



ECA Parish Continues to Forge on Behind the Scenes in several Different ways.

We are in strange times at ECA and it has been a difficult period for many of us. With the bishop's directive for NO in person activities until further notice, except for streamed services, <https://www.episcopalatlanta.org/covid-19/> (go to updates from Bishop Wright) we continue to find different ways to serve one another and our communities while practicing CDC and Dept. of Public Health guidelines for gatherings. The Vestry has met twice now via the Zoom meeting app and we continue to monitor activities and our response as a parish during these meetings. The Finance committee has also met twice and continues to monitor our finances and make recommendations as necessary. We have a link to our current financial report [here](#).

Since the beginning of our COVID-19 directives given by the bishop, we have had to readjust some of the ways we do things. During the shelter in place order, we were able to hold services at Lake Arrowhead to provide a picturesque scenery for our worship services. Thank you to Dan Miller who used his prior experience and knowledge to help with the recording of readings so we could have different parishioners participate in our services. Thanks to Joe Lozier who also recorded the hymns so we could have music for our services. Thank you to Brenda Pinkston and Jackie Collopy who have helped with worship services needs and Carolyn Higgins who has been able to provide the leg work needed to prepare our makeshift worship spaces. The Vestry and former Sr. Wardens of ECA have contacted (and continue to contact) parishioners weekly to check in and make sure needs are being met, or just to say hello.

During this COVID-19 period, parishioners have not been immune to tragedy; and we have pulled together to respond to their needs. We have assisted parishioners with different needs during this time by helping financially, with food or material needs, or with pastoral needs. I have responded to 4 deaths and performed religious rites as regulated by CDC and health dept guidelines and still have a couple of memorial services pending. I will have conducted 2 marriage ceremonies with 10 or less people in attendance while being streamed live on Facebook for family and friends to watch.

On April 26th at 11:00AM in response to community needs, ECA held a Drive-in communion service in conjunction with a food drive. Over 11 storage bins of food were collected and 46 people received communion. We had 3 walk-ups from the neighborhood who also participated. Thanks to Richard & Joyce Arnotti who opened up their driveway for us to do the food collection and service. Thanks to Jane Whisler, Nicole File, Horace Higgins, Chris Renaud and Wanda Ziembinski who helped make it happen.

On May 3rd we were able to move back into the nave at ECA and conduct worship services on campus again. We had a great service and was thankful to be back in our very own sacred space at ECA. I will be honest and admit though, I will miss having services at the lake as it was beautiful each time to see God's creation at its best.

On May 10th we held our 2nd drive-in communion and food drive on Mother's Day and we had another huge success with the food drive. We had 51 members who were able to participate in communion. The Vestry decided at our last meeting that we would continue holding drive-in communion services bi-weekly to follow up our live-streamed services. Our next offering will be Sunday May 24th from 10:30am to 12:30pm. We will keep the parish advised if we plan to have a food drive also.

This is not what we thought 2020 would look like at our Vestry retreat held in January, but we are a parish that adapts and adjusts when we are called to do so. Because of your continued financial support, we have been able to pay our employees during this period. This is great news

and our office may be closed for visits, but Pamala continues to get work done and is working on our online photo directory. We recently had our pavilion plans approved for building and we are working on plans to get the construction work started. We are also looking into getting the sprinkler system installed in the memorial garden to help with upkeep of our flowers and plants in the garden. Both projects were completely funded before the COVID-19 shutdown and will not have any major financial impact on our day to day operations.

I am thankful to the members of the parish for supporting me during this time with your help and prayers. It has been challenging to hold down two ministries, but without your support it would not be possible. I am currently on federal orders for the COVID-19 operation and at this time I have been told the orders will end on June 24th. I do not believe this will affect my ministry to the parish and the GA National Guard continues to be supportive of my full-time ministry with ECA. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any needs you may have during this time. I do not know when the bishop will lift his current directive, but until then, we will be the Church and continue to serve in a world that is in much need of God's grace and love. I look forward to the day we will be able to gather together in person at ECA, but until then, watch our services and come to the drive-in communion service opportunities.

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he obtained with the blood of his own son. (Acts 20:28)

In Christ, Fr. Paul+

See photos below











