sold her jewels and established a hospital where she nursed the sick, and opened the royal granaries to feed the hungry. After her husband's death in 1227, her in-laws, who opposed her "extravagances," expelled her from Wartburg. Finally an arrangement was negotiated with them that gave her a stipend. She became a Franciscan tertiary (lay associate) and devoted the remainder of her life to nursing and charity. She sewed garments to clothe the poor, and went fishing to feed them.

Let us pray: Almighty God, by your grace your servant Elizabeth of Hungary recognized and honored Jesus in the poor of this world: Grant that we, following her example, may with love and gladness serve those in any need or trouble, in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



The Old Testament tells us: "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act." Proverbs 3:27.

St. John imparts the profound truth of the reality of God's gift to us in Christ when he writes that "God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16. What a gift!

Christ tells us: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Mt. 6:21.

Therefore, in addition to the some \$9000 that the Oasis gives to help those in need, we as a Parish we are also gifting to those in need:

Mental Health Coaching services will start being offered within the next few weeks.

EPISCOPAL HEALTH FOUNDATION NEWS



AccessHealth's COVID-19 testing team in Rosenberg

Safety-net clinics across Texas are facing potentially devastating financial struggles during COVID-19, but a new emergency loan program developed by EHF and fiscally sponsored by **Austin Community Foundation** is helping clinics remain open to serve more Texans at risk of going without medical care during the pandemic.

The \$5 million *Texas Clinic Emergency Loan Fund* offers selected federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and other charity clinics up to \$1 million in

low-interest loans to help offset reduced revenues from fewer routine patient visits, shifts to telemedicine, increase in uninsured patients, and other additional expenses caused by COVID-19.

“Many of these community clinics have seen their revenues drop by 60%, while costs for things like telehealth, COVID-19 testing and PPE keep rising,” said **Elena Marks, EHF’s president and CEO**. “There’s a limit to traditional grants from philanthropy that can help these clinics, but the loan program works as potential ‘recyclable funding’ to keep more clinics up and running to serve low-income families who may need the care now more than ever.”

Six FQHCs that each have multiple clinic sites have secured loans through the *Texas Clinic Emergency Loan Fund*. These clinics service communities in greater Houston, Austin, and 20 Texas counties. The loans range from \$250,000 to \$1 million, require no payment in the first year, and have a three-year repayment term.

In addition to lost patient revenue and added costs to deal with COVID-19 protocols, many clinics had to close dental and vision clinics. Others had to temporarily close clinic locations due to staff exposure to COVID-19. Health centers have had to furlough employees or downsize staff. Most of the participating clinics have had to invest in new equipment and technology for telemedicine. Clinics are also seeing dramatic increases in uninsured patients, which has led to millions of dollars in unplanned costs for some of the clinics.

Each of the participating non-profit clinics offer comprehensive primary and mental health care services to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay, and offer a sliding-scale fee program. Together, the participating clinics see more than 280,000 patients each year at almost 100 different locations.

The loan fund is part of EHF’s \$20 million Impact Investing Program that was launched in 2019. The program will enable EHF to use other financial tools like debt and equity investments in for-profit and non-profit organizations to advance the same strategies the foundation seeks to achieve through traditional grant making. EHF partnered with Austin Community Foundation on the loan fund because of its experience in impact investing in Texas.

“The health and economic consequences of COVID-19 have pressed the philanthropic sector to seek creative solutions that are not bound by the confines of traditional grant making,” **Mike Nellis, chief executive officer, Austin Community Foundation**, said. “By partnering with Episcopal Health Foundation, our organizations are able to provide alternative financial vehicles to meet the needs of community clinics as they navigate operating in a pandemic environment.”

EHF developed the *Texas Clinic Emergency Loan Fund* and provided the initial funding for the program. Austin Community Foundation serves as the fiscal sponsor and distributes the loans. **Avivar Capital** serves as the fund’s program administrator, implementing the fund in partnership with national leaders in impact investing, clinic financing and loan administration.

Participating Clinics:

Clinic	Sites/Locations	Annual Patients Served	Counties Served
Legacy Community Health	34	127,526	Harris, Fort Bend, Galveston, Montgomery, Jefferson, Chambers, Liberty, Orange, and Hardin
Lone Star Circle of Care	23	92,801	Bastrop, Bell, Burnet, Harris, Travis, and Williamson
AccessHealth	17	21,805	Fort Bend and Waller. 11 WIC sites: Fort Bend, Waller, Wharton, Austin, and Colorado counties
Spring Branch Community Health Center	6	20,089	Harris/Fort Bend, serving patients from Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery counties
Avenue 360 Health & Wellness	9	12,089	Harris and Waller, serving patients from Montgomery, Liberty, Fort Bend, and Brazoria counties

Matagorda Episcopal Health Outreach Program (MEHOP)	8	9,703	Matagorda, Wharton, Brazoria, Jackson, Fort Bend, and Colorado
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HOSPITAL VISITS

Given COVID-19, visitations are restricted by hospitals. Nevertheless, if you know of anyone who needs a home visit because they cannot get to Church, please call the Parish Office, or let Fr. Makowski know. We will see if the hospital will allow Fr. Makowski to call on them. If you have a pastoral emergency, please call Fr. Makowski at 713.299.7675.

THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER

Praying is something that we all can do, young and old, rich and poor, tall and short. Please pray for everyone on our Prayer List.



***PLEASE BRING PORK & BEANS
FOR MANNAFEST***



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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