



ST. JOHN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

January - February 2021

THE GOOD NEWS

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

SUSPENDED — Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9 a.m. — Adult Christian Education
(In-person and Zoom)

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM - 10:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist, Rite II • Visit StJohnsMLB.org

SUSPENDED — Converge (Youth Ministry)
Holy Apostles', 505 Grant Ave.,
Satellite Beach

MONDAY

SUSPENDED — Bible Study
SUSPENDED — A.A. (Big Book Study)

TUESDAY

SUSPENDED — Cub Scouts
ONLINE ONLY — Bible Study -
Email for details,
Office@StJohnsMLB.org

WEDNESDAY

7:00 P.M. — Choir Practice in Sanctuary
ONLINE ONLY — Bible Study
Email for details, Office@StJohnsMLB.org

FRIDAY

ONLINE ONLY — TGIF
Email for details, Office@StJohnsMLB.org

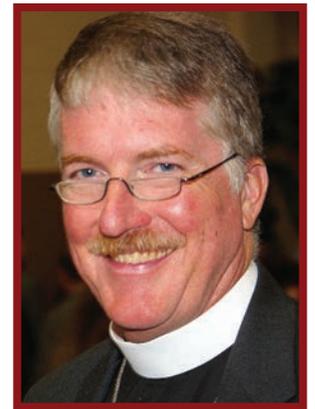
A WORD FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we come to a New Year, we often reflect on the year past. I know that many, especially those in the medical community, have had it far worse than I, but I can only speak for myself and what I'm looking forward to as we close the 2020 chapter.

I'm tired. Not physically, but mentally and emotionally. In some ways 2020 has been easier – fewer services, no visits to hospitals or nursing homes for most of the year, many events cancelled or drastically scaled back. Yet, I (and many others) have had to re-learn much that we have counted on. I have been serving as rector here at St. John's for 16 years now, and as a priest for over 34 years. There have been developments and changes over those years, but 2020 has required us to absorb and adjust to new ways of doing almost everything I do. I would guess we've handled as much change this year as we might normally have seen in a decade or more. That's draining.

And, of course, it's not just the pandemic. This has also been a year of dramatic social upheaval both in race relations and in politics. All these have changed many commonly held assumptions. We thought we knew what it looked like to be racist, and that we were moving toward a 'color-blind' society, but now we're not so sure. We thought we understood the place of science in helping us navigate this world but we're not so confident of that anymore. We assumed that we might disagree on politics but still get along and work together. Now it seems that we have become so divided and extreme that we are no longer confident that we can disagree and remain friends. It has not helped that so much of this upheaval has come at a time when we are less socially engaged due to pandemic considerations, and what engagement we do have is often online where we sometimes say and do things that we would never say or do in a face-to-face conversation. What we see is carefully



Continued on Page 2...

curated to give us what we have already shown that we like. That means we actually see less diversity than is really out there and the center gets lost as we are nudged toward extremes. More heat seems to bring less light.

All of this takes a toll on us as individuals, as a society and as a church. The coming vaccine will be great, but much of the heaviness of this moment will remain. So, what's next? I don't know, but I do have some ideas of how we Christians should try to navigate this strange new world. These are not new, but perhaps we need to discover them anew.

First, we need to work at community. What did Jesus do? He began by gathering a community of 12 disciples, which then expanded into a larger community of followers, and a tighter community with Peter, James and John. The history of Israel is a history of community – a people tied together by shared history, a shared creed, and a conviction that “we're in this together.”

Community doesn't happen by accident. It requires time, effort, generosity, forgiveness and sacrifice. Our first community is our families. Work at being family, whether you are together or apart, stay in touch, share life together. Where there are rifts do what you can to mend them. It may not always be possible, but try. Support, love and pray for one another.

Then we have the community of the church and we build that community essentially the same way. Prayer. Love. Time. Sacrifice. Effort.

Finally, the larger community around us. When I grew up, I knew all the neighbors. I knew whose door I could knock on for help and who I should probably avoid. I've lived in my house 16 years now (longer than I've ever lived anywhere) and barely know the people that live around me. Strike up conversations. Show an interest. It may begin by asking how they get their grass to look so nice or what project they are working on in the house. But reach out. Begin.

Second, get out of the online (and even in-person) echo chamber. Jesus consistently sought out those who were different. A gruff, vulgar fisherman. A wealthy tax collector. A philosopher. Samaritans. Women. Again, this requires effort. Don't let Google and Facebook curate what you read. You do it. Begin in Scripture, but read broadly. If you normally listen to Fox News, turn on CNN or MSNBC sometimes. And visa versa. And don't listen just to dismiss or disagree. Listen to understand the priorities and vision that drives people.

Third, look for opportunities to serve the needs of others. One of the clear characteristics of Jesus is that He saw the needs of others and reached out to meet them. A bleeding woman. A group of lepers. A “harassed and helpless” crowd. A man possessed with demons. 500+ hungry people. Jesus paid attention to others so that He could see the need, then sought ways to meet those needs. Sometimes food. Sometimes prayer. Sometimes a healing touch. Sometimes teaching. But always focused on the needs of others.

Of course, I could go on with many examples but let me finish with the most important. Deliberately focus your life and outlook on God. Without that center to hold on to, the rest will collapse under its own weight. Scripture. Prayer. Worship. Service. The formula is old, but it is tried and true. Like everything else, it takes deliberate effort, commitment and sacrifice. Let that be your New Year's Resolution and see where it takes you in the next year!

I close by circling back to where I began this letter – with the observation that the way past the tiredness of 2020 is not to retreat into our holes but get out and stretch. Yes, there is a time and place for quiet, and I, for one, am ready for some. But it is healthy only when it is part of that cycle of rest and work. The best sleep comes after a day of hard, productive work. Indefinite quietness is as debilitating as overwhelming change. Jesus followed a deliberate pattern of rest and work, quietness and activity. Be like Jesus!

**The Rev. Eric Turner,
Rector**

St. John's Episcopal Church

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Bishop Gregory O. Brewer

Rector - Fr. Eric Turner

Eric@stjohnsmlb.org • Cell: 321.615.0205

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“Good News” March – April 2021 Schedule & Deadline

The deadline for the next issue of “The Good News” (March – April, 2021) will be **Tuesday, February 16**. Please email (preferred) your submissions to office@stjohnsmlb.org or get them to the church office by **February 16, 2020**.

Sunday Ministries Schedule

For the time being, we will not be developing or publishing a calendar or Sunday Ministries schedule. When we return to in-person worship we will publish a new Sunday Ministries Schedule.

Loaning of Church Items

If you would like to borrow tables, chairs, cribs, linens etc. please speak with Fr. Eric or Kathy Oas, Jr. Warden, first as there might be an event on the schedule where these items are needed. And, of course, we need to keep track of the church’s property. Please contact Kathy at kmoas40@gmail.com, Fr. Eric at eric@stjohnsmlb.org, or call the church office at 321-254-3365.

Rector’s Vacation

Fr. Eric Turner will be on vacation December 28, 2020 – January 3, 2021. Fr. Terry Highland, Priest Associate, will lead worship on Sunday, Jan. 3 via Livestream.

Church Calendar

Since so many church functions have been suspended for the pandemic and we do not know what the re-opening might look like, we are not publishing a calendar in this issue as it will surely change, probably several times. We will provide updates as the situation develops.

Seaside Stitchers

now meets at St. John’s, but are suspended for the duration of the lockdown. Church members are welcome to join, and several have! The schedule varies, so please contact Shirley Muzzy (321-254-2206 or shirleymuzzy@aol.com).

Nursery

We have re-opened St. John’s Nursery for Sunday mornings, but could still use a few more volunteers. This is generally a once a month commitment. Please speak with Deacon Elizabeth (321-777-0168) if you are willing to help in this important ministry!

SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

GROWING SERVANTS OF CHRIST



Daughter’s of the King

The St. John’s Chapter of the DOK now meets on the first Sunday of each month at 12 noon via Zoom. Please email Sarah Kendall at 537sarah@gmail.com for Zoom link.

DOK continues to take the call to prayer seriously, even more so during the pandemic. You may send your prayer requests to Sarah Kendall at 537sarah@gmail.com or 702-203-6093. Please be aware that prayer requests to the DOK are only shared with the members of the DOK. They will not be shared with the clergy or put on the church prayer list unless specifically requested.

KEEPING UP WITH ST. JOHNS ONLINE



YOUTUBE CHANNEL

St. John's now has a YouTube Channel which is where we post worship live streams and sermons. Visit YouTube.com and search for St. John's Episcopal Church, Melbourne Florida, then follow us! You can also find links to all past and upcoming worship services by visiting stjohnsmlb.org and clicking on Worship Live Stream.

FR. TERRY'S MEDITATIONS

Brief, encouraging weekly meditations that are sent to your email inbox every Tuesday. Email office@stjohnsmlb.org if you'd like to enjoy this!

ST. JOHNS WEB

StJohnsMLB.org

You will find a variety of information there including schedules, the church calendar, archives of the "Good News", Sunday Ministry schedules, the latest eNews and much more. Poke around!

FACEBOOK

If you are on Facebook, you can also search "St. John's Episcopal Church" and like the page. Then you will get updates in your newsfeed, which you can respond to, or share with your friends.

ST. JOHNS CHAT

is an email "list" that allows you to keep up with the latest news at St. John's, prayer list updates, etc. You can also share things with others at St. John's. To subscribe, please just send your email address to Fr. Eric at eric@stjohnsmlb.org.

WEEKLY ENEWS

is a weekly email newsletter giving information on upcoming activities, what will be happening on Sunday, and other things. It generally includes a reflection from Fr. Eric on the lessons for the coming Sunday along with links and other information. This comes out every Thursday afternoon at 4 p.m. To subscribe, please send your email address to Fr. Eric at eric@stjohnsmlb.org.

SHARING JESUS' LOVE

Daily Bread Duty Days

We have 2 Daily Bread teams! They are open during this time of lockdown serving carry out only, so volunteers are still needed to prepare and distribute the meals. Those who are not in a high risk group and are comfortable in such a role are encouraged to continue to volunteer.

Your help is greatly appreciated!



DAILY BREAD

THIRD SUNDAY

10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Contact Doug Ludwig
321.243.3686 • Ludwig.Murray@att.net

Duty Day for January:
Sunday, January 17

Duty Day for February:
Sunday, February 21

FOURTH THURSDAY

10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Contact Ian Johnson
321.674.0932 • Johnsoni051075@gmail.com

Duty Day for January:
Thursday, January 28

Duty Day for February:
Thursday, February 25

GUIDED BY SCRIPTURE

Christian Education

Adult Christian Education gathers in person, in the Chapel (to the right, just before entering the Parish Hall) with masks and social distancing, and the class will also be available via video conferencing. If you would like to join by Zoom, the link is available on the church website. Visit stjohnsmlb.org and click on Worship Live Stream. You may also email the church office at office@stjohnsmlb.org and we will send you link. We are studying the book of Exodus, full of great drama and the early struggles of God's people to understand His work!

Youth Christian Education (middle and high school), under the leadership of Katie Wilson, is gathering in the Parish Hall, at this time in-person only.

One new feature arises from the fact that the youth class is generating a number of rather probing and important questions which may be better addressed by someone with seminary training. Therefore, on the second Sunday of each month, the classes will be combined and Fr. Eric will respond to questions and issues that have come up during the prior month in the youth class. It is hoped that this will be fun and enlightening for everyone!

A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Livestream ONLY Jan 3

As a preemptive strike against COVID-19 transmission, the vestry and rector have agreed to have no in-person worship on Sunday, January 3, having only a Livestream service.

We had three members test positive following the service on Dec. 6, leading to the cancellation of in-person worship on Dec. 13. Worship will be in-person and Livestreamed on Dec. 20, 24 and 27. (In-person only on Dec. 25.)

As Jan. 3 would be 9 days from Christmas, it would be prime time for virus transmission from exposures over the holidays. Dec. 27 is probably before anyone would be "shedding" virus and by Jan. 10 anyone infected at Christmas would likely be symptomatic and should be quarantining. Note that Jan. 3 comes the same length of time after Christmas as Dec. 6, when we had our first round of infections, came after Thanksgiving. We recognize that there could be transmission at any time, but this seemed like truly a "prime" time, hence the choice to act preemptively.

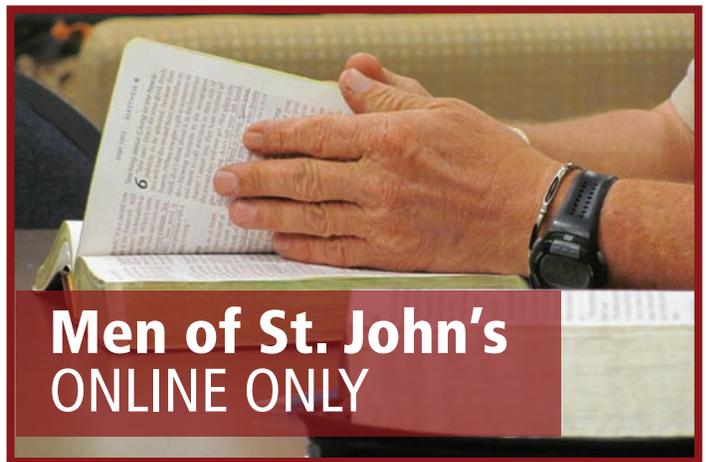
A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Ash Wednesday and Lent

We will have our Ash Wednesday worship of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes on Wednesday, February 17 at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Both services will be offered in-person and the 7 p.m. will also be available on livestream.

Sadly, due to the pandemic, we will not be holding Lenten Soup Suppers this year. Ways to provide some sort of Lenten program online are being explored.

GUIDED BY SCRIPTURE



TGIF, our men's breakfast and Bible study gathers every Friday, 8 a.m. by Zoom. We are now engaged in a study of the Beatitudes. Email office@stjohnsmlb.org for log in information.

A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Epiphany

Sadly, due to pandemic considerations, we will not be hosting an Epiphany service this year. We hope to return next year!

A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Victoria Landing

The service of Holy Communion at Victoria Landing led by Fr. Eric was suspended due to restrictions in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, however they are starting again in January with careful safety protocols. 10:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

2021 Stewardship

From the Stewardship Committee:

Dear Friends at St. John's,

The Stewardship Committee thanks you for your generous response in submitting your completed pledge cards for 2021. Thanks to your generous support, we anticipate a balanced budget allowing us to carry forward our work and even expand some areas.

Covid-19 has greatly altered the operation of St. John's Episcopal Church. In spite of all of the adjustments we have been forced to endure, St. John's has "plodded on." Our worship can be experienced on YouTube; bible studies have gone to "Zoom;" we communicate by phone and "Google Group" email; we have continued some long-standing church projects; we have completed some much-needed building repairs. In the midst of it all, our operating budget has remained relatively healthy, anticipating a small deficit, but much less than expected.

All of us look forward to the time when our church can operate freely again. We sense that some of our members have been preoccupied by national and world events, causing them to delay submitting a completed pledge card. It is not too late to submit your completed card, enabling our Vestry to effectively plan for 2021.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generous response!

In Christ's Love,
Jack Kenworthy, Katie Wilson, Terry Highland

SHARING HIS LOVE

Outreach Focus

JANUARY

The Outreach offering has been designated to go to the Clergy Discretionary Fund. These funds are not adequately supported through the regular parish budget. They are used to provide assistance to various people in need, for which we get calls and requests almost daily. Outreach offerings for January will go to the Discretionary Fund. Please help us help others!

FEBRUARY

The Outreach offering will go to the work of Fr. Loren and Linda Fox. The Foxes live and serve in northern Thailand, working in various parts of Asia. Linda coordinates member care for missionaries and their families working in some of the most difficult corners of Asia. Fr. Loren coordinates strategy and leadership development—focused on planting churches among seven unreached peoples who currently live outside the reach of the Church. An "unreached people" is a people group isolated by language, geography or both and have had no significant Christian outreach in their midst. To learn more: send an email to ReachUs@EngagingTheAdventure.org. Outreach offerings in February will go to the ministry of the Foxes.

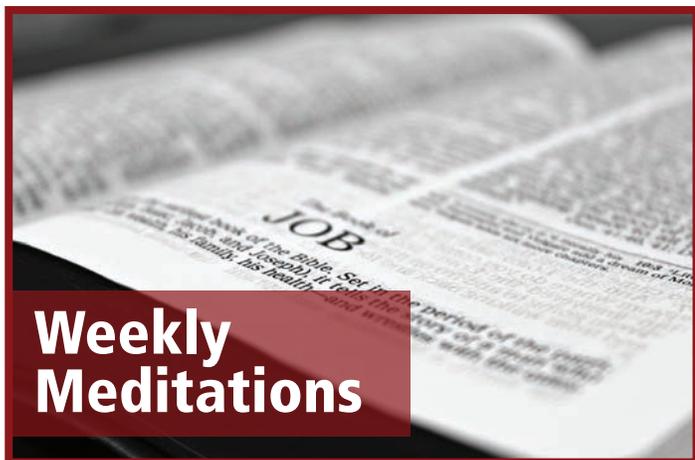
A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Military Prayer List

Every year we update the military prayer list, adding the new military members and removing those who are no longer serving in the military. Please submit or resubmit those members you want to be on our military prayer list. We will be removing the current list January 28, 2021 and replacing it with those you want to add or stay on this prayer list for this next year.

If you want to add a name, email the person's name to Father Terry at: redeemcec@aol.com or call 321-831-2587.

GUIDED BY SCRIPTURE



Weekly Meditations

Fr. Terry Highland offers a very brief, weekly meditation online. It will be available both as a video (2-3 minutes) and in written form. This is an opt-in, meaning that we will send it to those who request it. The meditations come out on Tuesdays. Please email office@stjohnsmlb.org if you would like to opt-in!

SHARING HIS LOVE

Hispanic Outreach

At its November meeting, St. John's Vestry committed to launch a new Hispanic Mission in this area. We are in the process of finalizing a Letter of Agreement with Canon Luis de la Cruz of Kissimmee who will lead the effort. We expect to launch in January 2021 and initially the groups will be small so it will be relatively easy to maintain appropriate COVID-19 precautions. We expect that gatherings and, eventually, worship services will be on Saturdays, probably twice per month.

The launch is being funded by \$10,000 from the proceeds of last year's land sale and we also expect a small grant from the Diocese of Central Florida to help with expenses.

Those who become a part of this work will be members of St. John's, we are not starting a new church to share our building but a new outreach arm of St. John's.

On January 31, 2021, Canon Luis will be our guest preacher to share with how about this ministry and vision!

Please pray for Canon Luis and for this new adventure that God is taking us on!

2021 STEWARDSHIP FROM THE TREASURER:

St John's 2021 Pledge Summary

Based upon the 40 pledge cards received, the projected income for 2021 can be summarized below.

Total Pledges (40)	\$142,880
Total Givers of Record	\$50,983
Other Income	\$22,020
Plate Cash/PETC	\$6,000
Hispanic Ministry	\$10,000
Total Collections	\$231,883

The current draft budget projects \$231,883 of expenses. The budget is balanced for 2021.

GROWING SERVANTS OF CHRIST



Converge: Our Joint Youth Ministry

Two Episcopal Churches in the area have teamed up for ministry with middle and high school students: Holy Apostles, Satellite Beach and St. John's now have a joint youth ministry called "Converge" and meets:

SUSPENDED DURING PANDEMIC

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Meeting of St. John's Episcopal Church will be held on Sunday, February 7 at 8:30 a.m. NOTE the new time! We are starting early because conducting the meeting both in-person and on Zoom will slow things down a bit, and without the 7:45 service, we can start the meeting a little earlier.

We will meet, as has become our 2020 custom, in-person (in the Parish Hall) and on Zoom. There is technology within Zoom that will allow members to vote remotely and those in-person will vote in the conventional manner with paper ballots. The only voting anticipated is the election of new vestry members but as we have five outstanding candidates for three positions, we may need to conduct two or even three ballots.

We will have the usual reports, finance and others, a brief look back at 2020 and a look ahead to 2021. Believe it or not, even in this time there is much to be thankful for and excited about!

We will elect three new vestry members to three-year terms. Rotating off the vestry will be Ben Kendall, Linda Miller and Lee Steininger, and we thank them all for the excellent service, and especially Lee who has served as Sr. Warden for this past year.

At this time, we have a slate of five excellent candidates for the three open slots. Nominations will be accepted up to the formal closing of nominations at the Annual Meeting. The names, along with brief bio's from each are below. Thanks to all these folks for their willingness to step forward!

Skip Alcorn

Born and raised in a military family (Dad was Career Navy), I spent most of my youth in Florida and attended generic, Protestant Sunday School and Church services on various bases. When Dad retired, he moved his family to Indian Harbour Beach in 1959. I've lived in the general area since then. I am a Veteran; having served in the Navy during the Viet Nam War, and returned home to marry, raise a family and complete my formal education; i.e., BCC, Rollins College, and lastly, a MS Degree from FIT. After a 33 yr. career (Marketing and Program Management disciplines), with Harris and Intersil Corporations, I retired from the electronics industry; only to start another career in the Real Estate business. I currently represent National Realty of Brevard, Inc. as a Sales Associate. My sweet Carol and I have been Parishioners of St. John's for about 3 1/2 years. Over that period of time, I have been involved with, and participated only in minor roles of the Family Promise and Habitat for Humanity Programs that are supported by our Church. In these troubled times, I believe that I can do more to support our Church and Community, and have expressed my interest in serving as a member of the St. John's Vestry during 2021 calendar year. Thank you for your consideration.

Gail Dunbar

I have been a member of St John's arriving shortly prior to Father Eric. I married my husband Doug at St John's and it will always hold a special place in my heart. I have been a choir member since my arrival and have assisted with Kings Kids and some committees in the past. The congregation of St John's is truly diverse and exceptional and I am blessed to share shoulder space with them all. I have been so proud of the way St John's has accepted all members. I have served on the vestry in the past and agreed to run again if needed. As I have stayed away due to COVID 19 and would have to attend vestry meetings from afar via zoom I understand if someone else is chosen and I will help as much as I am able.

Deborah Miller-Caldwell

I have been in the Episcopal Church for over 60 years. I have served in a plethora of leadership positions in the church. I have served in multiple churches multiple times as Altar Guild Director, served multiple times on several churches' vestry, and as Senior Warden. I have always felt taking on a leadership position in the church was an honor and always worked very hard to fulfill all duties of the position. St. John's means a great deal to me. I feel it is very important for us as a church body to make every effort to grow the congregations and the Vestry is a vital part of that growth and the future of St. John's.

Susan Badgio

In 2007 I began "church shopping" in the Melbourne area and St. John's was the 5th stop along the way. On Epiphany Sunday 2008 I sat in the sanctuary a half hour before the service started, and knew I had found my church home. Since that time I joined the choir, became involved with Solar Light for Africa, cooked dinners for our Family Promise hosting weeks, chaired the Gifts From The Heart gift drive and joined the Daughters of the King. In my professional life, I worked in management in electronics manufacturing.

Karen Taff

I started to get involved with the church when we moved to Florida in 1983! My husband and I attended Holy Apostles in Satellite Beach for about 12 years and became a member of the vestry during that time! I also served on a committee to purchase an organ! Since the death of my husband, I have found that St. John's has been the most comfortable place to call home and serve to as an usher and any other ministry that I have been called to serve!

SHARING HIS LOVE

Family Promise Competes for \$25K Grant and Continues • Helicopter Ball Drop Fund Raiser

State Farm Insurance sponsored a Neighborhood Assist Grant Program which awards twenty-five, \$25,000 grants to 200 nationwide causes. FPOB was one of the causes selected to compete for the 25 grants, a significant achievement itself. The program ran from September 23 through October 2 and individuals could vote up to 10 times a day for their cause. Many St. John's parishioners voted throughout the competition. The final results will be released November 4. As of October 1, one day before the voting ended, FOB was in 13th place.



According to Tara Pagliarini, FPOB Executive Director, the \$25K grant would be used for homeless prevention. She said, "the State Farm grant is an investment that would help no less than 100 of our neighbors and their children from falling into homelessness through short term case management and eviction prevention. FPOB has already experienced an increase of 225% in requests for prevention assistance during the pandemic. To date, 94% of the families have remained stably housed."

A sincere thank you for St. John's terrific support.

We continue to expect the Shelter Program, which we have participated in the past three years, to be resumed sometime after the beginning of the year. We look forward to continuing the great support of the St. John's congregation we have enjoyed in the past.

The Helicopter Ball Drop fund raiser will be held November 7. It involves buying "golf balls(s)" for a chance to win up to \$5,000 if your ball is closest to the pin when the balls are dropped on the 7th. One ball cost \$25 or three balls for \$100. There are entry forms in the parish hall or enter using the FP website, www.familypromiseofbrevard.org. This is a great way to contribute to Family Promise and also have a chance of winning a nice cash prize.

If you want to join our St. John's Family Promise team, we can sure use you. There is something for everyone. Please contact our Coordinator, Ben Kendall, at ben.kendall@gail.com.

Lee Steininger
Sr Warden

FROM BISHOP GREG BREWER

In these days of the COVID-19 crisis, we face challenges we have never faced before. This past Monday, I spent almost an entire day in front of my laptop and on my phone, responding to emails and texting, crisis voice after crisis voice after crisis voice.

I texted a friend of mine that I know who prays for me and I said, "Here's my dilemma. I'm really too much of an introvert to be available online for hours. But I'm also too much of an extrovert to shelter in and not be with people."

And yet in some ways, those are the challenges of someone who wants to make him or herself available. It's the way we communicate with one another. We have to keep social distancing, and yet at the same time, we have to stay connected.

So what I'm trying to do is offer perhaps some ways that we might just stay sane, level-headed in the midst of incredibly uncharted waters for all of us. And this includes facing the fact that we are pioneers in a very difficult situation. We are in places that we have not been before, and a part of that means some of us, according to our various personalities, are going to take different courses of action.

Surround Yourself with Wise Counsel

If you are by nature someone who likes to cover all your bases, someone who gets nervous about possibilities over which there is no control, you'll want to squeeze everything together into something that's personally manageable, with as little slipping through your fingers as possible. So you are playing in and living into worst-case scenarios, and those things inform how you're responding in the midst of this crisis.

On the other hand, if you are a person who takes risks, you are more than likely willing to be a risk taker, even in crises like this. Hopefully, both sides can talk to each other and come to plans that are sensible. But it's important, depending on the kind of person you are, to surround yourself with people who are like you and not like you, so you can discover some centered sense of wise counsel.

Take Time Alone With God

But at least for me, to be able to listen to anybody's counsel, wise or not, there has to be within me a certain level of stillness, the capacity to not live in total reaction mode all the time. And what keeps me sane as well as still on the inside is what I do in my alone times with God.

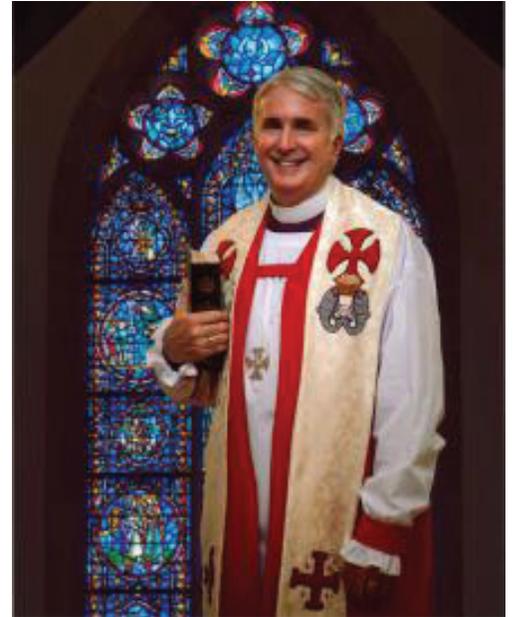
That means, first of all, making alone time with God is more critically important in this crisis, not less. You see, because I can be so scattered, I want to immediately get up out of bed and check my phone, look at the latest messages, figure out what's going on online, see the latest things that are showing up in the news or what my friends are tweeting, what's showing up on my Facebook page. And all that does is immediately suck me into the vortex of all that is happening.

That doesn't produce stillness in me, even though it might cause me to feel more connected. Actually, what it produces in me is the capacity to just absorb into my spirit the chaos of what it is that's going around me.

So as a discipline, I get up. I go to a chair that I always sit in first thing in the morning. I get up and make coffee before anybody else in my home gets up. And I sit down, and I begin to read and to pray.

I'm using as a part of my Lenten discipline the Rite I version of morning prayer. And the preface gives me, in essence, an agenda for my time. It goes like this: "Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his holy Word and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation."

So to start off, where do I begin? I begin because I'm talking to my Father, almighty God, our heavenly Father, one whom I have learned to trust, one whom I believe is good. One whom I believe holds me in the palm of his hand, regardless of what is going on, either within or around me. Whether I feel God's presence or not is actually quite beside the point. His promise is "I am with you always," no matter what I'm feeling, and that sets the stage because it tells me who is with me, to whom I am addressing my prayers.



And notice the invitation is to start, not on the downbeat, but on the upbeat, to render thanks for the great benefits we've received at his hand. As the psalm says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise" (Ps. 100:4). That sets the frame for how I think about even the most difficult things, even if the best I can do when I get up in the morning is that I can say, "Well, God, to my knowledge, I'm not sick yet."

In other words, the baseline for thanksgiving does not have to be standing up and shouting, although there's nothing wrong with that. The baseline is finding things for which you can give thanks, regardless of what else is going on around you. Even if you can see nothing in your circumstances, the best you could do would be to thank God for the gift of eternal life that we have received in his Son, that no matter what you're going through, you're heading into eternity itself.

And then it says, "to hear His Holy Word," because the act of thanksgiving clears the decks in your brain to make room for what it is that God might want to say to you through the Scripture. And again, allow that to form how you think about what's going on in your day, and then going from there to ask for yourself, and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation.

It helps me enormously in the midst of my own inner tension to focus in intercessory prayer on the needs of others. I was speaking to someone just this morning on the phone who has a really hard time getting up and making time to be able to pray, quite honestly, even though he admits he's wrong. He doesn't think he needs it. And what I said to him was, "You may not think you need it. But believe me, you are surrounded by people in desperate need of prayer."

Perhaps the best way you can use your time before God is to pray for the people God sends your way. And all things that are necessary for life and for godliness, to allow that daily form of time in the presence of God gives me the capacity that I need to be available for whatever chaos I might encounter over the course of that day.

Get Enough Sleep, Laughter and Prayer

The other thing I would suggest and offer is to make sure you're getting enough sleep, make sure you have people in your life with whom you can laugh and have people that you know who can also be praying for you. I emailed a friend I knew about making these videos and he said, "Oh, I'm looking forward to seeing them."

My automatic response was, "Oh, that means you're going to be praying for me, right?" Because I know that the fruit of anything that I do has everything to do not so much with my efforts as the intercessory support of other people.

I think when we get to heaven, we're going to be extraordinarily surprised at the role other people's prayers have played and how deeply we have been sustained. There is a web between us as members of the one body of Christ of which we are relatively unaware that when we pray for someone else, life is released and imparted to them, even in that moment again, whether they feel it or not.

And the same is true for us. I honestly feel an extraordinary obligation as a part of my role as bishop, to be an intercessor, to pray for the people in this diocese, to pray for people who don't yet know Christ, to pray for people I know who have asked for prayers and to solicit those same prayers for other people. Because all of us operate as Christians in concert together, even when we are entirely alone. And the web that is built between us is something God has created. They are the highways where intercessory prayer travels from one group of people to the next, literally even beyond space and time, as well as all across this planet. Build, ask for and live into the prayer support that is yours.

Have a Listener Who Understands

And finally, the thing I would suggest is have people around you, even if it's just one person, with whom you can share your heart, who knows something of the stress and tension as well as the joy. These people can be for us tangible reminders of God's promise that he never leaves us. And we're hearing it through the mouth and in the eyes of someone who knows and loves us.

I hope our congregations can more and more be those hands and eyes for one another. That you choose to be those yourself, even to the person checking out your groceries, even to the person at the convenience store, even to the driver who irks you on the highway.

Pay attention, see what God will do. This is a time that in fact can be redeemed. But it is redeemed through his servants who choose by the grace of God to walk in the light and to say no to the darkness.

What suggestions would you add for leaders who desire to stay strong in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic? Share this blog and your response on Twitter. Please include my username, @revgregbrewer.

A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Organ Fund Drive

Dear Friends at St. John's,

First, my deepest and most heartfelt thanks for making my forty-year-old dream come true. Thanks to your generosity, we have met and exceeded our goal of \$25,000!

In due time, perhaps in mid-January, we will have a console that will reliably cause a pipe to sound when a key is pressed. This is a bigger thing than it sounds, because before, the console was so unreliable that guest organists were very unhappy when asked to play around notes that wouldn't sound, stops that wouldn't play, and so forth. I believe that that will all be gone when we install the new console.

To bring you up to date on where we are today:

In October, Peterson Electro confirmed that they were still operational, and their original estimate was unchanged. The Vestry confirmed that we had received enough funds to get the project started, and on October 19th, I shipped them the stripped console that I had bought late last year. A couple of days later, they told me that they had received and unpacked it.

Since that time, I have received many e-mails and phone calls from Brian Koziel, the organ designer, and from Bob Dommer, the electrical engineer, as they have worked through the details of designing electronics to match the pipe work on our organ.

The "black boxes" they mount in the console interpret the stop tabs that the organist has set, and the key strokes that the organist makes, and turn this into a complex computer "word" that is sent down a cable from the console to the pipe room. The 55" wide by 18" high birch plywood panel installed in the pipe room will have mounted on it a number of "black boxes" that we will have to connect to the circuitry that is already there to drive each of the individual pipes that the organist has commanded. As we wait, we are currently working on transferring some of the existing wiring to new pins.

For a while, we will have both the new console and the pipe-room panel in the pipe room together while we trouble-shoot the installation. When everything is working correctly we will take the old console down out of the Choir Loft, and replace it with the new console. That should finish off the job, and I will be very thankful.

Hasty Miller



GROWING SERVANTS OF CHRIST

Leadership Training at St. John's

We have launched a training program designed to bring new people into various leadership roles in the life of St. John's, provide some basic training and framework for Christian leadership in a church family and provide ongoing support for those in leadership roles.

Initially, Fr. Eric provides the basic teaching, but in time others will also contribute based on their own expertise and experience.

This is intended for potential and current vestry members, leaders of various parish ministries, Bible studies, etc., and anyone who would like to explore these roles.

We will gather for about 1 hour, once per month, on the first Thursday via Zoom (Jan. 6 and Feb. 4). For the time being, we will meet only on Zoom. Please email the church office at office@stjohnsmlb.org for the zoom link.

Vestry Notes

The Vestry met on November 19, 2020 masked and socially distanced in the Parish Hall and virtually via Zoom. The October 2020 financials were reviewed and discussed, the 2021 proposed budget and the 2020/2021 stewardship campaign were discussed at length.

Vestry approved an additional \$500 for adding Lexan to the outside stained-glass windows, necessary to improve the indoor sanctuary lighting for video streaming, and for additional repair work from the electrical box replacement. The funds would come from the Land Sale fund.

The fund drive to repair the organ exceeded the asked amount. The organ may be ready by Easter. In addition, the repairs and hammer replacement on the church piano are complete.

Steve Bradley distributed copies of the latest iteration of the 2021 budget, described important points and answered Vestry questions. The Vestry will approve the final 2021 budget at the December 2020 meeting.

Distribution of PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) Grant (total value \$20,400) was approved as follows:

- \$5,000 already paid out as employee bonuses
- \$2,000 allocated to projected 2020 deficit.
- \$3,000 allocated to Capital Reserve
- \$10,400 would be held in reserve for potential future income shortfall due to COVID-19.

\$1,000 from Capital Reserve was allocated for replacement of the Rector's laptop.

The new Hispanic Ministry was approved with a 2021 budget of \$10,000 from land sale funds.

Fr. Eric requested the Vestry commit to an initiative to create Christmas gift bags to be created by Charlene Turner and distributed to St. John's member households in the area by members of the vestry. Cost is expected to be \$500-\$800, which will be covered by Lee Steininger. Lists and further instructions will be provided at the December Vestry meeting.

The Vestry met again on December 17, 2020. The November financials were presented. The 2021 Budget was approved (details will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on Feb. 7 and are available by contacting the church office). Key elements are a 2% raise for the staff, the addition of a paid parish administrator at 4 hours per week and the addition of the Hispanic Ministry.

\$900 was approved from Capital Reserve for electrical upgrades in the kitchen.

Delegates were elected to the 2021 Annual Convention of the Diocese of Central Florida, to be held entirely online, on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2021. Delegates will be Lee Steininger, Andy Weeks and Katie Wilson. Kathy Oas will be an alternate. Fr. Eric Turner will attend as a member of the clergy.

St. John's 2021 Annual Parish Meeting was set for Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021 beginning at 8:30 a.m. Meeting will be in-person and online, via Zoom.

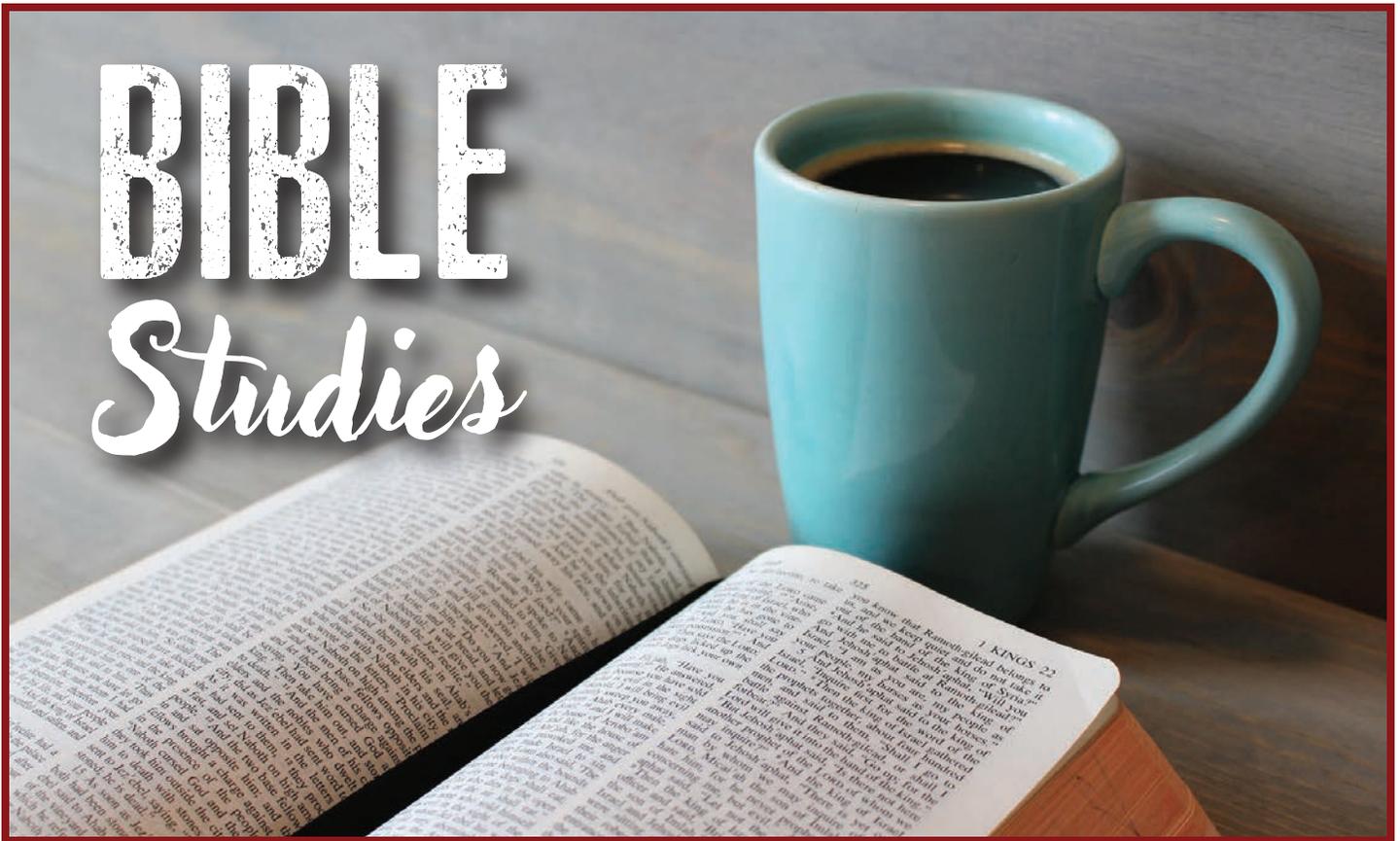
Fr. Eric Turner will be on vacation Dec. 28, 2020 – Jan. 3, 2021. Fr. Terry Highland will conduct the service on Jan. 3.

Financial Summary:

	Oct. Budget	Oct. Actual	Nov. Budget	Nov. Actual	YTD Actual
Income	\$ 15,704	\$ 14,596	\$ 17,850	\$ 20,136	\$ 192,611
Expenses	\$ 17,588	\$ 17,544	\$ 19,240	\$ 18,759	\$ 194,148
Net	\$ -- 1,884	\$ --2,948	\$ --1,390	\$ 1,377	\$ --1,537

BIBLE

Studies



Guided by Scripture

We hope that you are able to find one that meets with your regular schedule!

Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. in Fr. Eric's office, led by Deacon Elizabeth. Contact Dcn. Elizabeth at 321-777-0168. **NOW ONLINE ONLY.** Email office@stjohnsmlb.org for log in information.

Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. at Fr. Eric's home (4581 Bellaluna Dr., West Melbourne), Contact Fr. Eric at 321-615-0205 for more information. **NOW ONLINE ONLY.** Email office@stjohnsmlb.org for log in information.

Friday morning: TGIF – Men's breakfast and Bible study, Fridays, 8 a.m. at the Old Village Restaurant, 1180 Aurora Rd. (just west of Route 1). In addition to solving all the world's problems, we are studying the first epistle of Peter. **NOW ONLINE ONLY.** Email office@stjohnsmlb.org for log in information. No TGIF on January 1.

Adult Christian Education - Sunday morning Adult Christian Education at 9 a.m. has started back up. We are gathering in the Parish Hall at 9 a.m. and via Zoom and we are studying the book of Genesis, a grand and dramatic story of God's work among us and our attempts to understand that work! For the Zoom link, visit stjohnsmlb.org and click on Worship Live Stream or email office@stjohnsmlb.org.

BIRTHDAYS



January

Jean Hutton • 01/02
Austin Louks • 01/02
Cade Oas • 01/02
Lory Bittner • 01/03
Dorinda Campbell • 01/04
Jan Louks • 01/11
Sally Martin • 01/12
Rosie Scheunemann • 01/13
Hasty Miller • 01/15
Kyle Louks • 01/16
Ricky Saylor • 01/16
Dick Jarvela • 01/17
Woody Turner, Jr. • 01/21
Douglas Ludwig • 01/22
Kathy Oas • 01/24
Nicole Tuten • 01/24
Jan Archey • 01/25
Ashley Campbell • 01/29

February

Tyler Heusinkveld • 02/02
Anne Scruggs • 02/03
Bill Chernault • 02/08
Pam Jarvela • 02/08
Pam Davis • 02/09
Randy Evans • 02/13
Chuck Strissel • 02/14
Hope Johnson • 02/18
Angie Brown • 02/19
John Campbell • 02/19
Elizabeth Turner • 02/22
Dick Martin • 02/26
Gloria Kenworthy • 02/26
Bob Scruggs • 02/27
Ben Kendall • 02/27

ANNIVERSARIES

January

None Known

February

Lacey & David Brotherton • 2/12
Carl & Barbara Holliday • 2/14

January 1 Office Closed for New Year's Day
January 3 No In-Person worship, Livestream at 10 a.m.
January 7 Leadership Training, 7 p.m. via Zoom
January 14 Holy Communion at Victoria Landing, 10:30 a.m.
January 17 Daily Bread Duty Day
January 21 Vestry, 7 p.m., by Zoom
January 28 Daily Bread Duty Day
January 31 Canon Luis de la Cruz preaching
February 6 Diocesan Convention
February 7 Annual Parish Meeting, 8:30 a.m
February 11 Holy Communion at Victoria Landing, 10:30 a.m.
February 17 Ash Wednesday Worship, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.
February 18 Vestry meeting, by Zoom, 7 p.m.
February 21 Daily Bread Duty Day



610 Young Street
Melbourne, FL 32935