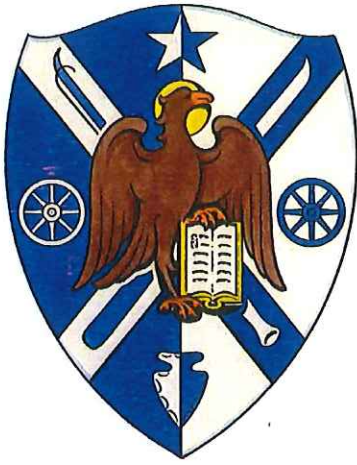


The Evangelist



July 2020

News about Our Episcopal Church and Community

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God Bless America!

Happy Independence Day to all members and friends of Saint John's Church. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew will continue to keep their Fourth of July celebration going as best they can in the time of social distancing. The celebration will be streamed LIVE on the Saint John's Church Facebook page.

At 10 a.m. on Saturday, a scout from Troop 153 will be on hand for a Presenting of the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance. Charlie Nutter will introduce Steve Balman, who will be speaking about the Declaration of Independence. After Steve's talk, we will wind things up with a few songs for our patriotic sing-along.

But wait, there's more! It has been a tradition, established by Brother Phillip Chenoweth more than forty years ago, to have a drawing to give away an American flag. Since we can't be together in person, anyone who wishes to enter the drawing can email your name and contact information to: flag@sjtulsa.org and we'll make sure that you are in the running. The winner will be announced later. Good luck!

Following our Brotherhood event, Joseph Arndt and Adam Pajan have planned heart-stirring patriotic music for this occasion.



The July 4 recital music will include:

Concert Variations on the Star Spangled Banner - Dudley Buck
Excerpts from "Water Music" - G. F. Handel

Cantilena in G - Arthur Foote

Reverie - William Grant Still



Brotherhood Update

The **Brotherhood of St. Andrew** has been meeting continuously online with Zoom meetings every **Saturday at 8:30 a.m.** since the last week of March. They did not meet on Holy Saturday as the church streamed the service that day. The Evening Brotherhood continues their Zoom meetings on the **second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m.** This would be an ideal time for other men of Saint John's Church to experience one of our meetings from the comfort of their home. We are the designated and official men's ministry of the Episcopal Church worldwide, so you are already considered to be part of the Brotherhood, either active or aspiring. It would be a great time to come and at least stick your toe in the water while we are still meeting online.

If you would like a Zoom invitation, please send your name and email address to: Bob Baker at baker111@tulsacoxmail.com or Richard Medlock at richard.medlock@cox.net

Come and See!

A Message from Father Sam



Be the Change You Seek

Years ago, when Hurricane Katrina decimated New Orleans, I had the privilege to go to that area of our country to serve and to help rebuild. There is a stockade fence in the 5th Ward of New Orleans, which stands in the middle of a

neighborhood that was destroyed by the floodwaters of Katrina. Painted on it are the simple, yet powerful, words of Gandhi: ***"Be the change you seek..."***

When disaster strikes, be it a natural disaster or a pandemic, what lies just beneath the surface often rises to the fore. People live in a state of quiet desperation and quiet agitation, seeking, always seeking, ever searching and yet not finding. Perhaps it is because they seek the wrong things or search in the wrong places. Still, we are conditioned from youth and by a culture which seeks after temporal and temporary things. For so many, success is defined as the achievement of material wealth, power and status. Yet, these things are fleeting when we achieve them and we become exhausted chasing after a "should be," supposed-to-be life.

I recently had a phone conversation with a friend in Boston who has lost his job because of the failures of our economy related to the pandemic. By all appearances he was the exemplar of success. He had money, power and status. When his position was eliminated, he found himself without any of the things that had defined him for so many years. My friend told me he was lost and he was exhausted and he had to "find a way to change this disaster."

Perhaps now in the midst of tension and the ugliness of racism...perhaps now in the midst of a raging pandemic...perhaps now in the midst of a critical national election, people can relate to my friend's emotional state. So many of us know loss and exhaustion, and while the cause of our pain and suffering are different, the result is the same. Many have lost everything that defined them...a loved one has died...a job is no more...a lifetime of material wealth created has vanished. Every day people struggle with change, and the need for change, that goes well beyond the financial impact of an economic downturn or even a catastrophic pandemic and social upheaval.

In the midst of such change, however, there is hope. New life will happen! There is always hope in Jesus for in God all things are possible. My friends, new life is always possible.

All change, whether intended and planned for or unexpected and surprising, will create anxiety, even struggle. Fear not...stand strong in your faith...***there is hope, new life will and is happening! Thanks be to God!***

Reopening Advisory Committee Formed, Looking Ahead

Fr. Sam has formed an Advisory Committee to help guide the church in issues ranging from timing and safety to preparedness as the parish leadership makes ready for the week we can reopen for in-person Sunday Holy Eucharist services. With the guidance and feedback of this parish committee, he will listen to the insights of senior staff members, the guidance of the Oklahoma Diocesan office, and the feedback from the all-parish survey conducted in June. He will stay tuned to the COVID-19 case data from the Oklahoma and Tulsa County health departments, and participate in group discussions with other priests across the diocese about best practices and key learnings.



As soon as a firm plan for reopening is determined, we will let everyone know by email and mailed communications. What we can foresee at this time is that worship will

look different for a while from the way it was experienced before the pandemic. Parishioners should prepare themselves for a few different ways of worshipping when the wonderful day of gathering arrives. This may include (but not necessarily be limited to): the wearing of facemasks, no congregational singing, the need to depart immediately after the worship concludes, the nursery will not be operating, a reservation system may be necessary, and access to the building will be limited. The last item means that we cannot convene initially for coffee hour or host any group meetings.

Our clergy, staff and vestry are as eager as all of you are to be in communion with one another as soon as we are safely able. Until we see your wonderful faces in the pews, we will be joining you online for digital services seven days a week, chatting with you by phone, sharing parish news often by email, and lifting every person up in our prayers. We urge you to be in touch with your friends in the church via calls, texts, emails and even old-fashioned letters and cards.

A Message from Senior Warden, Jim Hicks



*In Congress, July 4, 1776: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. **Establish Justice*** is the first of five (5) objectives outlined in the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution the Framers drafted in the six (6) weeks during the hot Philadelphia summer of 1787.

One of the great challenges for Christians is as old as our faith, but it takes on special urgency today as protests surrounding the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and unrest in cities across the nation, including Tulsa, have all opened our eyes to perceptions of race, equality and social justice. As **Christians** we are called upon to engage with those, drawing attention to **injustice**, wherever it is found. Every believer is called to serve "the least of these," to "**hunger and thirst for justice**," to be a "peacemaker." Matthew 25:31-46, Matthew 5:1-10. The beautiful and serene campus of our church seems a world away from these issues but, in fact, they are on our doorstep.

But, how do we connect worship on Sunday to work on Monday? How is the Gospel proclaimed not only in the pulpit, but also in our everyday lives?

Guided by Jesus' parable of Lazarus and choosing not to look the other

way, the Vestry approved a \$5,000 donation to the feeding program created and operated by Vernon African Methodist Episcopal Church in North Tulsa. Vernon AME has provided over 5,000 meals to the unemployed and economically disadvantaged in its area of Tulsa. In addition, over 13,500 grocery meals have been provided. The Vestry felt a positive way for Saint John's Church to address **injustice in our community** was to provide financial support to help feed those less fortunate. This donation was given through the Outreach Fund and made possible by generosity over the year by members of our congregation.

Hopefully, a dialogue has been opened with Vernon AME Church so that both congregations can address these issues and work together to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre next May. I know many of you want to do your part on a personal level but, like me, aren't sure where to start! If you have any ideas or thoughts on how best to address these issues, please do not hesitate to contact Fr. Sam or me. Together we can make a difference in our community. Peace be with you.

Caring for Our



Community

Good News Gardens

The National Episcopal Church is inviting parishes and individuals to join the Good News Gardens movement! You can get involved and register your efforts as you tend a plot of veggies or wildflowers at your home. Additionally, you sign up for a newsletter and follow the initiative on Facebook.

Perhaps you are already sharing your garden's bounty with neighbors or wildlife? If not, please consider adopting these three actions this summer:

- 1) Plant **NATIVE** wildflowers in your garden to serve wild pollinators.
- 2) Pray for those who are food insecure.
- 3) Proclaim your efforts by sharing on social media.



Please also consider sending Mary Waller a photo (with description) of your native wildflowers in bloom, or sack of vegetables you're taking to a food pantry, and she may share your pic with others via our parish communications. Mary is the outgoing state director of the Oklahoma Monarch & Pollinator Collaborative and our new church Director of Communications (mwaller@stjtulsa.org).

Learn more and/or join the national initiative here:

[HTTPS://EPISCOPALCHURCH.ORG/GOOD-NEWS-GARDENS](https://episcopalchurch.org/good-news-gardens)

Parishioner Kudos

In June we asked ministry leaders for special stories of parishioners sharing their gifts to make Saint John's Church, or the broader community, a little brighter place. Mother Susanne shared samples of beautiful cards that Betsy Hocker has personally worded and penned to both the men's and women's prisoners we serve.

So we asked Betsy to tell us a little bit about what inspired her to "lean in" to this ministry and how long she had been practicing the art of calligraphy. She said that it all started as a post-retirement project and personal goal-setting. "I spent the last thirty years working on behalf of women and children, victims of physical abuse and sexual violence," Betsy explained. "I retired at the end of April and I decided to commit myself to creating things of beauty because I had experienced so much ugly in my career."

COVID-19 impacted Betsy's ability to directly serve in the community, so when Susanne suggested that she participate in the prison postcard program she leaped at the chance. "My enthusiasm for the project was a little self-serving, since doing a good deed was the result of practicing something I enjoyed and wished to improve. I had grandiose visions of creating artistic works to be treasured."



But, Betsy wasn't happy with her first free-hand illustrations, so she pivoted to focusing on the precision of the calligraphy pen as well as

finding just the right scripture to inspire women and men she had never met. "I would say a prayer before writing each name," she said. "I remembered Psalm 139 and thought how God knew each person before they were born and had knit them together in their mother's womb. No matter their crime or offense against society, they were children of God and fiercely and wonderfully made. Focusing on men or women in prison was a real change for me. I used to advocate on behalf of victims, not offenders. Many of the postcards included a reference to Psalm 37 or a passage from Jeremiah. I wanted to remind the recipient to not fret and trust in the Lord. I wanted them to have hope."

Betsy says she cherishes the time spent on this project. "I know I will continue this work because of the passage from Matthew: 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'"

Getting to Know Us!

This month our staff spotlight is on a person many of you know well in our parish (for her terrific smile and yummy food), Amanda Davies! What you may not know is that her role in the church office has changed. As an Associate for Communications, Amanda's focus has shifted to helping us transition to delivering online worship services (on the audio visual team) and getting us ready to welcome people in the pews when we reopen.



We had a chance last week to chat with Amanda and get to know some fun facts about her!

Q: What are some activities you enjoy in your free time?

A: I love to travel. But I also am a bird watcher and an avid gardener (though still learning!).

Q: Where were you born and what university did you attend?

A: I was born in New Orleans and received my undergraduate degree at the University of Oklahoma.

Q: Tell us a little about your family!

A: I have been married to my husband, Chuck, for twenty-seven years and we have two wonderful children: Olivia and Adam, both aged eighteen. I have a lovely, sweet cat named Mr. Biscuit and an evil cat named Pablo aka Pablo El Diablo.

Q: What are you currently reading?

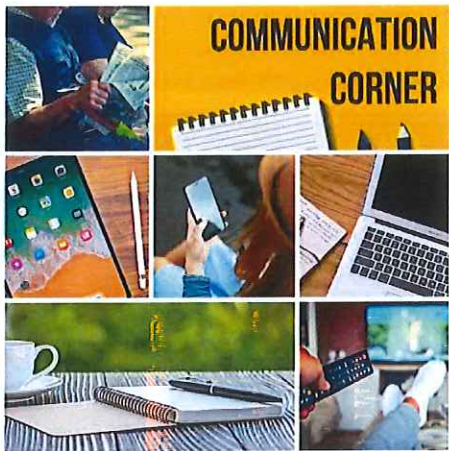
A: I'm currently reading two books, "The Book of Forgiveness" by Bishop Desmond Tutu and his daughter, as well as "The Mount of Olives" by Michael Ivanov.

Q: Would you share something with us that your fellow Saint John's Church parishioners might not know about you?

A: When I was 20, I was a limousine driver and drove celebrities like John Lee Hooker, Neil Diamond and Wayne Newton!

Q: During these strange days of social distancing and uncertainty, do you have a particular Bible passage that really helps you stay positive?

A: I have a couple. The first is John 16:33, "I have told you these things, so you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." And, the other is Deuteronomy 31:8, "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."



Hi friends! This month the communications team would like to share some best practices and ask for your help.

Facebook x3

Did you know that our church has several active Facebook pages? Two are general, moderated by the communications team, and a third is focused on the music ministry, administered by Joseph.

We host an "official" page (see left side of the photo with the red doors in the picture). Think of this as our public page or storefront. We focus here on communicating events for the parish and public, sharing stories about the church, and building brand awareness of our ministry. Best practices by church members when it comes to this page are to SHARE the page or posts with your friends and perhaps hit "like" or "heart" the posts you especially enjoy. Did you know: if you share at the beginning of our live Sunday Holy Eucharist, this can help lead to other people around the country or world finding our church? It's true (due to Facebook's algorithms).

We also have a "group" page (see right side of the photo with the communion plate and hand in the picture). Think of this page as more of our church Common Room.

This is a good spot to share positive news, cool faith or Episcopal resources, and photos of your family participating in a church event (even while social distancing). Best practices for a group page, and our social media policy, is to speak inclusively, be courteous, avoid politics, and be in community with one another. The group page has a few rules, which can be found by clicking on the "About" link on the left-hand side of the page. This page is not the same as your living room and not really the right place for conversations you might have on your own personal Facebook page. We can have differing opinions and

that's what makes our church and denomination so awesome. Remember that other people thinking about attending our church may visit this page and form an opinion about us before ever stepping in our doors.



Tech Troubles?

If you are a parishioner with a computer and internet connection, but are still having trouble accessing the church's live worship services, please email Amanda Davies in our office (adavies@sjtulsa.org). We want to reach out and see if a parishioner or staff member can walk you through the steps over the phone. Or, if you are limited by your equipment or internet/Wi-Fi speed, we will point you to some resources or services that may be able to help.

Do you Do Geek?

Related to the paragraph above, we would like to know if you are a parishioner with a good amount of tech knowledge who is willing to be of help to Saint John's Church members. There are a couple of ways you might be of service. The first, if you speak "geek" really well and are patient with others who do not, we are looking for you! We would like to find a few people in the parish willing and able to talk with current church members (or future ones!) who are experiencing technical difficulties tuning into our live or recorded worship, education and music offerings. If you think God is calling you to help in this way, please email Amanda (adavies@sjtulsa.org).

The second way tech-minded parishioners (ages 15 and up), can serve our church is through becoming a member of our Audio Visual/Tech Team. As we prepare the church for the upcoming permanent installation of video and audio tools, we are looking for future team members to join our event tech crew. If this interests you, Josh Corsaro wants to hear from you. Email Josh soon to discuss your questions, availability or interest level (jcorsaro@sjtulsa.org).

Saint John's Players

As the days of summer get longer, so does the wait to gather in groups with family and friends. What better way to celebrate life than with fireworks shows, barbecues, sporting events, and live performances. I never imagined a world where these privileges didn't exist, until now.

On a personal level, I miss performing in music theatre. Words do not convey the feeling one gets in front of a live audience. Thoughts race through my head like bottle rockets. Did I get my lines right? My costume...is it clean!? On no, I'm losing my voice! Just one more try then it will be perfect (eighteen tries later)...

With all this being expressed, I'm an amateur actor. I don't receive any payment or award for the hundreds of hours spent putting myself through this. That is not the point.

The word amateur, derived from French, actually comes from the Latin term "one who loves." I love many things, but it takes passion and commitment to be a true amateur. The recent quarantine has me reflecting on mastering other things that bring me joy. So far, I'm an amateur gardener, chef, dog whisperer and bird watcher. Time will tell if I ever truly master anything. After all, time is our most precious commodity. God gives us the strength to never give up. My strength comes from mercy, for myself and others, because God has been merciful to me.

In January, Saint John's Players (SJP) had a sold out attendance at this year's celebration of The Epiphany of Jesus. It was a joyous celebration indeed! The House of Bedford and his royal court held a feast and entertained guests with songs and stories of medieval grandeur. This took a village of amateurs; actors, directors, musicians, seamstresses, set production, cooks and servers. Can we pull this type of production off

again? When the time is right we will, with the help of others who love, including God's mercy.

Many years ago, an old soul told me that if something happens once, it can never happen again; but if something happens twice, then it will surely happen a third time. For now the SJP aren't over, just going through intermission. Stay tuned for the second act when we can all be together again. We look forward to being there with you. Praise be to GOD.

- Nick Bradford

Scout Troop 153



The Dog Days of Summer are here, and although they look a little different than in past years, the one enduring activity for our

scouts is Summer Camp. The doctors who are members in our Troop 153 will determine the most appropriate safety measures to put in place for this event, taking place Wednesday, July 22 through Sunday, July 26 at Camp McClintock, outside of Bartlesville. Scouts will work on advancement, merit badges, fun, outdoors, fishing, rifle shooting, campfires, s'mores and ice cream!

Several of our scouts are planning on attending a popular trip to the Northern Tier High Adventure area at the end of July. Northern Tier is a collection of high adventure bases run by the scouting organization in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness of Minnesota, Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park and Canadian Crown Lands, Manitoba's Atikaki Provincial Wilderness Park, Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and points beyond. Northern Tier is the oldest of the four National High Adventure bases operated by the scouts. In the summer, participants undertake wilderness canoe excursions. There are no lodgings along these trips, and aircraft and motorboats are heavily

restricted. Typical treks may cover 50 to 150 miles and take six to ten days.

Our Troop 153 hopes that everyone is being diligent with the hand sanitizers and face masks. Stay safe!



July Music at Midday

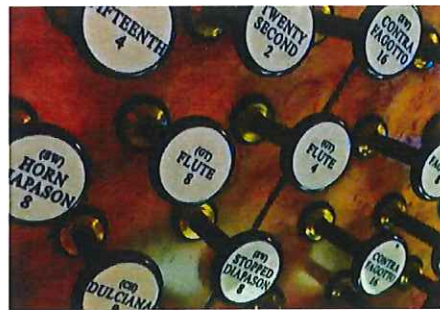
Streamed live at noon on the Saint John's Church Facebook page.

July 1 - Joseph Arndt, organ

July 4 - Patriotic Music at Midday,
Joseph Arndt and
Adam Pajan, organ

Patriotic recital music includes:
Concert Variations on the Star Spangled Banner - Dudley Buck
Excerpts from "Water Music" - G. F. Handel
Cantilena in G - Arthur Foote
Reverie - William Grant Still

July 8 - Adam Pajan, organ



Milestones

July Birthdays

- 1 Joanne Dove, Leanne Hudson, Tom McCartney, Steve Spavital
- 2 Kelsey Gulick Johnston
- 3 Lori Frazee, Russ Lawson, Liz Thibodeaux
- 5 Connor Phipps, Barrett Prather
- 6 Joci Lake, Cheryl Melton, Margaret Parker, Ray West
- 7 Wes Kaefer, Rowan Waller
- 8 Beverly Edwards, Karen Garren, Helen Jo Hardwick, Debbie Hensley, Karen Jones
- 9 Bonnie Arnold, David Graves, Emma Haines, Graham Haines
- 10 Mary Hammons, Tina Spavital
- 11 Larry Lipe, Millie Millspaugh
- 12 Timothy Clark, Susan Veltman
- 13 Madelyn Dalton
- 14 Gary Szabo, Hannah Wyrick
- 15 Kent Campbell, Doug Crews, Eric Estes
- 16 Julia Gold, Jon Hockenson, Will Jezek, Adriane Redinger, Pete Wallace
- 17 Katey Cottrell, Donald Sackett
- 18 Alicia Baum, Clinton Gillingham, Jim Hanlon, Tyler Moore
- 19 Debbie Luthey
- 20 Anne Burlingame, Priscilla Tate
- 21 Cynthia Marlow, Janice Steil
- 22 Kevin Fields
- 23 Peggy Landrum, James Lee
- 24 Bob DeLay, Susan Johnson
- 25 Marsha Gulick, Tom Mach
- 26 Cynthia Whitaker
- 28 Patricia Engler
- 29 Greg Griffin, Lawrence Johnson, Nancy Phillips
- 30 Todd Hensley, Bill Shellshear, Terri Tacker
- 31 George Jones, Amanda Norwood

Transitions

Births

June 17
Henry Ryan Hesterlee

Passings

June 2 Ben Beleele
June 3 Kathy Magrini
June 11 Adele Garren

Address Changes

Dick and Donita Hedlund
2555 Duportail St. #D125
Richland, WA 99352

Stewardship: Community and Commitment

What a year it's been so far. None of us could have predicted the turbulence that 2020 would bring to the world. In times like these, I am more deeply grateful for my Saint John's Church home, the generous hearts of our parishioners, and the hard work of our clergy and staff. Even in the midst of these historic difficulties, Saint John's income for the year to date remains strong.

As you know, by far most of that income comes from your pledges. With this faithful stewardship, our ministries have had the resources this spring to adapt and grow digitally and to continue building and nurturing community so that we can each continue our journey—together in spirit—to become whole in Christ.

Your continued commitment to stewardship of our parish ministries is enabling our church to bring more people closer to God each week. Imagine the opportunity this momentum brings! On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, thank you for keeping your pledge commitment a priority.

- Susan Walker

Recital Soothes Restless Babe

Earlier this spring, new church member Lauren Houston shared a sweet anecdote with Joseph Arndt, our music director. Only a few weeks old on the day of this story, baby Otis was cranky and restless at midday, unable to relax and nap. Meanwhile, his mom had her iPhone nearby. So she tuned into a live afternoon performance by Adam Pajan, our church's Artist in Residence, on our Schoenstein & Co. organ (nicknamed "Susie").

"Otis was super fussy and fighting sleep and I started playing the recital and he calmed down so much!" explained Lauren. "He loves the organ music and listens on Sunday mornings when we watch. But this was precious because he was just exhausted and being a grump." Lauren shared that she put her iPhone next to him and the music took him down from a ten to a one on the cranky scale.

"When I was pregnant, Otis always started moving when the organ was played on Sunday," Lauren added. "I can't wait to get him in the sanctuary so he can hear it in person one day soon!"

When sharing the story about little Otis and his mom's message, Joseph said "THIS is why we are doing what we are doing!" Thank you, Joseph and Adam, for continuing to bring beautiful music and education to our parish family (and beyond) during our time of social distancing.



This Month at Saint John's Church

July 2020 Newsletter

Saint John's Episcopal Church

4200 S. Atlanta Pl.

Tulsa, OK 74105-4331

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New Wednesday Course: *Living a Baptized Life*



Have you ever wondered how baptism affects our everyday lives, helps us to discern wise ways of being, and leads us to become better followers of Christ? Do you ponder how baptism informs how we attend to and respond to the cultural issues around us? If so, you are not alone! We will discuss these questions in the context of a detailed look at Holy Baptism in *The Book of Common Prayer* starting this month.

In a new Wednesday evening education series hosted online, Sam+ and Susanne+ will lead us through weekly topics beginning at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome and you don't have to attend every class. To register, please contact Carteena Robohm (crobohm@sjtulsa.org) with your email address. An invitation with your access code will be emailed prior to your first class.

In July we look at Holy Baptism

July 1	There is one Body and one Spirit (BCP 299-300)
July 8	Do you desire to be baptized? (BCP 301-304)
July 15	Let us now pray for these persons (BCP 305-306)
July 22	The celebrant blesses the water (BCP 306-307)
July 29	I baptize you... (BCP 307-308)

In August we explore the Baptismal Covenant

August 5	A deeper dive into resisting evil
August 12	A deeper dive into being a Christian community
August 19	A deeper dive into telling the Good News and serving others
August 26	A deeper dive into striving for justice