

ST ELIZABETH'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Rt. Rev. Scott B. Hayashi, 11th Bishop of Utah
The Rev. Michael Carney, Vicar

SUNDAY WORSHIP, HOLY EUCHARIST 10:00 AM

A New World Record

You won't find it in the Guinness Book, but we're setting a world record that hopefully won't be repeated. Normally the season of Lent lasts for forty days, after which we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter. But what I see is that Lent began on February 26, 2020 and never finished. We've been locked down in the pandemic for a whole year, and it hasn't let up yet.

The Book of Common Prayer tells us that for more than a thousand years "it's been the custom of the church to prepare for Good Friday and Easter by a season of penitence and fasting." (p. 264) Lent is a time for stepping back to take a look at our lives, often giving up a comfortable habit for a while to see how that feels. In doing that we're following Jesus on his forty-day vision quest in the desert, when he was tempted by Satan and waited on by angels. Then after the darkness and agony of the crucifixion the glorious resurrection comes, as reliably as the sun rising in the east.

2020 was not the first year it didn't work out that way. In the long history of the church there have been other pandemics and wars and natural disasters that have overshadowed Easter. That's never happened in my lifetime, however, and I've been around for almost 70 years. Despite the ups and downs



and downs we've gone through, for the most part our country has been insulated from widespread, extended catastrophes. Native people and African-Americans have always known better, but white people like me have been able to live in a bubble.

Though it wasn't clear at the time, on Ash Wednesday 2020 the virus told us, "This is the year you're going to give up being in control for Lent." When we hadn't learned much from that after forty days, the season was extended. It will stay with us until we finally recognize that we're not the masters of the universe, that we need to adapt

Continued, page 3

Winter Talk 2021

For decades, Indigenous ministries leaders from congregations across the Episcopal Church have gathered each January to renew relationships, share ministry stories, hear reports from national leaders and worship together. This year (for obvious reasons) the gathering took place on Zoom, which worked surprisingly well despite the absence of shared meals. Carleen Kurip appreciated keeping up the longstanding Native tradition of coming together in the winter. "Even on Zoom it was comfortable and gave me a warm, safe feeling," she said. "We got to hear from lots of interesting people, and it's good to know that all of us care about sharing our stories."

For Adam Twiss, being part of Winter Talk was entirely new, and he loved the Gospel-based discipleship Bible studies. "Discussing John 1:51 was a high point for me," he said. "Seeing heaven opened with angels ascending and descending is what the promise of everlasting life means to me." Adam was excited to be part of such a large group of disciples, and it inspired him to do more to share the Word with Native friends and neighbors. He takes serious Jesus' promise that "You will see greater things than these," which inspires his work as a Case Manager for the Ute Tribe's Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention program.

Forrest Cuch is a veteran of Winter Talk, and he really enjoyed reconnecting with old friends. He's completing a three-year term on the Indigenous Ministries Advisory Council, which supports our national leader The Rev. Dr. Bradley Hauff. Forrest participated in a powerful session in which each Council member shared their thoughts and inspirations. "Each of us is so unique and talented," he said, "and I loved Ron Braman's gift for music and Shaneequa Brokenleg's energy and spirit." Forrest expressed special appreciation for Brad, whom he called "a quiet, steady leader with a powerful voice for Indigenous people." All of us are thankful to the Episcopal Church and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry for the support our ministries receive.



A New World Record, continued from page 1

to adapt if we're going to survive. This is a lesson we desperately need to learn, though I'm sorry it's happening in such a painful way.

Just because it feels like Lent has been going on forever doesn't mean that there's been no resurrection. If we really pay attention, it's clear that Jesus has been right here with us. I see him sitting with lonely patients in ICU's, comforting people mourning their losses, encouraging everyone who's sick of being cooped up at home. Best of all, he's working through our hearts and hands as we reach out to others and help them endure this record-breaking season.

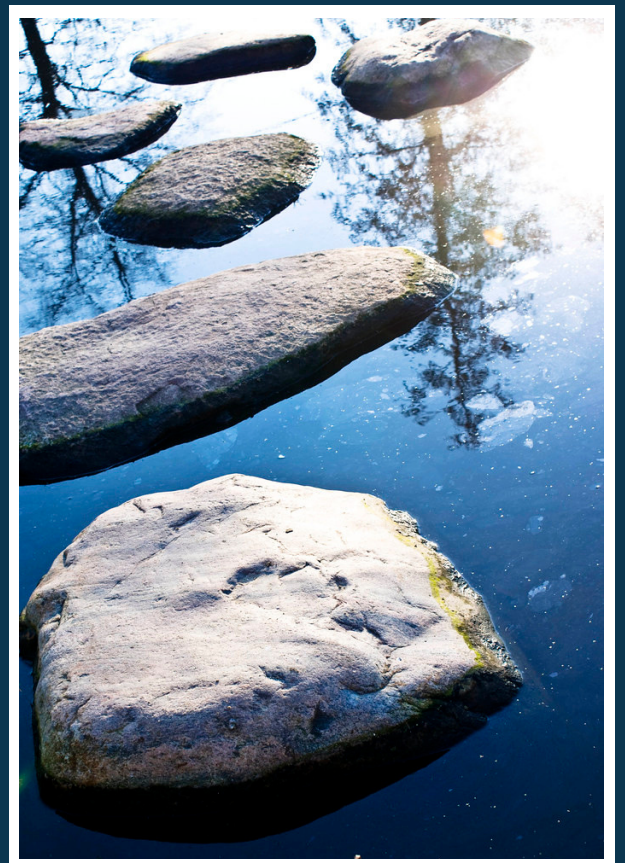
Are we learning from all of this? Clearly, we are not in control of the world, and acting that way is no help. It's time for that familiar Ash Wednesday blessing again, and the words should be ringing in our ears: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Life on earth is brief and precious. Let's team up with Jesus and make the most of it.

Michael Carney

Stepping Stones

**an online AA group
facilitated by Adam Twiss**

Thursdays at noon
For more info contact
Adam or email
whiterocksrev@gmail.com



A Different Kind of Christmas

In the Year of the Pandemic so many familiar customs are out of our reach, but we try to be creative and keep what we cherish the most. Christmas Eve was like that at St. Elizabeth's this year. We did our best to present the heart of our usual worship service by video on Facebook Live, and it seems to have worked out reasonably well.

At 5:00 pm Rev. Michael was joined by Laraine Larson, who played carols on the piano, and Pepper, Maria and Nehemiah Alanis, who read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. Everyone wore masks and stayed in their own corners of the sanctuary for safety's sake. Later that evening Michael led a candlelight service, with a Christmas message, prayers and Silent Night. Amazingly, over 200 viewers tuned in to these services on Facebook, and while we wished we could have been together in person, it was great to connect with so many people!



Becca Gardner was determined to keep up as many of our Christmas traditions as possible. One that worked out well was making and delivering "goody bags" to families, which she did with the Alanis sisters. Like the pies in November, the recipients loved being surprised with such a tasty treat. Becca

jumped

also organized a small, family-style Youth Group Christmas party, which was the most we could do safely this year. We're starting to discuss when Art Empowers (the new name for Arts-Kids and Teens) programs can begin again. We look forward to seeing all the young people again as soon as possible!

jumped

More photos, page 7

Old World vs New World

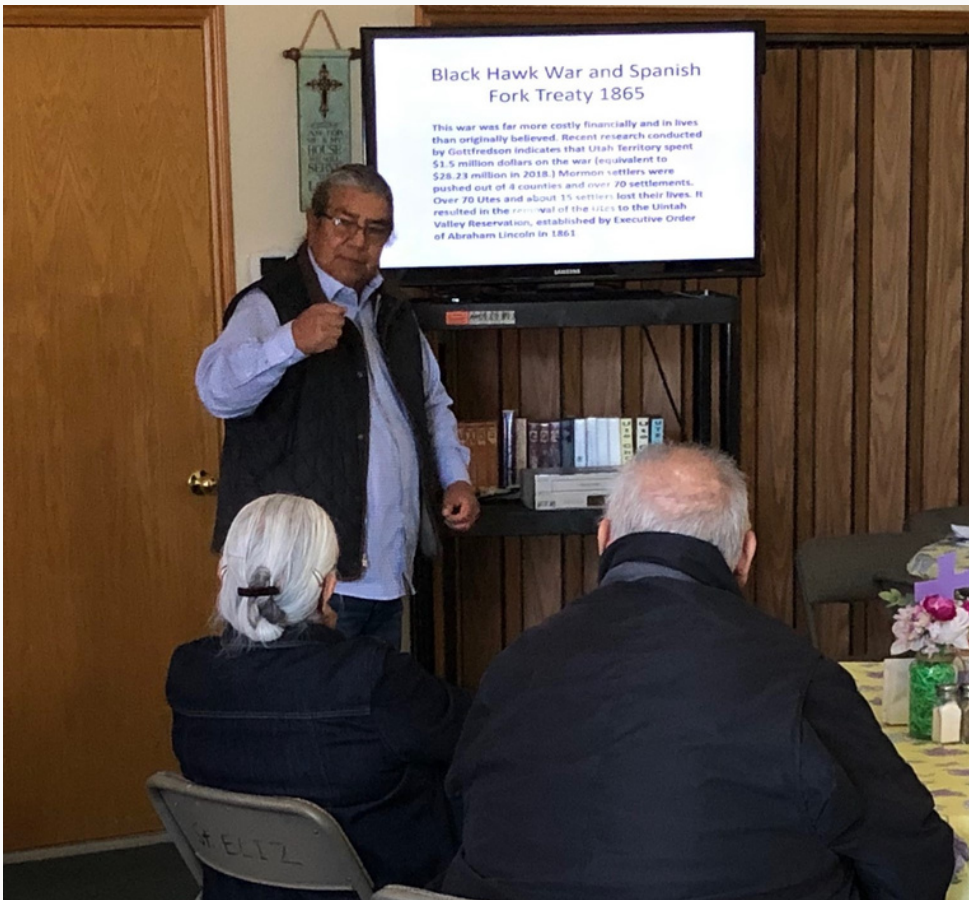
Over the past 500 years, the perception has been that the old world had all the answers: the science, technology, and advanced ways of living. Can that still be said? Or perceived as truth?

We are facing a monumental moral crisis. Consider these observations:

- The United States is deeply divided politically
- Income inequality is at an all-time high; poverty and homelessness are on the rise
- Pollution of the air, water, and land is contributing to climate change
- Rainforests are being destroyed each day, contributing to global warming, and thousands of native people in South America are being killed for trying to protect the earth
- More and more animal species are becoming extinct
- Violence is glorified on TV—guns are becoming a national past-time—some sports have become barbaric (UFC, WWA)—while mental health is in decline

We are losing empathy! We have failed to give the study of history the serious attention it deserves! And we are now paying the consequences!

Perhaps we can learn something from the ancient people who occupied the western hemisphere for much more than a mere 500 years. They were here on this continent thousands of years before Columbus and the Vikings. Is there anything we can possibly learn from these ancient people?



Black Hawk War and Spanish Fork Treaty 1865

This war was far more costly financially and in lives than originally believed. Recent research conducted by Gottfredson indicates that Utah Territory spent \$1.5 million dollars on the war (equivalent to \$28.23 million in 2018.) Mormon settlers were pushed out of 4 counties and over 70 settlements. Over 70 Utes and about 15 settlers lost their lives. It resulted in the removal of the Utes to the Uintah Valley Reservation, established by Executive Order of Abraham Lincoln in 1861.

The indigenous peoples of the so-called new world observed the wondrous power of nature and made friends with it. They also found God as the creator of these wonders and retained that connection through ceremonies. They laid claim to nature as their teacher. Out of this came a perception of the world as a spiritual realm intertwined with a physical plane on earth. This worldview was and continues to be very different from the technologically superior, western Eurasian perception of the world.

As worldwide trade was expanding, a horribly destructive judgement was made in Europe that was felt around the world.

Continued, page 6

Old World vs New World, continued from page 5

the world, a critical judgement that unfairly characterized all native people of the new world as non-human. It was called the *Doctrine of Discovery* and was set forth by papal bulls declared in Rome and adopted by European royalty. This doctrine held that “heathens of the New World were not considered human because they were not Christians”; therefore, they did not possess rights to the land!

I suggest that amid these so-called “heathens” were actually nations with higher ideals than even today. I am talking about the Taino Indians (sometimes referred to as Arawak) of the Caribbean island we call Hispanola. Columbus and his soldiers (who were Christians) arrived with sword and armor on full display, ready for battle. The “savages,” on the other hand, displayed just the opposite. They were naked with outstretched arms as they waded into the water to greet their strange visitors. They were givers, not takers; they greeted with kindness, not fear and cruelty. To put it simply, the Tainos had a Christlike presence. Their kindness was immediately interpreted by Columbus as weakness, an opportunity to exploit and ultimately destroy. Actions like these would have provoked the righteous anger of Jesus, which was often directed at religious people who abused their power.

It is important to point out that the Old World evolved out of a bloody and violent period in Europe: Crusaders v. Mongols, Hundred Years’ War, War of Roses, to name a few. In the New World the Inca, Maya, and Aztec nations were expanding, and they were sometimes violent. But we also had the kind, peaceful nations evolving in the milder climates, especially in the Caribbean region. Many but not all of these nations were more humane, gentler and highly generous.

According to the book *My Grandmother’s Hands*, by Resmaa Menakem, trauma is not only intergenerational but it resides in the body, and healing is necessary for both the perpetrator and the victim of violent trauma. That would explain why Old World representatives like Columbus and his soldiers were so cruel, violent and dominant. It explains why native victims suffer trauma to this day, and also why there continues to be so much violence in our culture. We are all in need of healing!

This clash, this war of cultures, has continued to take place to this very day. The never-ending struggle of male dominant European descendants for natural resources and wealth has begun to result in scarcity and in cruelty directed at others. Lately, it has manifested not only in nasty, corrupt domestic and international politics, but also in a high degree of greed, violence and destruction to ourselves and our home, our mother earth. In contrast, most but not all indigenous societies are more matriarchal than patriarchal. This sometimes puts us at odds with the dominant culture, and for good reasons. In truth, the native people of the new world have never really fit the European mold... even to this day! Our challenge is to hold on to both the Christian teachings and the Indigenous values that will help us live healthy, balanced lives in the modern world.

(Most of this essay is excerpted from a video lecture given by Forrest S. Cuch for Utah State University, which will be available online. The religious references are unique to this newsletter article.)



Logo art by Shannon Gardner

St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church occupies and operates upon the ancestral and traditional lands of the Ute Indian Tribe.

Stepping Stones

**an online AA group
facilitated by Adam Twiss**

Thursdays at noon



**For more info contact
Adam or email whiterocksrev@gmail.com**