

**This Month at Saint John's Church**  
September 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

# The Evangelist

## Equipping the Saints

Is it September 13th yet? As a small child filled with the spirit of anticipation for what is to come when they arrive at a place of great promise and potential...I find myself asking "is it September 13th yet?!"

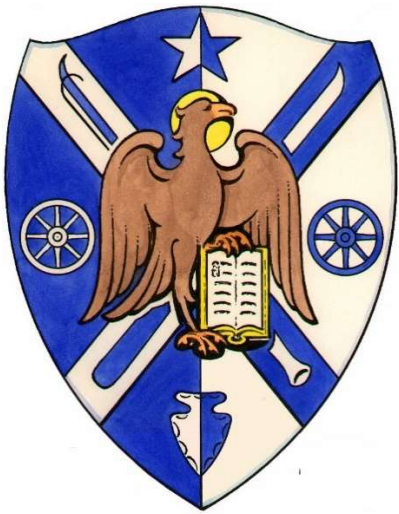
In this same spirit of excitement and anticipation that we "officially" begin, in earnest, *our* program year, our ministry here at Saint John's Church (note that I used the word *our* instead of my ministry). **All** are called to serve our Lord and each other. This year is no exception. While we can anticipate that most of our offerings initially will be digital and online, we still have the opportunity to participate, learn and grow. It is our "new norm," and though we will one day offer in-person education, meetings and programming, for now we will stay safe.

Part of my responsibility as Priest-in-Charge at Saint John's Church is to continually remind each one of us what Paul taught: "*When He ascended on high, He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men*" (Ephesians 4:8). You see, Saint Paul was telling us that you and I are to be about "*equipping the saints*," equipping ourselves in reality, for the work of ministry and for the building of the body of Christ and for the Kingdom of God. Each of us has a role to play, even if we presently cannot be together in person. We can share on social media, with our friends and family near and far, our programming at Saint John's Church. We can share liturgy days and times and we can show up to support each other as we work for God's kingdom.

I am convinced that the work Paul speaks of can only be accomplished together...in relationship with others...in community, digital or otherwise. No one person, ordained or lay, is more important than another is. No one person, ordained or lay, bears more responsibility for the work than another. Therefore, it is with great joy that we continue the ongoing work of Saint John's Church. Our ministry is fruitful and will continue to be in the days, weeks and months ahead. **Together...we begin!**

*Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen!* (The Book of Occasional Services)

Ever yours in Christ, *Fr. Sam+*



September 2020

### News about Our Episcopal Church and Community

#### In this Issue

Fr. Sam's Message.....	1
Senior Warden's Report .....	2
Treasurer's Report.....	3
Reopening Update.....	3
Junior Warden's Report.....	4
Vestry Notes .....	4
Exploring the Bible.....	5
Book Study .....	5
Communications Corner .....	6
Getting to Know Us.....	7
Youth and Family .....	8
Scouts .....	8
Daughters of the King .....	9
Lay Ministers.....	9
Phone Ministry .....	9
Milestones.....	10
Flower Fellowship.....	10
Our Stories: Sy Family.....	11
Music at Midday.....	11
Coming Soon .....	12

### Coming Soon...Stewardship 2021

Each September brings us the respite of cooler mornings and evenings, college football (though admittedly that may look a bit different this fall), the continuation of Ordinary Time in our liturgical calendar, and a focus for church leadership upon what Saint John's Church resource needs will look like in the year ahead. In the middle of this month, our church will launch the 2021 parishioner pledge campaign. We are excited to share with you many of the stories of how this amazing church community has impacted individual lives, supported families, grown ministry and brought glory to God. Keep an eye on our Facebook page, the twice weekly e-news, and your home mailbox for more. We hope you will join in!

*Remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."* **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**





# From Senior Warden Jim Hicks - Update on the New Rector Search Process



The search process for a new rector in an Episcopal church can at times seem frustrating and confusing to the person in the pew. Why can't we just get a new priest in here in a month or two and get on with it? After all, when someone quits their job at work, we usually find a replacement in two or three weeks. Can it be that much more complicated at church?

Well yes, it can be. People invest a lot of spiritual energy into their lives at church. Having a priest who is able to relate to parishioners on their spiritual journey is important to the health and growth of a parish community. The search

process is designed to assist parishes to find a good match for the needs of their community. At Saint John's Church, the long process of self-reflection and study, culminating with the results of the Holy Cow! Survey, led to the preparation of a Parish Profile – a detailed narrative statement of what our parish represents and treasures. I encourage you to view the profile on our website: [sjtulsa.org](http://sjtulsa.org) (under the Rector Search tab).

This process was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the change in leadership at the Diocese of Oklahoma. The Reverend Canon Eric Cooter, Canon to the Ordinary, began his duties on July 1 but has already met with the Vestry and is now accepting applications for the position of rector in our parish. The Diocese of Oklahoma will make an initial review of candidates, screening for overall appropriateness to the parish and conducting initial diocesan reference checks. Once interested candidates have been vetted, their names are forwarded to the Vestry near the first of September. The search process will then take the following shape, infused with humility and prayer:

The Search Committee's work begins with **assessing the candidates**:

- a. Review all candidate materials.
- b. Send questions to the candidates to assess how they communicate in writing. Questions should be about four in number and related to the values found in the self-study.
- c. Personal reference checks.
- d. Review social media (Facebook, blogs, Twitter, online sermons, etc.).
- e. Conduct Skype or telephone interviews.
- f. Begin initial assessments and narrowing the candidate pool.

The work continues with the **selection of the candidates to receive visits** in their own parishes:

- g. When the Search Committee determines the candidates to receive visits in their own parishes, the Diocesan Transition Minister is notified right away.
- h. The Bishop makes a final "bishop-to-bishop" reference check.
- i. A formal background check is completed (and paid for) by Diocesan House (may take up to two weeks).
- j. Visits to the candidates' parishes for confidential review.

The Search Committee's role concludes with making a final candidate recommendation short list to the Vestry. At this point in the process, the Vestry's work includes the following actions:

The Vestry invites final candidates and spouse/family to visit the parish for an interview with the Vestry. It is suggested that in addition to a formal interview, the Vestry could host an informal meeting with the candidate(s) over dinner, possibly at a parishioner's home. It is suggested that the Vestry make arrangements for the candidate to tour the city and review housing options during this visit. If the candidate is not from this diocese, arrangements must be made for an interview with the Bishop during this visit. **Candidates will not be asked to preach, celebrate, or meet with the general membership as a candidate for the open position during their visit to the parish.**

The work of the Vestry concludes with **the decision**. After the final interviews, the Vestry will meet to prayerfully deliberate and discuss their impressions of the final candidate's visit. The Vestry should then elect the new rector. The wardens will then notify the Bishop of the Vestry's choice of their next Rector or Priest-in-Charge, and request in writing the Bishop's consent of the call.

There are many other factors for us to keep in mind through this entire process. Priests are people and professionals. They come in all shapes, sizes and vintages. Some, for their own reasons, will feel very ready for a change and are energized by what they see as a genuine opportunity to move on to a new pastoral challenge. Candidate spouses and family members also have a say in any decision to seek or accept a call at another church. For clergy, prayerful discernment in seeking God's call in the next season of ministry is essential and they, like the parish, evaluate the fit of the congregation for the spiritual gifts they have to offer, all in service to God and God's church.

And, the approach to some steps in a search process may be handled a bit differently or innovatively, depending upon the situation regarding the social distancing policy of the diocese at that moment in time and/or the status of the COVID-19 situation in our community.

*(continued on page 3)*



# May the Road Rise to Meet You

Last month, we caught up with Gil and Susan Sy for a socially distanced Zoom interview to learn a little bit more about them, their family and the couple's involvement in the life of Saint John's Church. Their journey begins with a plane, a Gideon and a quilter.

Some of you may know Gil because he is very active in the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, attending in person regularly before the group stopped meeting together in March, and via Zoom now. The Brotherhood has been important to Gil because it provides another way to serve the neighborhood and the church community, something very important to him.

Some of his favorite events to participate in have been the Pancake Supper and the Hamburger Cook-Off.

The Sys began attending Saint John's Church in 2015. Around that time, Susan was making a lot of baby blankets and spending time at Hancock Fabrics, where she met Beverly Edwards. Beverly told her about the quilting ministry and Saint John's Church.

"I was baptized in the Episcopal Church," Susan explained. "We decided to visit. We had not been to church in a while. It was really nice." Near this same time, Gil had traveled for work by plane and met a representative of Gideon International. "He asked me some questions and gave me a trave-size reference copy of the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Psalms," said Gil. "If I had a question about something, I would be referred to specific scripture. It made an impact and encouraged Susan and me to find a church." They began attending Saint John's regularly and decided to stay.

Like many others, Gil and Susan choose to sit in the same pew most Sundays and attend the same service time. Before COVID-19, this was a seat near the northwest section of the nave and almost always for the later service. This allowed them to get to know their "pew neighbors," like Helen Jo and Jim Hardwick, and meet new friends across the aisle during the sharing of the Peace.

Gil noted that they currently watch the church's worship services on Facebook, and he chuckled that he "had to join Facebook" to attend church! (PS readers: you can alternatively attend without a Facebook account if you watch the service via the website.) Susan mentioned how much they appreciate the online church option because the couple is being very careful during the pandemic. Church has helped them deal with this challenging time. In person or online, Susan says they really enjoy the sermons here. "We can take them to heart, and hopefully the message makes us each a better person," she said. She also really loves the choir music. Gil added that they both love it when Father Sam ends the service with the Irish blessing. "It encourages us to look forward and to move forward with our lives," he added.

Due to work, the couple has lived in Connecticut and Texas also, but they love Tulsa and consider it home. Today, Gil is a mechanical engineer and works on combustible systems. Their children are grown and both married. The eldest, Brian, is married to Elissa and they have a son, Thomas, and live in Bixby. The Sys' daughter, Emily, is married to James and they live in Boston.

# Music at Midday Returns

Music at Midday returns with Season 6 on Wednesday at 12 noon beginning September 2, streamed on Facebook and our website, [sjtulsa.org](http://sjtulsa.org).

- September 2 - Adam Pajan, organ
- September 9 - Joseph Arndt, organ
- September 16 - Adam Pajan, organ
- September 23 - Music of Buxtehude
  - Stephanie Raby, baroque violin
  - Eric Smith, viola da gamba
  - Joseph Arndt, organ
  - Nicholas Garza, countertenor
- September 30 - Adam Pajan, organ





# Milestones

## September Birthdays

- 1 Alex Abney, Blu Lawson, Marc McCaw
- 2 Elizabeth Crews, Marian Greenwood, LeaAnn Lee, Joshua McCormick
- 3 Noah Baum, Phillip Bedford
- 4 Kathy Hoyt
- 5 Susie Byers
- 6 Stephanie Byrd, Ivan Cox
- 8 Karen Abney, Cooper Smith
- 9 John Burkhardt
- 11 Michael O'Kelly
- 12 John Brock, Claire Cummings, Rachel Etheridge
- 13 Marilyn Bedford, Miriam Young
- 14 Michael Christian
- 15 Brad Brown
- 16 Judy Cairl, Shannon Johnson, Hossein Kalami, Gretchen Mitchell, Chelley Wallack
- 17 Rhonda Breaux, John Gray, Charlie Nutter, Tim Vogel
- 18 Robert Adkison, Tony Beeson, Dean Luthey, Case Rycroft
- 19 Al Davies
- 20 Amanda Davies
- 21 Elliott McCaw
- 22 Barbara Burke, Trudy Vestal
- 23 Richard Dodson
- 24 Iona Hoopert, Bridget Johnson
- 25 Steve Dodson
- 26 Jeff Baum, Angela Swanson
- 27 Charlene Hanlon, Scott Randall, Lisa Schooley
- 28 Betty Bilbrey, Judy Hays
- 29 Carolyn Nierenberg
- 30 Jim Perdue

## Deaths

- 7/17 Venis Treiber
- 7/19 Harry Burt
- 8/21 Don Atkins
- 8/25 Jean Laster



(Flowers by Sadie Cole Gordon)

# Flower Fellowship

In August we caught up by phone with Sadie Cole Gordon. A “little birdie” has told the church office about something kind she was doing in the Tulsa community. For those of you who do not know Sadie well, she started attending Saint John’s Church three years ago and is involved with the flower committee. A lifelong Episcopalian, she is active in the Tulsa Garden Center and the Linneaus Teaching Garden, and had a clinical psychology practice in Joplin, prior to relocating to Grand Lake several years ago. She moved to Tulsa in 2017. As a Master Gardener, she is additionally an accomplished floral designer and, prior to COVID-19, she was about to launch her own small part-time business in that field.



We asked Sadie if we could share this story, and while she admitted that she had ordinarily shied away from sharing personal activities, this year is different. Sadie said what many are feeling right now: “Our connections with our fellow parishioners are very real and when we cannot come together, it is easy to forget how precious those relationships are.”

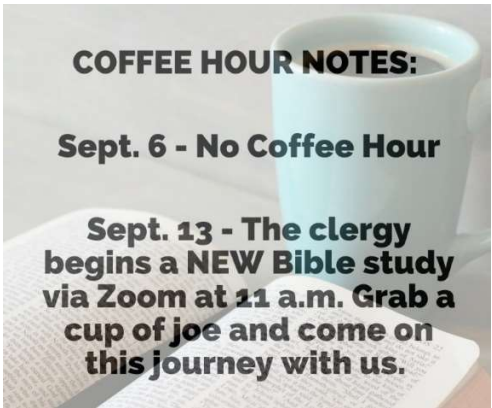
So about a month and a half ago, Sadie joined a friend who attends Asbury United Methodist Church, and they began making flower arrangements to give away to people in need. Both ladies are taking advantage of their home gardens that are chock-full of wonderful blooming plants and meet, while social distancing, to create cheerful arrangements.

“We give the floral creations to neighbors, to shut-ins, and sometimes fellow parishioners,” she

explained. “And, I would be delighted to add more Saint John’s members who may have a special need.”

If you know of a Saint John’s Church member who is socially isolated or has a special need, please send Sadie an email at [sadiegordon@att.net](mailto:sadiegordon@att.net). She is happy to make a socially safe delivery to a front porch. She and her friend depend on free materials from their gardens and a few purchased florals to create the arrangements. She hopes to continue the project until the first northeastern Oklahoma freeze. She uses fresh herbs, cuttings from shrubs, small branches from ornamental trees, vines and grasses to create the arrangements. One of the many things Sadie has appreciated has been the growing friendships with other flower committee team members, including Daphne Wise, Anne Burlingame and Betsy Hocker. After teaching two workshops on floral design for the flower committee team, Sadie said she was very impressed by the outstanding talent and dedication in the group. “Each of the committee members brings their special skills and love of nature to help enhance the worship services with their beautiful arrangements,” she said.

“I consider it an honor to work with them.” Sadie believes people who have an affinity for flowers and garden materials have a common and special bond. “I call it Flower Fellowship”.



(continued from page 2)

Members of our Search Committee are Jeff Baum, Susan Walker, Kay Owens, Lise Dean, Jace Pavlik, Trent Shores, Junior Warden Doug Crews and Senior Warden Jim Hicks. The current Priest-in-Charge, Father Sam Colley-Toothaker, has not and will not be involved in the search process. With the Bishop’s blessing, his Letter of Agreement with the parish provides that he **can be** considered as a candidate as rector.

Please pray for the committee, Vestry, and applicants as we begin this period of discernment.

## Bill Chevallier: Treasurer’s Report

My treasurer’s report through July of 2020 reflects financials that are similar to the previous month.

Our total income through July was approximately \$626,000. Our expenses were approximately \$670,000, which includes an investment of \$35,000 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 the operating funds.

In addition, the Finance Committee met earlier this week and approved a budget for the remainder of this year. The revised budget will be presented to the Vestry later this month. Based on our remaining expenses, we will need to draw funds from our endowment to help supplement the operating revenue. When we presented the original budget to the parish earlier this year, we anticipated a shortfall. Fortunately, this shortfall is less than what was presented then. I will be glad to furnish the budget upon request. You are welcome to send an email to me at [wcc@mychev.com](mailto:wcc@mychev.com) and I will forward you the revised budget.

As I said last month, although we have had a strong commitment from everyone, it is important that we continue this financial commitment through the remainder of the year.



## On the Question of Opening the Church

We are concerned and do not recommend opening the church at this time. Among the many reasons for concern for the health and well-being of our parishioners of all ages, are the following:

Even though the four- and seven-day rolling averages of COVID-19 cases in Tulsa are falling at this time, this can change rapidly. We are dealing with widespread community incidence in Tulsa. The risk of contracting the virus remains very high.

This virus is especially difficult to deal with because of its very high infectivity rate and high mortality in the high-risk groups, even with the improvements learned from recent experience. In addition, the large numbers up to 40 percent of asymptomatic carriers (which is highly unusual) further increases the infective rate. Another major problem is the turnaround time for testing, which frequently has been in the five- to seven-day range in Tulsa. This makes contact tracing more difficult, increasing the risk of asymptomatic carriers infecting many others. As some schools open, there is a concern by health professionals that there will be a significant increase in the number of cases.

Robert Redfield, M.D., Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), said in mid-August that he was concerned that we could have a healthcare catastrophe like we have never seen before in the fall when people are inside more and the previous flu season returns.

Another important benchmark to follow is the percent positivity rate of the test. Some parts of the country have percent positivity rates of 1 percent for COVID-19 testing (one in one-hundred tested are infected). However, the Tulsa Department of Health reports rates in the 15-20 percent range recently. This indicates a high level of infection in our community. Masks are very important. But no masks (still seen often in our city) still allow approximately 30 percent of previous levels of infectivity.

We know in the meantime our church is working hard to provide virtual services for us, including helping resolve challenges for those who have difficulties with technology or other issues. We know all of us are working to do what we can.

Our church’s Advisory Committee is also working hard to develop a plan to meet the safety guidelines of the Diocese of Oklahoma, the CDC, and the Tulsa Health Department for the time when we can make a decision to open.

Respectfully, Jim Dean, M.D. and Richard Medlock, M.D.





## From Junior Warden Doug Crews

As we approach the end of August, work at the church is still progressing, although there have been several delays in equipment and supplies due to the backlog of shipping orders between our vendors and their suppliers. Days have turned into weeks and weeks into months, the comfort in all of this is that almost everyone is on the same ship. However, gradually, with a lot of perseverance, things are beginning to take shape. By the time Saint John's Church re-opens, the new audiovisual streaming system will be up and running and the tower bells will once again be tolling the hour and calling you to worship. While you have been away, we have also taken the time to make many repairs, some small, some large, to the building and equipment. The HVAC system has seen the bulk of this work, and there is still one large system repair that must be done in the very near future.

We have gathered plenty of personal protective equipment for your protection and safety. We are working on the guidelines so you will know what to expect when the church re-opens. However, keep in mind that will only happen when our virus numbers drop to a level deemed appropriate for the safety and health of all. Until then, be vigilant, wash your hands, social distance, and wear your mask properly.

## Vestry News & Notes

In this new column for The Evangelist, we are highlighting members of the Saint John's Church (SJC) Vestry, beginning this fall, with a little bit about the four vestry members who will be completing their terms at the conclusion of this year. This month we are delighted to feature and thank Bob Baker for his servant leadership to our parish in our inaugural "Vestry Q&A." When you see or chat with Bob next, be sure to help us extend our shared gratitude for his role in this important and time-consuming position in our lay leadership!

Q: Bob, how many "tours of duty" have you served as a vestry member here at SJC? A: This is the third time, including serving with our two former rectors.

Q: We understand you recently retired. Tell us about that. A: Until the pandemic, I had a forty-three-year ophthalmology practice at Baker Eye Clinic in Broken Arrow. Then after not seeing my patients since late March, I decided that it was a good time to retire.

Q: Would you tell us a little about your family? A: Sure. Karen Hampton and I have been a couple for more than twenty-five years. Though neither of us have had children, we love our whippets, Sabrina and Barlow.

Q: While packing up a decades-long practice must have been time consuming, did you have any "down" time this summer to read any great books? A: Yes. I have enjoyed *The Soul of America* by Jon Meacham as well as *Hell and Other Destinations* by Madeleine Albright.

Q: We know social distancing has been hard and different for everyone. Is there a particular SJC activity you are missing? A: Although I have missed picking up Joe Morris for our 7:15 a.m. Saturday Brotherhood meetings, I have enjoyed helping to facilitate our weekly Zoom meetings at 8:30 a.m. for the past three months.

Q: Here is a silly one for you, Bob...if you were stranded in a remote location and could pick one fellow vestry man or woman, who would you select and why? A: I would choose Barrett Waller to help because I have enjoyed working with him, and believe that he is resourceful in resolving problems.

Q: Did you have a special place at SJC you miss or find especially peaceful? A: My "go-to" place in the church is the library, to read and reflect. In addition, I will be glad when we are able to gather with friends there again.

Q: If you could use only three words to describe SJC, what would they be? A: I would describe Saint John's Church in these three words: "Our Church Home."

Q: Do you look forward to anything in particular in our church's year ahead or farther down the line? A: I would like to see us increase our involvement with the community outside the church.

Q: Would you share a favorite passage that is of help, comfort, healing or inspiration during these unusual times (or any time)? A: A favorite of mine comes from Numbers 6:24-26 and it goes

*"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."*



## Daughters of the King

Our Saint John's Church chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King (DOK) is excited to announce the induction of two new members, Mary Hammons and Linda Wilson. On August 12, we welcomed both new members during a Wednesday Holy Eucharist service celebrated by Father Sam and witnessed by member Janice Ingle. Both inductees worked on and completed a national study guide over four months for admission.

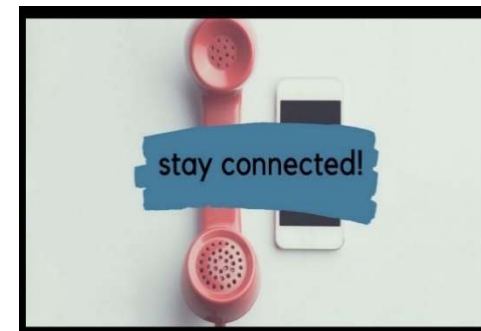
Our church's chapter of the DOK was established in 1959 and currently has four additional active members: Dona Morris, Beverly Edwards, Barbara Lawson and Carolyn Shorten. The new members join this spiritual praying order for women who are communicants of the Episcopal Church or churches in communion with it. The Order has three main purposes: prayer, service and evangelism.

When not limited by social distancing, the DOK typically meets in our church library the first Thursday of the month from 10-11:00 a.m. This fall, the DOK will meet via Zoom on Thursday morning, as well as on Wednesday evenings for prospective members. The Daughters have ongoing projects, though members are not required to participate in them. This year, the Daughters will be assisting with calling and sending cards with individual notes to parishioners.

If interested in learning more about our chapter of the Daughters of the King, please contact Janice Ingle at (918) 704-1443 or janiceingle@att.net.

## Lay Eucharist Ministers

Hello! My name is Lynn Kimmel and I am a member of the Layreaders and Eucharist Ministers. Basically, we are those church members who are willing to read the lessons and/or share the cup during communion. We would love to have you join us. Why? I can only say that to me, sharing the word of God and the blood of Christ means a great deal. In addition, if you feel a little nervous about doing either or both, don't worry. There is training provided and you will not be scheduled until you feel ready. If you are interested, please let either Diane Morrow or me know.



## Calling Ministry to Parishioners Continues

The project to call parishioners regularly and "check in" was initiated last spring by the staff and vestry of the church when we had to close the building due to the pandemic. A new ministry has grown out of that effort and continues this fall with old and new volunteers. The Let's Connect by Phone Ministry is committed to calling Saint John's Church parishioners during this continuing extraordinary time of COVID-19 social distancing. Fourteen dedicated callers are the link to help our parishioners understand that the church is open, even if the building is currently closed.

Callers are in touch with their list of parishioners once a month to see how they are doing, if they have questions, and if they have any requests (prayers, clergy contact, illnesses, family concerns, etc.) And, volunteer Mary Hammons is writing personal notes to a specific list of thirty parishioners selected by Mother Susanne (some are homebound and some we only have their addresses as a way to contact them). Our callers cannot ring congregants up from the church office, so some calls may come up on a home or mobile phone with an unknown caller ID. In the case that the parishioner does not answer the phone, the callers will also try to text the parishioner. They may also try to send an email if they are not able to connect via a phone number.

We also encourage you to check in on your Saint John's friends and neighbors by phone when you can! We want to extend our gratitude to the following servants of God who are helping to keep a communication line open to our dear church family: Bob Baker, Judy Cairl, Diana Carter, Josh Corsaro, Naomi Flagg, Lynn Kimmel, Susan Lyons, Dee Maguire, Marilyn Masterson, Jean Medlock, Gene Melton, Maurine Miller, Kay Owens, Linda Wilson and Mary Hammons. A special thanks goes also to Kathleen Moss, our coordinator of volunteers, for organizing this program along with Mother Susanne!





## Youth & Family Ministry

Hi families! We miss seeing the children, teens and parents of our Saint John's Church family. However, know that you are constantly in our thoughts and prayers! While we are unable to meet in person, we are excited to announce a fun new two-part initiative: **Postcards of Praise** plus **Kids Chat** and **Teen Talk**.

Part 1: If you have young people in your household, be on the lookout in your mailbox each month for a postcard to him or her soon. These mailed missives will include a scripture reading and a cheerful message that a young person can read and keep for themselves, put on the fridge, use as a bookmark, string along a bulletin board, or share with the family around the dinner table. We encourage your family to collect all of them and think about a fun way to share with others. The first one will be mailed in mid-September.

Part 2. As many activities for youth and their parents have "gone virtual," so too has a new way of US coming together as a youth ministry family. Some of you may be following our Family Friday videos, and we encourage you to continue as we have some fun ones coming up. In addition, we are launching an online fellowship for our young friends. This opportunity will make it possible each month for two Saint John's Church young member age groups to re-connect, get caught up, and even invite new friends to join!



**"Kids Chat" will be for children ages 12 years old and under and be hosted at 1 p.m.**

**"Teen Talk" will be hosted at 3 p.m. for youth ages 13-17 years.**

These online meet-ups will be hosted via Zoom on **the last Sunday of each month, starting on September 27**. Joshua Corsaro will facilitate the chats and start each gathering off with a prompt where you can talk about a message from the month's postcard. Watch the church e-news blasts for the correct Zoom link to be connected starting on September 27.

Have questions? Don't hesitate to call, text or send an email to Josh! His email is [jcorsaro@sjtulsa.org](mailto:jcorsaro@sjtulsa.org). Be on the lookout in the church's e-news or your mailbox at home for more details in the weeks to come.



We made it through another summer, one that brought incredible challenges that we have done our best to overcome. Our scouts now have a new form to fill out when attending an in-person event that attests to the following of all coronavirus-related precautions. These forms will be used frequently for upcoming events this month.

We start the month on September 1 with the Court of Honor. All merit badges and rank advancements (with the exception of Eagle) earned during the summer months will be awarded this night. Four scouts will be receiving their Eagle rank on November 1. Merit Badges in the time of COVID-19 are now being earned virtually, which does not diminish their validity in the least. In addition, scout meetings will be held virtually.

Our scouts can try their hand during Fish Camp, held at John Zink Base on September 11-13.

Individual scout patrols will be meeting and finalizing their fall and spring campouts by September 15, so stay tuned for the exciting locations to come.

A favorite activity of our scouts will occur on September 19 when they attend Williamson Shooting Day. Shooting skills will be sharpened by aiming for stationary and moving targets (clay pigeons).

I would like to leave you with a personal note. For twelve years now, I have watched my son advance through Cub Scouts and now Boy Scouts. I have watched with other parents while their sons worked and obtained rank after rank and merit badge after merit badge, climbing that ladder to reach that final rank of Eagle Scout. Along the way, I have watched some young men decide that the journey was not for them, and you can only wish them the best as they try a different route to their dreams. Also, I have watched while other parents helped and fed the scouts who pitched in to help their child's Eagle project succeed. Recently, that was my role. I was a runner for anything that was needed, including food, for my son's Eagle project. Watching scouts work together to help another scout obtain that final rank was both humbling and thrilling, and my son would have had a truly difficult time finishing without their assistance. I know that we, as his parents, will never forget that, and neither will my son. From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU for hosting our troop. You are changing lives forever simply by giving Troop 153 a home.

With gratitude, Trina Moore



## Living Discipleship by Exploring the Bible

A new course, **Living Discipleship: Exploring the Bible**, will be offered on Sundays during the academic year 2020-2021. This is a journey through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. We will look at narratives in the Bible to see the great story of God's love from the beginning of creation, through the life of Jesus Christ, and in our own time guided by the Holy Spirit.

You may use either your own Bible and read the scripture for each Sunday or you can purchase the companion book, *The Path: A Journey Through the Bible*, available from Forward Movement or from Amazon, which includes commentary and questions. *The Path* presents excerpts from the Bible that cover most of the "greatest hits" from the Bible story. It is intended to give you an idea of the overarching narrative, the sweeping story of God's great love for us.

This study will take place on Sundays at 11 a.m. via Zoom. The sessions will be recorded so that others can participate in the study on Wednesdays. The class will be facilitated by Sam+ and Susanne+. A Zoom link will be included in the Sunday morning e-news. Dates, topics and readings will be:

Sept. 13, God Saw that it Was All Good, Genesis 1:1-2:9, 2:15-3:24.

Sept. 20, The Sign of the Covenant, Genesis 4:1-16, 5:1b-2, 6:5-8, 13-22, 7:7-10, 17-22, 8:1-3a, 6-22, 9:1, 9-19, 11:1-9, 27-32.

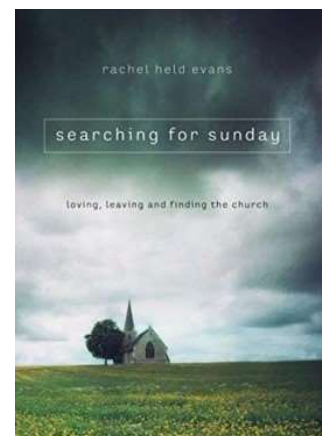
Sept. 27, The Ancestor of a Multitude, Genesis 12:1-5, 13:14a-17, 15:1b, 5b-6, 16:3-4a, 15-16, 17:1-22, 26-27, 18:23-33, 21:1-21, 22:1-19, 24:67b.

## New Book Study - Searching for Sunday

In a new book study led by Joseph Arndt, we will explore the novel *Searching for Sunday* on Wednesday evenings. Sessions will begin September 2 and go through October 7. We will meet Wednesdays from 7:15-8:15 p.m.

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.

Contact Diana Carter to register at [dcarter@sjtulsa.org](mailto:dcarter@sjtulsa.org).







Hello, dear parishioners, from the communication team at the office. This month we have a “laundry list” of a number of items we want to be sure everyone has a chance to be updated on from various departments of the church. Here goes:

1. From the Rector – look for updates to the church’s reopening status in the Friday weekly e-news blasts. There will only be an item included if there is an update to share.
2. From the Admin and Ministry Teams – the church will not be open on the Labor Day holiday, Monday, September 7. This means that any calls or emails, other than emergencies, will not be returned on that day. It also means that the church will not be offering livestreaming Morning or Evening Prayer service that day.
3. From the Senior Warden – look for updates on our church’s Rector Search in the Friday weekly e-news blasts. There will only be an item included if there is an update to share.
4. From the Communication Team – be on the lookout for another “Together While Apart” message to reach your mailboxes around September 9-10. You are always in the thoughts and prayers of the church staff, even when we cannot see you.



5. From the Admin Team – if you receive a message from Tithely that you owe a balance on a pledge, disregard it. Please know that our office never sends “balance due” or “late payment” notices to anyone related to a pledge to support the church. We have communicated with Tithe.ly to discontinue this unwelcome practice. We regret if one of these messages bothered anyone. We did not authorize them, but understand just a few have been sent by the vendor. For this and other reasons, we will be migrating away from using this donation-management facilitator organization.

6. From the Rector – Rally Day, usually held in September, will be postponed until the late winter or early spring of 2021. We look forward to when we can all gather again, but at this time many of our outreach ministries are on hiatus and volunteers cannot “jump in” and serve (this applies to groups such as luncheon teams, meals for the Day Center, Sunday school teaching, etc.). Having said that, if there is a group you are interested in, call the office! We will get you an update. The Brotherhood is meeting twice weekly via Zoom, the Daughters of the King will begin meeting via Zoom soon, and the Prayers and Squares volunteers are sewing from home. Related, please note that there is a “call in” option for those interested in attending any group’s Zoom meeting if you have an equipment or other issue that makes “tuning in” via the computer not possible.



7. From the Worship Tech Crew – we are looking for volunteers interested in working one- to three-hour shifts, with weekday and weekend options, to help deliver our digital ministry. You do not have to be tech “savvy,” because we will teach you. You simply need to be reliable, able to follow instructions, and willing to receive direction from a team leader. Come make new friends on the AV team and help us build and strengthen relationships in our growing community!

News flash: we are looking for weekday morning Zoom class tech assistants for Beth Dunkin’s returning fall Bible courses! Send an email to [jcorsaro@sjtulsa.org](mailto:jcorsaro@sjtulsa.org).

## Getting to Know Us!



This month’s staff Q&A is with a non-official personnel member, but someone who has been a key team member keeping all our worship services fully staffed: Father Justin Boyd. Serving in the capacity of supply priest and often present for Morning or Evening Prayer, Fr. Boyd has stepped up when our clergy needed to be out for personal time this year, and we are very appreciative. We hope you have fun getting to know him a bit better from this interview in late August.

Q: Hey Father Boyd, tell us a bit about your family. A: I am married to my amazing wife, Carmen. We will be celebrating our tenth anniversary on September 4. We have a nine-year-old son, Aidan. He is a fourth grader at Holland Hall. We have three labs and a cat. My father is a retired Episcopal priest, and my mother is a retired music teacher. Many of you likely know my mom, Jackie (Boyd) Saylor. She has filled in on the organ bench several times at Saint John’s Church over the years.

Q: I believe you called Tulsa your hometown. Where did you go to school and what did you study? A: I went to Holland Hall School and graduated from Memorial High School. Next, I attended Oklahoma City University, where I studied opera performance and musical theatre. I graduated from the University of Tulsa with my bachelor’s degree in musical theater in 2006.

Q: When did you feel a call on your heart to ministry? A: I first felt the Spirit leading me to my vocation at the age of thirteen. I did my absolute best to ignore it, and ran as fast and far away as I could. Well, we all know how that normally works out! I attended The Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, in Austin, Texas. I graduated in 2016, receiving my Master of Divinity, with a concentration in Hispanic church studies.

Q: I recall that you are an accomplished quartet singer and helped found a Tulsa singing group. Is that group still performing? A: I am a classically trained singer and a member of the original cast of Forever Plaid, here in Tulsa. We began in July of 1995 and planned on doing eight shows. Due to popular demand, we extended the run. We are still singing together! We do occasional gigs for fundraisers and small parties. One of my favorite places we have done the show is the Coleman Theatre, in Miami, Oklahoma. If you have never been there, I highly recommend a day trip to check it out.

Q: What’s something about you that might interest your fellow clergy or Saint John’s congregants to learn about you? A: In 1991 the Archbishop of Canterbury came to Tulsa. He celebrated a service at Trinity Church. I was asked to be the crucifer for the service. I still count this experience as one of the greatest of my life.

Q: Is there a particular scripture passage that you have found helpful during our time of social distancing? A: I have not had a particular passage jump out at me during the pandemic. What has been extremely profound is doing the Daily Office throughout the week. It is such an amazing way to start the day.

Q: We heard you “geek” theology. What great theology books or authors would you recommend? A: Anything from Brené Brown or C.S. Lewis. Lewis’ *Mere Christianity* helped change my spiritual path. Another is my friend Bill Miller. He wrote, *The Gospel According to Sam*, and my all-time favorite, *The Beer Drinker’s Guide to God*. It takes the reader on a spiritual journey of ordinary times and places. It is deeply profound.

*In the photo: Father Justin with his dad, Father Larry Boyd, on the day of Justin’s ordination to the priesthood.*

