

This Month at Saint John’s Church
August 2020 Newsletter
Saint John’s Episcopal Church
4200 S. Atlanta Pl.
Tulsa, OK 74105-4331

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 54
TULSA, OK

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

RECTOR’S
FORUM



Save the date to join Fr. Sam
for 1 of 3 opportunities to
chat about the church:

Sun. Aug. 23 @ 11 a.m.
Wed. Aug. 26 @ noon
Mon. Aug. 31 @ 6:30 p.m.

WATCH FUTURE E-NEWS EDITIONS
FOR ZOOM ACCESS CODES

Father Sam will host three forums in late August to give members of the parish an opportunity to hear church updates directly from him, as well as to ask some questions that may be on your minds. You must have the ability to join online, via Zoom. Watch the e-news for details later this month about how to register to attend one of the chat forums. Pick the one that best fits your schedule. See dates and times in the orange graphic (at left). The August 23 forum will be in place of the regular coffee hour.

If you don’t “do” digital and you want to email or call in a question for Fr. Sam, we welcome that ahead of any of the chats. You can email a question to Mary Waller at mwaller@sjtulsa.org. Or, you can alternatively call the church office and ask to leave a message for Mary. This will go directly to her so she can create a list.

We really regret we cannot do this in person at this time. However, look for a follow-up article in the October newsletter with highlights of some of the most frequently asked questions and their answers. As always, watch the weekly e-news for ongoing updates about the church, especially during our time apart.



August 2020

News about Our Episcopal Church and Community

In this Issue

A Life of Legacy 1, 2
Fr. Sam’s Message 2
Reopening Update 3
Treasurer’s Report 3
Senior Warden’s Message 4
Saint Simeon’s Insert side A
Parishioner Stories Insert side B
 & Communications Corner
Getting to Know Us 5
Get Involved 5
Classes and More 6
Milestones and More 7
Upcoming Forums 8



Saint John’s Episcopal Church
www.sjtulsa.org (918)-742-7381

The Evangelist

A Life of Legacy

What is the purpose of the church, specifically our congregation at Saint John’s Episcopal Church? If you ask me, I would answer in three parts: we exist to worship Almighty God; we exist to give opportunities for spiritual growth; and we exist to grow in relationships with each other. I never asked her this question, but I do believe that our departed, beloved parishioner Katherine Magrini would have agreed with me. After all, she gave of herself so that we could further the work of the church in these three ways.

I met Kathy in June 2015 during my first week on the job here. I called her to introduce myself, and within a few days she came to my office and we had a visit that went on for hours. It never felt like hours because there was so much laughter! In that conversation, Kathy made it very clear to me that she wanted to support the music program. That meeting was the beginning of a special relationship that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Kathy began sponsoring a performance of Handel’s Messiah that grew each year. In December 2019 the choir offered two performances of the complete work, cover-to-cover, with period instrumentalists coming from Dallas and New York City. The Saturday performance was broadcast on our NPR station and available online internationally. Each year we have brought back my friend Timothy Brown, retired music director at Clare College in Cambridge, England, as guest conductor. Messiah has become a hugely popular offering with hundreds of people attending.

Why Handel’s Messiah, and why would we put so much emphasis on a concert weekend? Kathy and I

once had a conversation in which we agreed that experiencing Handel’s work was the most powerful way to hear the Christian message. The music moved her so much and I could never describe the deep, emotional impact it had on her. I will never forget the way her face would light up when she heard her favorite aria, “I know my Redeemer liveth.” I always looked at Kathy when Meray would start singing (not for more than a second of course – otherwise Tim would get cross at me for not watching him).

It is no mystery that Kathy experienced periods of deep sadness in her life. Despite this, her spirit and her faith kept her resilient.



On a personal level, I have always been gratified in knowing firsthand that her deep involvement with music in our church gave her tremendous satisfaction.

In the last two years of her life, Kathy had several prolonged periods of being in the hospital or a rehabilitation facility. I visited her numerous times during those periods. In spring 2020, it was extremely difficult for me that I could not go visit her in the hospital because of COVID-19 regulations. I never got to say a proper earthly “good bye” to her. Though there was nothing I could do, I still feel a sense of regret. I take comfort in trying to remember her smile and all the good she did for us

.Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

I have enjoyed five tremendous years of ministry and personal growth here at Saint John’s Episcopal Church. The relationships I have with parishioners are so special, and losing Kathy this year was tough. This was on top of losing Ben Latham and Maureen Singleton a year earlier. When I think of these three people, I try to turn my sadness into a sense of purpose.

How can I and how can all of us carry forward the mission of the church that they steadfastly supported? Surely, that is what they would want us to do.

— Joseph Arndt



A Message from Father Sam

My Brothers and Sisters, I am so pleased with the professionalism Mary Waller and her communications team, specifically Diana Carter, are bringing to us in The Evangelist each month. It is packed with information we need and want as a parish. This month, I want to acknowledge their hard work – well done! And, because the newsletter is such a full publication this month, I will simply share two short prayers that I use daily. The first is prayed on behalf of our parish and the other is prayed in gratitude for all we have been given.

A Prayer for Families...let us pray:

Lead in truth, O Christ, the fathers and mothers of families. May they be urged on and strengthened by the sacramental grace of marriage and aware of being on earth the visible sign of your unfailing love for the Church. Let them be serene and firm in shouldering the responsibilities of married life and of the Christian upbringing of their children.

Lead young people in truth, O Christ. Let them not be drawn in by the idols of exaggerated consumerism, prosperity at the expense of others, moral permissiveness, and protest expressed through violence. Instead may they live with joy your message, which is the message of the Beatitudes, the message of love for God and one’s neighbor, the message of moral commitment for the real transformation of society.

Lead all the faithful in truth, O Christ. May Christian faith animate their whole life and make them become, before the world, courageous witnesses of your mission of salvation. May they be responsible and dynamic members of the Church, happy sons and daughters of God, and brothers and sisters with you and with all people. Amen.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving...let us pray:

O Lord there are some who look at the glass and see it as half empty. Some see the same glass as half full. O Christ we are just thankful for the glass. Amen.

Unknown authors wrote both of these. I hope you find them as meaningful as I do. Be safe, stay well, wear a mask and know you are in my prayers.

Prayerfully in Christ, Fr. Sam+

Servant Leader “Kudo”

This month the whole church staff wants to give a “shout out” to B.J. Pohl. You no doubt have seen his smiling face at church activities prior to our time apart. But you may not know how much this parishioner, family man, busy computer technology consultant and vestry member does behind the scenes to help us communicate. He was instrumental in the creation of our current website and, thanks to his coding skills, helps us to adapt it in unique ways. He patiently instructs those of us with less tech experience and even makes short videos so we will remember what he taught us. Simply put, he is a huge help. Unsung hero no more, please give B.J. a big thank you the next time you chat with him!

Milestones

August Birthdays

- 1 Jacob Fields, Karen McCartney, Mary Spangler
- 2 Bill Dunbar, Jace Pavlik
- 3 Tyler Breaux, Teresa Burkett, Ryan Redinger, Tim Wilson
- 4 Donna Allison, Mary Deisenroth, Donald Wyrick
- 5 Gus Canaday
- 6 Allyson Bedford, Paula Bryant, Chuck Davies, Dona Morris, Etta Walker
- 7 Kathy O'Kelley
- 8 James Blanton, Phyllis Dotson, Janice Ingle
- 9 Leigh Chevaillier, Cathleen Griffin
- 10 Dan Prather, Christopher Short
- 11 JoAnn Swan
- 12 Keith Clark, DeDee Cottrell, Babs Harrill, Tony Jezek
- 13 Gerene Adwon, Walter Allison, Carlos Tuttle
- 14 Mariel Cline, Dave Collins
- 15 Julie Allen, Corbin Boston, Parker Souter, Lori Van Allen
- 16 Foster Gillingham, Deane Oven
- 17 Anson Pohl
- 18 Justin Gassaway, Kay Owens
- 20 Grace Canaday, Grant David Canaday, Candace Merifield
- 21 Joe Gold, Kimberly Souter
- 22 Rick Ballard, Ashton Pohl
- 23 John Byers
- 25 Diana Carter, Carolyn Hart
- 26 Katy Kraus, Linda Wilson
- 27 Barbara Van Hanken
- 28 Peggy Schroedter
- 30 Anne Brown, Craig Cottrell, Glen Gravender
- 31 Jeanne Froeb, George Marchetti, Jesse Pavlik

Address Changes

Lane Duel
4715 S. Madison Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74105

Caught in the Act

Recently, Mother Susanne caught parishioner Dwayne Edwards in the act of sowing good deeds. Or rather, in the act of removing bad weeds! Susanne spotted him in the Garden of the Resurrection one weekday during her lunch on the west patio. Dwayne said that since he was all caught up with his home garden, he was happy to help the church. He didn’t do this for recognition, but we still want to give him a “thank you” shout out!

If you have time and energy to spare and want to help others, please reach out to Susanne via her email. If there is a ministry (or grounds project) we can plug you into, we will point you to a need that may just fit your passion perfectly. Always check with the church office prior to any church-related activity, as those are highly limited right now in keeping with diocesan policy.



Bishop Reed, Save the Dates!

The Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed, Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Oklahoma, will deliver a recorded guest sermon to our Saint John’s Church community on **August 23 during our 10 a.m. service**. We are very excited to welcome him as he “takes” the pulpit through streaming technology at our Sunday Holy Eucharist.

On Saturday, August 8, at 11 a.m., St. Paul’s Cathedral in

Oklahoma City will host a service for the Welcoming and Seating of the new Bishop. This ceremony signals the passing of authority from the current Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Ed, to the Bishop Coadjutor, Bishop Poulson. Elements of the liturgy include the seating of the new Bishop in the “cathedra” (the Bishop’s chair in the cathedral), and the passing of the diocesan crosier (the Bishop’s staff). Bishop Ed’s ecclesiastical authority will continue until the end of the year.

The service will be live-streamed on the Diocesan YouTube Page.



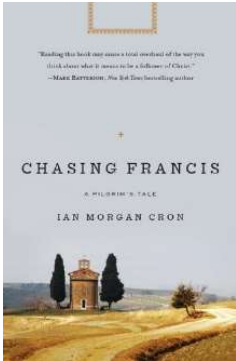
Thank you, Brotherhood

The winners of last month’s American flag drawing were Tulsans Janice and Chuck Steil. They have since raised the flag at their home and shared this note: “We are thrilled to be the recipients of this gift!” said Janice. “Chuck is a Viet Nam veteran and I have always been a true blue patriot of our beautiful country. Thank you again Brothers for this gorgeous flag! We will proudly fly it each day! Yours in Christ.”



New Book Discussions

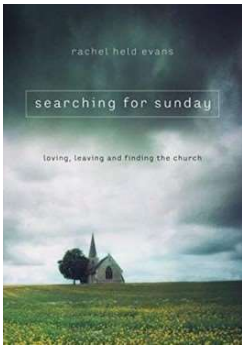
Are you looking for a good read this summer? We invite you to discover the following novels recommended by Father Sam and Joseph. Both are available to order, or to download via Kindle. If you are interested in participating in an online book discussion, and able to join in through Zoom, Father Sam and Joseph will each lead a discussion series starting this month.



Sam will guide us through *Chasing Francis* every Thursday at noon, starting on August 6. To register for either group, email info@sjtulsa.org. What happens when the pastor of a mega church loses his faith? In this novel, Chase Falson has lost his faith in God, the Bible and evangelical Christianity. Join Chase on his life-changing journey to Italy where, with a

curious group of Franciscan friars, he struggles to resolve his crisis.

Joseph will help us explore *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans via Zoom beginning the week of August 17. He will send a doodle poll soon to select the best time.



Rachel Held Evans (1981-2019) was an Evangelical blogger who questioned her faith and ultimately started attending the Episcopal Church. Her books, particularly *Searching for Sunday*, tell her journey of faith in which she questions fundamentalism and participates in church plants. Her writing speaks clearly to modern audiences of all ages and she

raises issues that resonate with all current generations.

Backpack Blessing

Summer is almost over so you know what that means - school is about to start! For some of us, this means rushing to the nearest stores to buy backpacks, pencils, crayons, markers, and all the supplies necessary to be a successful student and teacher. This year, we don't know when every student will begin classes in their school buildings but we want to continue the tradition of blessing backpacks. Since we must maintain social distancing, we are going to do this via our Zoom Coffee Hour. Even if you are not a teacher or student, join us so we can bless them in going into uncharted territory.

Living a Baptized Life Course Continues



Hosted online, Father Sam and Mother Susanne lead participants through weekly topics beginning at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday. In the August syllabus, we will explore the Baptismal Covenant:

- Aug. 5 Dive deeper into resisting evil.
- Aug. 12 What does being a Christian community mean?
- Aug. 19 Telling the Good News and serving others.
- Aug. 26 Dive deeper into striving for justice.

We have noticed that people are viewing the classes online at their convenience and we love that! So, we're going to try something new: the class will be recorded (without Zoom attendance) and made available for viewing on Facebook. In addition, Sam+ and Susanne+ will present the August classes as a conversation, diving more deeply into the implications of living a baptized life.

Viewers will be provided the content and some questions to consider. Then, periodically, we will invite you to a Zoom meeting to consider comments or questions you would like to share.

When? August 30, 11 a.m. Watch the future e-news updates and bulletin on Sunday, August 30 for the Zoom access link and code to use.



As climbing cases of COVID-19 set daily records across the country, church gatherings continue to present a heightened risk profile. Both the Tulsa and Oklahoma City health departments recently cited weddings, funerals and other faith-based activities as three of the "serious seven" locations where individuals "are often more exposed to COVID-19." On July 8, the New York Times reported that hundreds of cases of COVID-19 have been linked to religious facilities and events, with many erupting over the last month. People breathing, speaking and singing together in one place for a prolonged length of time, coupled with finite capacity for spacing and indoor air circulation, combine to increase the risk of transmission at any mass indoor gathering, even under careful circumstances. Church events are no exception.

I want to make sure we are doing everything we can to ensure that Saint John's Church does not become one of these statistics. As a threshold, we will not reopen until Tulsa has achieved a downward trajectory in new cases for fourteen consecutive days. We will follow diocesan and CDC guidance, of course, but there is certainly more to study as we formulate our plan, which will no doubt be subject to change as the local situation warrants. I am advised by a committee consisting of: physicians Richard Medlock and Jim Dean; our Chancellor, Teresa Burkett, a healthcare lawyer who is also a registered nurse; our stewardship chair, Susan Walker, and Senior Warden Jim Hicks, both attorneys; and our Junior Warden and Building and Grounds chair, Doug Crews. This committee meets regularly to evaluate and discuss the conditions they will recommend to me as part of our reopening.

I found a recent article, "17 FAQs for Houses of Worship Considering Reopening During the Coronavirus Crisis," to provide considerable food for thought. Published on June 18 by the bipartisan Center for American Progress, in consultation with several university epidemiologists, the article lists three additional recommended benchmarks before resuming large indoor church gatherings: 1) ten or fewer new cases per 100,000 people over a period of fourteen days; 2) two percent or less of people tested are confirmed to be infected; and 3) sufficient contact tracers and instantaneous contact tracing technology to enable tracing within forty-eight hours of at least 70 percent of the contacts of a person testing positive. The article goes on to

outline other subjects for consideration by churches desiring to go above and beyond basic precautions until it is safe to lift restrictions, including a maximum capacity of fifty people, prohibitions on physical contact and shared objects, and plans for distancing, movement and sanitization within the space.

We will submit our final reopening plan to the Tulsa Health Department for its review and approval prior to implementation. Unfortunately, COVID-19 is invisible and highly contagious, and we cannot eliminate all risk within our walls. I can assure you, however, that it is of paramount importance to me to prioritize the health and safety of our Saint John's family, their families, friends and co-workers, and Tulsa's healthcare providers in making these decisions, while doing all that we can to remain connected in as many creative ways as possible until we can come together again, with joy and thanksgiving. – Fr. Sam+

Bill Chevallier: Treasurer's Report



As I present the treasurer's report through June of 2020, it gives me great pleasure to reflect again on the amazing faithfulness and sacrificial generosity of Saint John's Church. On behalf of the Finance Committee and the Vestry, I wish to thank each and every one of you for the wonderful financial support you have given the church during this very difficult time. Your generosity has enabled the church to pay our bills, salaries and commitments. As you will see, our financial position has improved substantially from the previous year.

When the church decided to close its doors due to the pandemic, we were all very concerned about our ability to connect with members of the parish and how this would affect pledging and contributing by the members. Fortunately, this opened the door to our online worship. Although members of the church were not physically present at the church, they remained connected to Saint John's Church. In addition, we all realized that we were connecting to many non-members. In fact, it was decided that this could become an important outreach for our church. You will see that Saint John's Church has increased its revenue from the same time last year.

Our total income through June of 2020 is approximately \$549,000 - that is 18% more than the previous year after taking out any extraordinary advances. Our pledges are up almost 23% from the previous year. Our expenses are approximately \$551,000 - that includes an investment of \$32,000 in our Media Ministry. The Finance Committee and Vestry have agreed that the funding for our Media Ministry will come from our Outreach Fund and not from Operating Funds.

Although we have had a remarkable commitment from everyone, it is important that we continue this commitment through the remainder of the year.

A Message from Senior Warden Jim Hicks



On a sweltering August afternoon in 1920, the struggle of generations of women seemed to come to a triumphant end. August 18 of this year marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees American women the right to vote. Achieving this milestone required a lengthy and difficult struggle. Beginning in 1878, when the Amendment was first introduced in Congress, women achieved the “right” to vote through decades of agitation, marches, civil disobedience and hunger strikes. But the Constitution left it to states to decide who could vote and it took the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to fully enfranchise women of color and others.

In the Episcopal Church, women were not allowed to be ordained as priests until 1976, when the national governing body, pressured by wide acceptance of 11 women, “irregularly” ordained in Philadelphia on July 29, 1974, changed the rules. However, it was one thing to ordain women and quite another for individual parishes to invite women to fully participate in ministry. Some dioceses were slow to ordain women priests. Today, women make up almost half of those ordained to the priesthood each year and roughly one third of all Episcopal priests now are female.

At Saint John’s Episcopal Church, parishioners have been ministered by Deacons Nancy King, Nancy Brown and Therese Starr. The Reverend Susanne Methven served as Associate Rector for nine years before working at Clover House in Salina, Kansas. In 2017, she was the first female priest to celebrate and preach in the Cathedral in Salina. Reverend Susanne returned to Saint John’s Church last year and is serving as Interim Associate Rector, where she emphasizes her special interests of pastoral care and outreach, as well as adult Christian formation.

Susanne is grateful to a long sequence of people who helped her along during her life, starting with her father, an Anglican priest, and her Lutheran mother, who was the granddaughter of a pastor. Susanne went to elementary school in England and grew up in northern Virginia. In 1978, she graduated from Hollins University in Roanoke. Then she earned a master’s degree in Business Administration from Harvard University, followed by work in Toronto, Pennsylvania, California, Oregon and finally Las Vegas, where she earned a master’s degree in Marriage and Family Counseling. When Past Presiding Bishop, Katherine Jefferts Schori, was the Bishop of Las Vegas, she was the first person Susanne talked with about ordination, so she supported Susanne from the earliest part of her discernment. Jefferts Schori sponsored her for her seminary work, ordained her a deacon in 2006, and even gave the sermon at her graduation from the seminary on May 15, 2007 in Austin.

A graduate of Bryn Mawr College, Nancy English King (1934-2011) served as a deacon at Saint John’s Church over 20 years, touching the lives of countless people along the way. Judy Gann, a deacon for New Hope Oklahoma and former administrative staffer at Saint John’s Church, recalls looking up to Nancy

for guidance as she completed deacon formation at Saint Patrick’s Church. “Nancy was very particular about how things were done at the altar and she had a good sense of humor.”

A native of Michigan, the Reverend Nancy Brown attended Oral Roberts University and served at Saint John’s Church before serving as deacon at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Sapulpa since 2014.

Therese Starr was a parishioner at Saint John’s Church from 1989 - 1998. After moving to Eufaula, her priest suggested she become a deacon and Nancy King was very encouraging. Starr served her internship at Saint John’s Church from September 2010 to June 2011 before being ordained a deacon. She was ordained a priest last year and serves as Priest-in-Charge of Eufaula’s Trinity Episcopal Church. The Gelvin Foundation, of which she is a director, donated the funds for the installation of the antiphonal organ in our balcony.

This year, I am sure that August 18 will be just as sweltering as it was 100 years ago and I encourage everyone to reflect on the incredible contributions made by Susanne Methven, Nancy King, Nancy Brown, Therese Starr and so many other female members of our congregation – such as the Altar Guild and Daughters of the King.

Rector Search Update

The Vestry met with Canon Eric Cooter from the Office of the Bishop via Zoom the week of July 20. With input from the Canon, the Parish Profile has been completed. Our rector search process now enters the stage where interested candidates may contact the Diocese. Look for more updates in the September newsletter.

Getting to Know Us!



In this month’s column about members of the church employee crew, we got to spend a few minutes with Mayra Duarte, Associate for Parish Facilities. Our communications team had fun catching up with her one afternoon in mid-July for a question and answer session. We

know you will enjoy getting to know her just a little better, too.

Q: Mayra, how long have you been helping our church remain in tip-top shape?

A: I have been at Saint John’s Church for twenty-five years.

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: I have been married to Adrian since 1984. We have four daughters and five grandchildren...three girls and two boys.

Q: If we were in normal times, not a pandemic, and you could go anywhere or do anything on your vacation days, what would you enjoy most?

A: Oh, that would be to visit my family in Guatemala. I come from a little town four hours from Guatemala City. I try to get to see my family there about every two years.

Q: I understand that you officially became a United States citizen during your time living in Tulsa. Can you tell us a little about that?

A: Yes, I lived in California before moving here. While at Saint John’s Church, I worked to receive my U.S. citizenship. I am very happy to be able to do that, especially for my daughters. I have very fond memories of Jo Waller and Dona Morris coming to my ceremony! They are like family.

Q: Are you a member of another church in Tulsa?

A: Yes. I go to St. Thomas (More) Catholic Church in east Tulsa.

Q: Do you have any hobbies or special interests that parishioners or staff members might be surprised to find out?

A: Ha. Yes, that may be basketball. I have loved to play since middle school and still occasionally do with my grandkids.

Q: Do you have a favorite event that happens at this church?

A: Oh yes, that would be the Wednesday night potluck dinners. I see many of my friends on those evenings. I miss them so very much while we cannot be together.

Q: You spend many hours in the church and know almost every nook and cranny. Do you have a favorite location at the church?

A: I think that would be in the sanctuary, when everything else is quiet and most people are gone, but Joseph is practicing the organ. Those are special times.

Do You Have a Calling?



Have you been watching our Morning or Evening Prayer services? Have you thought, "Wow, I would love to participate?" We are looking for people willing to come to the church and serve as lay readers. Your commitment is one hour of service on the day you are scheduled. We are willing to train you and support you. Please contact Diane Morrow for details at dmmorvoce@att.net or (918) 748-8960.

Do you have free time and feel a nudge in your heart to reach out to parishioners? Have you considered that this time of social distancing is actually a unique opportunity to connect with a member of the congregation that you don’t know well, or even at all? If so, we invite you to become involved in the ongoing Let’s Connect by Phone ministry begun by our clergy, staff and vestry. We need friendly voices and caring listeners to sustain this important program. Volunteers are assigned a list of parish members and commit to making short “checking in” phone calls, texts and/or email connections to people on a monthly basis (until we can all come together again). If this interests you, email or call our SJC coordinator of volunteers, Kathleen Moss, at kathleen.moss@me.com or (918) 633-8881.