

On the mind of the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser...

As you may have read in our mission statement, Incarnation prides itself on providing a “warm and open Christian welcome in the heart of New York City.” We do this in big and small ways: from creativity in worship, to the ministries of our Usher Corps and Hospitality Committee, to user-friendly church bulletins and welcome bags for visitors, to the Pride flag hanging outside our doors. It all goes to support a culture of belonging and the “big tent” ethos of the Episcopal Church, which prizes inclusivity, community, and unity over uniformity.

Our church building plays a large part in our mission as well. The beauty of our sacred space alone is an invitation that draws us in for spiritual rest and renewal. Functional considerations are also important. For example, we are all missing the air conditioning right now! To continue making our worship space as accessible and welcoming as possible, the Vestry has decided to make an alteration to increase fellowship and community engagement. We will be removing the back two rows of pews on either side of the center aisle. The back pews next to the walls will remain in place.

This decision was not made lightly. The Vestry undertook an extensive, prayerful discernment process over several months to evaluate how our physical space can best support our daily mission. As part of this journey, we held valuable discussions facilitated by Bishop Allen Shin and our own Archdeacon Denise LaVetty, whose guidance helped us see the spiritual and practical benefits of this change.

There is also historical precedent for adjusting sanctuary seating to enhance our worship and community life. In the 1970s, the church successfully removed pews from the front of the nave. That modification allowed us to introduce the freestanding altar that we use during our weekday services. It also provides generous space for choral and orchestral concerts.

Once the two back rows of pews are removed, that area will remain a completely open, flexible area. This intentional layout will provide gathering space generally and much-needed breathing room for receptions held in the nave, such as our annual Parish Christmas Party. It will also allow us to improve our children’s area, which provides toys, books, and quiet activities to keep little ones occupied before and during worship.

The physical removal of the pews will take place during the week of July 27. Following that, a task force of Vestry members will evaluate hardwood and other flooring options to ensure the project matches the historical aesthetic of our worship space. The flooring work will occur in late August, and the space will be fully completed and ready for us to celebrate together by Homecoming Sunday, September 13.

We are blessed to handle this project with excellent financial stewardship. Community Church, the congregation that rents our space on Sunday afternoons, fully supports this vision and will be generously covering the lion’s share of renovation costs.

We are a landmark church with a living faith, always seeking to serve the evolving needs of our community. I am grateful for the wise leadership of our Vestry on this project and for all the ways our parish makes Incarnation a true sanctuary of connection and Christlike welcome.

Adrian+

TODAY AFTER CHURCH

12:30 to 1:15 p.m. All are invited to the Parish Dining Room to help make sandwiches for delivery to a nearby homeless drop-in center.

DIOCESAN EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EfM) ZOOM OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, July 21, 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Curious about EfM? Diocesan Coordinator Liza Page Nelson will make a Zoom presentation about the EfM formation program at 6:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m., with time for

Q&A and conversation after each. Pop in for just the presentation or the Q&A only, or stay for both. Registration is required.

Go to theology.sewanee.edu/education-for-ministry for an overview of EfM.

Go to bit.ly/4fqIlhU to register for the Open House.

STORYTIME AND PLANT WORKSHOP WITH OSBORNE KIDS

Saturday, July 25, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Children whose parents have been affected by the criminal justice system will gather in the Assembly Hall for lunch, followed by storytime and a plant workshop for kids. Parishioner Michael Wang will offer a reading of his book *Leif's Gift*. Michael will also demonstrate plant propagation, and children can decorate a small pot for planting.

This event is in partnership with the Osborne Association, part of our ministry to children of incarcerated parents. Volunteers are needed to set up before the event, help during the event, and clean up afterward. If you'd like to volunteer, speak to Vestry Member Eleanor Flach or email the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser (adannhauser@churchofthe-incarnation.org).

WINE AND CHEESE RECEPTION WITH SHISHYE THOMPSON

Tuesday, August 4, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Earlier this year, the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser travelled to India, where she saw friend and faith leader Shishye Thompson, who runs Shishyashram, an organization that shares the Gospel and provides a variety of outreach ministries in North India. Shishye recently travelled to the trafficking hubs of Nepal and will be at Incarnation to report on his recent work combatting human trafficking and ministering to women in prostitution. Please join us in the Parish House for a wine and cheese reception and informal discussion with Shishye. RSVP to the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser.

JOURNEY BAGS FOR LOVED ONES LINK

Loved Ones Link, sponsored by the Osborne Association, is a free bus service that brings families to visit their incarcerated loved ones in prison. Incarnation is preparing "journey bags" filled with items such as toys, games, and snacks that help children and their caregivers pass the time on the bus and feel supported as they embark on a trip that can sometimes be difficult.

Our goal is to create 100 journey bags at a cost of \$12 each. You can participate by buying items from our Amazon Loved Ones Link gift registry: bit.ly/4wcnep5. Or you can donate toward the cost of the bags by scanning the QR code below.



Thanks to those who have donated. We've already raised \$398! We'll be assembling the bags during Coffee Hour on **Sunday, August 23**. Please join us.

CHRISTMAS FAIR DONATIONS

The slow days of summer are a perfect time for cleaning out closets and de-cluttering your home. Remember that we accept donations for the Christmas Fair year-round! Bring your gently used housewares and other saleable items to the Parish House. (Please note we cannot accept clothing.)