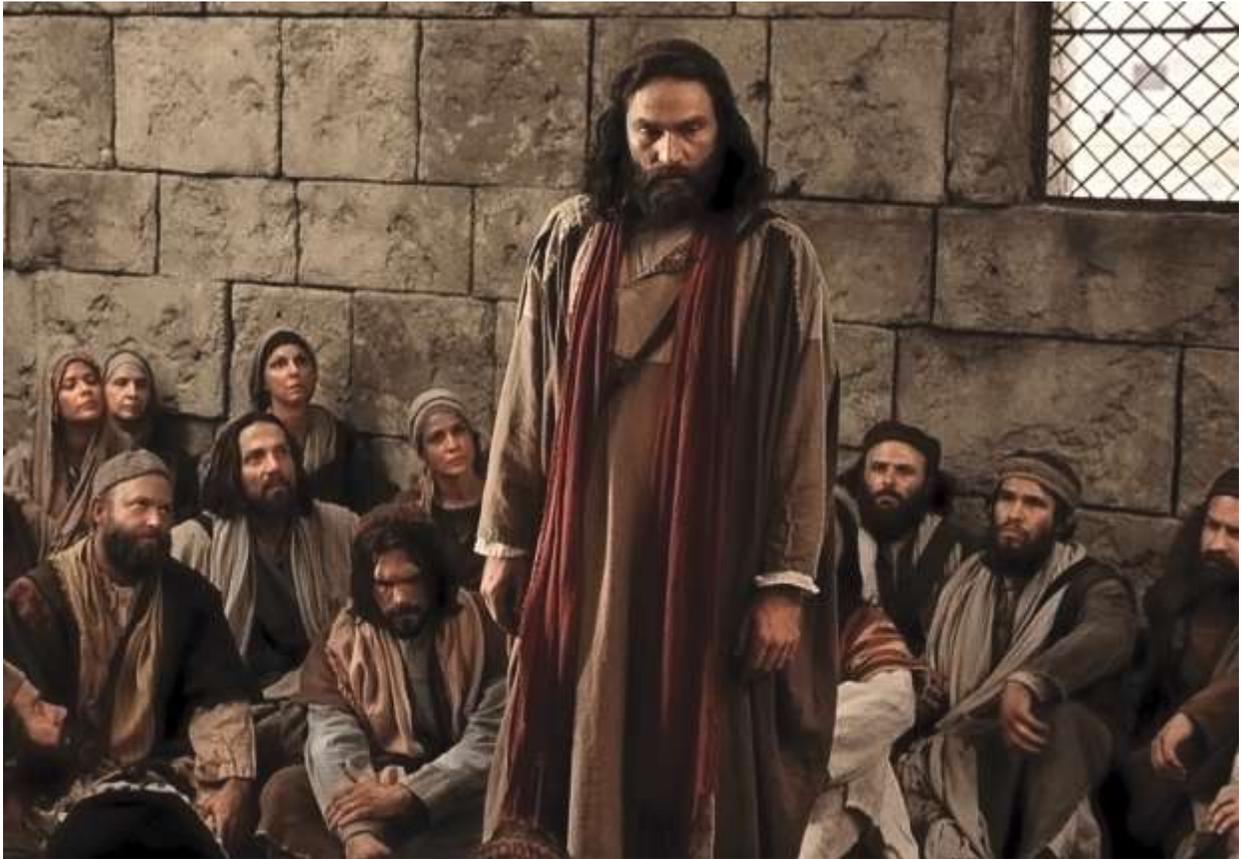


The Church of Saint Boniface

April 18, 2021

Third Sunday of Easter



The author of life you put to death,  
but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses.

(First Reading)

## FATHER'S DESK



Our Saint Boniface Legacy of Hope campaign begins this weekend.

When Bishop McManus first introduced the idea of running a diocesan capital campaign, the honest first reaction from many priests was "Are you kidding me?" (and I am just taming my words). There goes the diocese again asking for money!!! Priests were furious!

The demands of running such a campaign fall on the shoulders of local parishes and priests often in small towns like ours. Local parishes are more concerned about how they are to survive in this era of greying and dwindling congregations and low mass attendance. Parishes think about how we are to pay our bills (bills that keep going up). We worry even more about the spiritual life of our parishes. Not money!!

There was pushback but the Bishop insisted. He spoke to us candidly, firmly and clearly about his plan. He introduced the name of the campaign: Legacy of Hope (that got us quiet!) He spoke about 'generosity' and how the generosity of others (that we do not even know) allows us to enjoy and call our parishes home; the generosity of the men and women, priests and religious who built our parishes. (There is a book about the beginning of the Catholic Church in Worcester Diocese. It is entitled They Were Giants, and indeed they were). For the Bishop it all boiled down to these lines: Do to others, or do the same to others, as has been done for you!

We have a duty, a sacred responsibility, to keep the Legacy of the Hope of the Gospel alive. We have an Easter command to make sure that people know that 'Jesus is alive' through the works and witness of the church in our towns, communities, regions and world.

I came home and thought about all this. I placed myself in the Bishop's urgent message and yes, when I look at my life/my story, I have been a recipient of the generosity of others (many times undeserved). My parents, teachers in school, friends and benefactors, the missionaries in Africa (who built schools, tertiary institutions, hospitals, still to this day) who laid a powerful foundation in many countries that people may live a modern and decent life. This Campaign is about my life/my story.

The campaign is twofold: The first part is the diocesan part. A parish belongs to a larger family which is the diocese. We support the body of the church to be healthy and well. 60% percent of the funds we collect will directly support: Priest retirement (We help those who have ministered to us over their years who are now old and frail); Catholic Education and schools; Programs that alleviate the struggles of the more poor parishes and communities in our diocese; We will also support the effort of beautifying our Mother church – the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

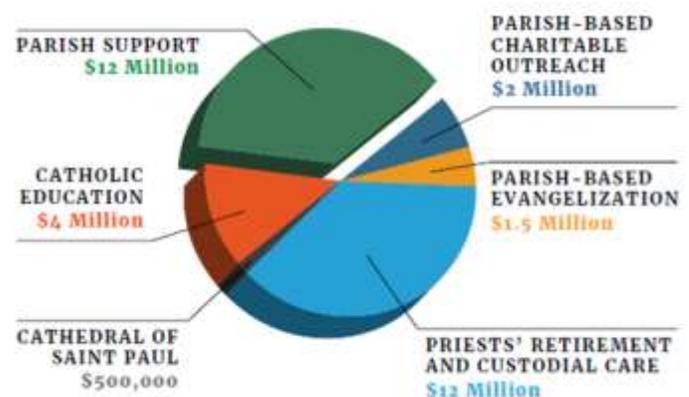
The second part is the parish part: 40% of the funds we collect will come back to our own parish. And there is an even sweeter deal for Saint Boniface that the chairpersons of our campaign committee will explain to you over the next few weeks. I have seen firsthand the generosity of many people in this parish. We offer our time, talent and treasure to make this the beautiful parish we call home. Look at how beautiful over the years we have kept it, and now with no debt. Think about the many children who have been baptized here (since 1957), the confirmations, marriages, festivals, dances, the spiritual resource that this parish has been for many! It is a quiet place for prayer and Bible study.

**We have our successful the Preschool. Let's continue this Legacy of Hope for others.**

You will be receiving more information about all this in the mail, but feel free to call the parish office or visit our parish website.

Have a Blessed Week in the Lord!

*Father Anthony*



**MASS INTENTIONS**

April 28	8:00 AM	<b>John McShane</b> , 2nd Anniversary by his wife
May 8	4:00 PM	<b>Brian Connors</b> , 1st Anniversary by Robert & Mary Bourque
May 9	10:30 AM	<b>Kathleen Cronin</b> , 2nd Anniversary by Dr. Joseph Cronin

PRAY THE ROSARY every Saturday at 3:30 PM in the church, led by members of the Saint Boniface Knights of Columbus.

WEEKDAY MASSES 8:00 AM Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

**EASTER VIGIL, APRIL 3, 2021**

Two young men in our parish came forward to be baptized and accept the Catholic faith at the Easter Vigil this year.

Please welcome Matthew Brothers and Matthew Osgood to our parish family!



**COLLECTION REPORT**

April 4	
– Sunday Offering	\$ 2,174
– Fuel/Maintenance	20
– Easter Offering	1,430
– Other	235
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 3,859
April 11	
– Sunday Offering	\$ 3,183
– Fuel/Maintenance	216
– Easter Offering	321
– Other	15
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 3,735

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Give to our parish whether you're in the pews or not! Many parishioners have been making their weekly offerings online. It's secure, convenient and easy to make one-time or recurring donations at [www.stboniface-lunenburg.org](http://www.stboniface-lunenburg.org)

*First Communion Day  
at Saint Boniface is  
Saturday, May 1*

Please keep our candidates and their families in your prayers:

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Eleanor Audette</i>      | <i>Mason Lay</i>        |
| <i>Sean Callahan</i>        | <i>Katrina Nvule</i>    |
| <i>Jackson Champagne</i>    | <i>Kimberly Nvule</i>   |
| <i>Leonides Ciampa</i>      | <i>Aurelia Portillo</i> |
| <i>Audrey deBettencourt</i> | <i>Anna Sicilliano</i>  |
| <i>Joshua Dodson</i>        | <i>Nora Thibault</i>    |
| <i>Tessa Kasowitz</i>       | <i>Morgan Wilgus</i>    |

*I am  
the Bread  
of Life  
John 6:35*



## The Lamé Shall Leap

Let's look at the big picture. When John the Evangelist wants to highlight one of Jesus' healings to illustrate the meaning of his ministry, he picks the healing of the man born blind (John 9), for in his Gospel believing is the deepest kind of seeing; in that

sense, we are all born blind until we have the faith to see afresh by the light of the world that is Jesus. Similarly, when Luke wants to illustrate what is going forward in his history of the post-Easter Church, he chooses to focus first, and at great length, on the healing of the man born lame (Acts 3-4), **for in his account the Church is called "the Way." Relative to that way, we are all born lame** until we are moved by faith from the paralysis of nonbelief to movement on the Way, following the risen Lord Jesus.

The reading from Acts that we hear this Sunday is drawn from the speech that follows and explains the healing of the man born lame. Since the excerpt used in the reading is rarely commented upon and even more rarely placed in context, it might be helpful to do so here.

**The occasion of Peter's speech is the healing that precedes it. Peter and John, continuing their Jewish practice of worshipping at the Temple, approach the Beautiful Gate and encounter a well-known beggar there. Having no money, Peter gives him what he does have. He says to the man born lame, "in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk." Peter takes him by the hand, raises him up, and immediately the man stands up, walks, and begins leaping. The action of jumping is important to Luke, for he mentions it twice in this brief account.**

Why the emphasis on leaping? There is only one place in the Hebrew Bible that mentions the lame leaping, the oracle about Israel's deliverance in Isaiah 35:6: *Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of deaf be cleared; Then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the dumb will sing.*

Jesus himself had alluded to this passage when asked to identify himself to John the Baptist's disciples (see Luke 7:22). It would seem that Luke underscores the leaping of the healed man because he sees in this physical cure a sign of the larger meaning of what is going forward in post-Easter Jerusalem: **the healing illustrates, "acts out," the restoration of Israel that is occurring** in the growth of the Christian community after Pentecost.

When the spectacle of the lame man leaping draws a crowd, Peter is quick to interpret this event against the long story of Israel: **"The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. ..."** That is, the God who identified himself as God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to Moses in the burning bush episode (Gen 3:6), the God of the covenant, who enabled the people to make the Exodus out of Egypt, has also fulfilled the prophecy of the fourth Servant Song (Isa 52:13) in **"glorifying his servant" Jesus in the resurrection. And this healing, with all it represents, is an extension of that glorification.** In rejecting Jesus at Passover time, they had involved themselves in something bigger than they knew. They should repent, therefore, **not just from complicity in Jesus' death, but in response to the call to conversion that was the thrust of Jesus' public life.**

~ Dennis Hamm, SJ

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## Did the Resurrection ACTUALLY happen?

*Is there actual, scientific proof of the Resurrection?*

Atheists and non-Christians argue that there's no proof that Jesus physically rose from the dead. Some non-believers argue that Christians can believe that Jesus's spirit rose from the dead, but there is no possible way Jesus's body was once dead and then came back to life.

In his book *Counterfeit Christs: Finding the Real Jesus Among the Imposters*, Catholic Answers apologist Trent Horn calls this false view of Christ's resurrection the **"Rotting Corpse."** Trent Horn first shows how we know first through Scripture that Christ rose from the dead. In Romans 1:4 and 1 Corinthians 15:12-14, St. Paul asserts that Christ physically rose from the dead and that God will raise us from death as well. Christians can be assured that Scripture explicitly claims that Christ rose from the dead.

Additionally, Horn points out how it was women who discovered the empty tomb. If this discovery was just something the Gospel writers made up, they would have had someone who would be considered more reliable in their time and culture, like Roman or Jewish officials or one of the male apostles, to discover the tomb.

**The Apostles also could not have been hallucinating. If they were imagining Christ's appearances, all of the apostles would have had to hallucinate the same thing, which is nearly impossible!** There are no other examples in the ancient Greco-Roman world or Jewish teaching that feature someone dying, going to the afterlife, then returning to earth with a physical body. If Jesus's resurrection were a hallucination, then the apostles would have imagined something familiar to them, but Christ's defeat over death was unprecedented.

"Get Fed" is brought to you by The Catholic Company: [catholiccompany.com](http://catholiccompany.com)

*God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you  
by turning each of you from your evil ways.*

(Acts 3:26)



## Alternate Reality

This appearance of the risen Jesus to the Christian community follows the story of his appearances to the two disciples at Emmaus. The complete unit (Lk 24:36-53) can be divided into three scenes: (1) the appearance (Lk 24:36-43); (2) instruction and a final commission (Lk 24:44-49); (3) the ascension (Lk 24:50-53).

### *The Appearance*

If we explore this appearance story in terms of alternate reality, some of its elements make fresh sense. First, the disciples exhibit multiple reactions: they are terrified and startled (Lk 24:37), alarmed and skeptical (Lk 24:38), overjoyed yet wondering (Lk 24:40), and they think they see a "ghost" (Greek: "spirit," Lk 24:34), which suggests that they recognize a new kind of experience.

They know Jesus died and was buried, but now they see him quite alive. Instead of a "ghost" they see a flesh and bone person in alternate reality (Lk 24:39). Jesus eats fish in their presence (Lk 24:43) not only to prove his "reality" but to reestablish table fellowship with his followers! Clearly this is a new kind of experience of alternate reality.

### *New Understanding*

As the disciples at Emmaus so too does this community gain a new understanding of the risen Jesus they are experiencing, rooted in the Scripture. Jesus personally "opened their minds" to the fuller meaning of the words he spoke in his lifetime and offered a deeper understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. No specific passages from the Old Testament are cited. Indeed, scholars are unable to find any passages that relate to Luke's global interpretation that "the Messiah shall suffer and rise from the dead on the third day."

Experiences of alternate reality opened the minds of prophets and others in the Old Testament to understanding the will of God with greater clarity and precision; the experience of the risen Jesus accomplishes the same result for those who see him.

### *Commission*

What then is the function of this specific experience of alternate reality? In today's passage, the risen Jesus commissions "the eleven and their companions" (Lk 24:33) to preach "repentance for the forgiveness of sins" to all nations and to be "witnesses" (Lk 24:47-48).

Preaching forgiveness of sins is a familiar theme in Luke, but the theme of testimony is a new one that will be highlighted repeatedly throughout Acts. These eyewitness followers now bear witness and testimony to the end of the earth concerning the suffering Messiah who was raised (e.g., Acts 4:4, 29, 31, etc.).



### *Empowerment*

Ordinarily, the experience of alternate reality itself suffices to convince, motivate, and empower the recipient to act upon the experience. But Jesus advises his followers to "remain here in the city until you are invested with power from on high" (Lk 24:49).

This is a crucial notion in Luke's Gospel, unfortunately omitted in the selection assigned for today's liturgy. It was with the "power of the Lord" that Jesus healed people (Lk 5:17). Indeed, the "power that went forth from him" (Lk 6:19) is the very same power with which God will invest these disciples (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5).

The fact that it is impossible to harmonize the diverse resurrection stories into a continuous narrative should give the modern believer pause. One transforming experience of the risen Jesus and its narration in a single story sufficed for our ancestors in the faith. The experience and/or the story was enlightening and empowering.

Through centuries of Christian tradition, this experience has been stylized in ritual and relived in sacrament. The Western tendency toward rationalization has often robbed liturgy, ritual, and sacrament of their potential experiential impact. **Can today's reflections help restore the power?**

~ John J. Pilch

## A Positive Force

**Isn't it interesting that, right in the middle of** this season of Easter joy, the church focuses our attention on the suffering of the messiah? **The prophets announced long ago that God's messiah would suffer; "it is written that the messiah must suffer; Christ had to suffer."**

**Jesus' followers never have been able to come** to terms fully with the idea of redemption through suffering. Surely suffering cannot be **good, cannot be God's desire for us! Jesus,** however, turned suffering into a positive force, buying redemption with the single coin that has suffering and death on one side and resurrection on the other.

The amount of suffering in our world is staggering. Apart from the suffering that comes naturally with life, there is the suffering we inflict on ourselves through injustice, violence and war. The suffering of Jesus continues in our day, and we still have difficulty seeing its victims as our redeemers.

*Jesus takes the side of those most in need, physically and spiritually. The example of Jesus poses a number of challenges to the contemporary Church. ... [M]ost radically, it calls for an emptying of self, both individually and corporately, that allows the Church to experience the power of God in the midst of poverty and powerlessness.*

U.S. Bishops, [Economic Justice for All](#),  
1986: #52 (pp. 13-14)

— Gerald Darring

Have you checked this out yet?

### THE VOICES OF SAINT BONIFACE

These are video/audio interviews of life-long parishioners and clergy who share their personal faith and life stories, living and serving in the parish community. Our first interviewee is Louise Nadeau, our Parish Sacristan.

The link is now live on our parish website!

## Saints of the Week

April 19.

**SAINT GIANNA BERETTA MOLLA**

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla was a wife, mother, and pediatrician. During her last pregnancy Saint Gianna was found to have a noncancerous uterine fibroid. While she allowed the doctors to remove the tumor, she made sure that her pregnancy was protected. Saint Gianna Molla died of complications shortly after her daughter's birth.



April 20.

**SAINT CONRAD of PARZHAM**

Saint Conrad of Parzham served as friary porter for 41 years. Anyone who came to the friary in Altoetting would have met Saint Conrad as he greeted them at the door. Such a role may not sound like much, but Saint Conrad turned it into a true ministry of love and service.



April 21.

**SAINT ANSELM**

Perhaps best known in philosophical circles for his rational proof of the existence of God, Saint Anselm was a great theologian as well. A Benedictine monk and scholar, **Saint Anselm earned the title "Father of Scholasticism,"** a school of philosophy/theology prominent in the middle ages, especially among Catholic philosophers and theologians.



April 22.

**SAINT ADALBERT of PRAGUE**

Saint Adalbert of Prague received his name from his mentor, Saint Adalbert of Magdeburg. Ordained a bishop early in life, Adalbert of Prague became a faithful defender and preacher of the faith. In return for his faithfulness Saint Adalbert received criticism, exile, and martyrdom.



April 23.

**SAINT GEORGE**

**Slayer of dragons, rescuer of a king's daughter,** and other legends seem to cling to Saint George. What we do know for sure is that he was willing to shed his blood for the faith. Even though the details may be sparse, the fact of his courage and holiness is enough.



# Saint Boniface Church

817 Massachusetts Avenue, Lunenburg, MA 01462

Parish Office: 978-582-4008 email: [stbonifaceparish@verizon.net](mailto:stbonifaceparish@verizon.net)

Discover St. Boniface ~ Visit our website: [www.StBoniface-lunenburg.org](http://www.StBoniface-lunenburg.org)

## Parish Office Hours

Monday / Wednesday / Thursday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM (closed 12:00 – 1:00 PM)

## The Celebration of the Eucharist

Sunday: 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 PM

Summer Sunday Mass schedule: 9:00 AM  
(Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend)

Weekday Masses: 8:00 AM, Wednesday/Thursday/Friday

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession) Saturday 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. or by appointment.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM Adults are baptized at the Easter Vigil as part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Infant and child Baptisms are by arrangement.

FIRST EUCHARIST Preparation begins in grade one and includes classes, retreats, and home instruction. Children receive First Eucharist in grade two.

CONFIRMATION Our Confirmation program begins in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade; students are confirmed in the spring of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. For young adults who have been baptized but not yet confirmed, contact the parish office.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY It is the policy of the Diocese of Worcester that a couple should contact the parish at least one year prior to the anticipated date of their wedding to allow sufficient time to carry out the various steps of the marriage preparation process. It is important that arrangements be made with the church before plans are made with reception halls, caterers, etc.

ANNOINTING OF THE SICK Please call the parish office 978-582-4008 or email Fr. Anthony at [stbonifaceparish@verizon.net](mailto:stbonifaceparish@verizon.net) or Nancy Cieri 978-582-6983 [nancycieri@comcast.net](mailto:nancycieri@comcast.net) to arrange these visits.

PRAYER LINE MINISTRY If you or someone you know needs prayers or if you would like to be a part of this ministry of those who pray for the needs of neighbors, please contact Sue Cote 978-582-0404 [sj33@msn.com](mailto:sj33@msn.com).

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #16480 *In Service to One. In Service to all.* Members meet in the Parish Hall on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. Any Catholic men over 18 who are interested in joining the Knights should contact Grand Knight Peter Bak (978-403-5119) or Deputy Grand Knight Claude Poirier (978-660-3202), or email [kofc16480@gmail.com](mailto:kofc16480@gmail.com).

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## PARISH STAFF:

	<i>phone</i>	<i>email</i>
Rev. Anthony Mpagi, Pastor	978-582-4008	<a href="mailto:stbonifaceparish@verizon.net">stbonifaceparish@verizon.net</a>
Jo-Anne Poirier, Administrative Assistant	978-582-4008	<a href="mailto:stbonifaceparish@verizon.net">stbonifaceparish@verizon.net</a>
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Louise Nadeau, Sacristan		
Ministry Schedule	978-582-4008	<a href="mailto:stbonifaceparish@verizon.net">stbonifaceparish@verizon.net</a>
Nina Charpentier, Dir. Early Childhood/PreK	978-582-7110	

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**Newcomers to St. Boniface** are invited and encouraged to formally register as members of the parish so that we may stay in touch with you with faith formation news, notices of special events, volunteer opportunities, and more.

Registration forms are available at the doors of the church, the parish office, or on our website.

*Please note that you must be registered for at least six months before we can issue any verification of your status as a parishioner for godparent or sponsor letters.*

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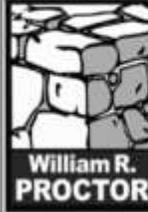
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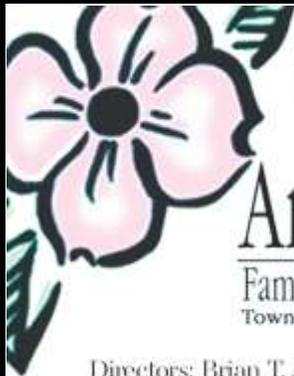
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