



ST. JOHN'S JOURNEY

LIVING IN HOPE † UNITED IN FAITH † LED BY LOVE



June, 2024

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Pastor's Corner

Dear People of St. Johns,

Summer is upon us! A time for vacations and relaxation, and we can enjoy the weather if it's not too hot. Unfortunately this time of year causes grass to grow, gardens to tend, and we often forget some of our most important obligations; our families, our friends, and our church.

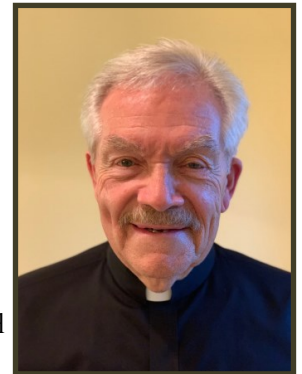
My heart is heavy because our nation seems to have forgotten these important obligations. We have a national crisis. Our government is nonfunctional and does not display the needs or the will of the people. Freedom is not free, and never has been. Our government is supposed to be of the people, by the people and for the people. Something has changed and we all have our own ideas of what has caused this drift in our democracy.

We can't send our children to school without the worry of a mass shooting. We can't shop for groceries without looking over our shoulder. When we drive anywhere we could become a victim of road rage or a sniper. Is this your idea of "the land of the free?" Most of us have been taught the difference between right and wrong, especially those who have attended church regularly

throughout their lives. We have been given the commandment to love God and our neighbors as ourselves; do unto others as you would have done to yourself.

My thoughts on this national problem are very basic. We have become too involved with living a life without God. People have drifted away from the church and show no interest in attending or returning. Most churches have shown a steep decline in attendance and churches are closing or combining to keep the doors open. If this continues I believe things could get much worse.

We have just traveled through the seasons of the incarnation (Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany) and the Paschal (Lent, Holy Week, and Easter) and as we walk through these defining moments in the life of Christ, we search for meaning and spiritual nourishment. Now as we enter the long season of ordinary time, Pentecost, we can apply these teachings to our presence in the world, living the values of the kingdom of God. Continued on page 2...



St John's Episcopal Church
4074 S. Mill St.
PO Box 86
Dryden, MI 48428
(810)795.2371

Website: www.stjohnschurchdryden.org
Email: stjohnschurchdryden@gmail.com
Find us on Facebook!



Editor: Becky Foster

St. John's Journey is published monthly. We're looking for your photos and articles. Please email them to "stjohnschurchdryden@gmail.com" with the word "Newsletter" in the subject line. Deadline for July is June 28th.



Happy Birthday!

Bob Miller

Vestry Notes

Dear Friends,

As you read through this newsletter, I think you'll agree with me that May was a pretty amazing month for St. John's. We had a great Garage Sale and Music Concert. We solved the mystery of the disappearing bell rope. Fr. Harold's Senior Ministry at The Bells senior facility continues to grow. Our Pentecost pics turned out pretty well. And we continue to be strong financially. There's much to be grateful for.

We have some guests coming in late June that I think we'll all be glad to see.

We also have a big project on the horizon that we need to work on together. Have you been to the front of the church lately? Take a look. Jack and Ida Lynn have done great work with the gardens. But the exterior of the church is not looking so good. The paint on the wooden siding is in bad shape and quite a few boards need replacing. Some boards are just gone. We considered vinyl siding but it's way too expensive for our small church. Even so, repair and repainting is going to be a big expenditure. The best quote we have received from a reputable contractor is \$43,000. Gulp!

Those of us who are home-owners know this

type of maintenance is necessary. The last paint job was in 2016 – and it was pretty much just paint, very little prep or repair. This time, we'll do a thorough job and commit to regular



maintenance and repair. The contractor says that if we do that, this should last at least 10 to 15 years. Not only will it look better, but it will be structurally sound and prevent critters from just waltzing in through holes and soft rotting wood.

The Vestry has been expecting this project (although not the total cost) for a while and we have two \$10,000 CD's that were planned for this effort. And we are investigating a grant from the Diocese and from other sources as well. I invite you to consider making a special donation in the month of June to help out. Just put "Paint Project" in the memo line of your check or on the envelope that you put in the plate. Any level of giving will help and is much appreciated. I'll post a chart in the Parish Hall to track financial progress as well as news about the physical project. We hope to start the work in late July or August. We'll be sure to keep you updated throughout the summer. I am confident that we will find the funds we need and have a lovely church exterior to show by fall – with God's help, that is!

Peace & Blessings

Becky

Continued from page 1. . . God, in light of what we have experienced in the past few weeks and months. This is a wonderful time of year to emphasize the teachings of Jesus Christ as a practical way to live out the mysteries of his life.

There are many ways to break up the monotony of ordinary time. Try to preserve a balance and a pattern during this season. It's okay to vacation and spend time away, and have fun, but when you return refreshed, invite a friend or relative to attend church with you. Without any major reason to look at the church, many simply will not attend with you. This does not mean you should de-emphasize evangelism. Invite, so people will find the values of the Kingdom of God. We have a beautiful church with beautiful people, they may like it here.

The day of Pentecost opened the way of eternal life to every race and nation. The Holy Spirit crosses over the boundaries of language and culture to create new people through the grace of God. May the Spirit of his truth lead you into all truth, giving you the grace to confess Jesus Christ as Lord, and allow you to proclaim his wonderful works.

In God's Love, *Rev. Harold*

Some Special Guests for June Sundays



Freya Gilbert, from the west side of the state, will be preaching at St. John's on June 23rd. Not only will she preach on the readings for the day, but she will take time after the service to discuss her experiences as a transgender woman and answer questions we might have about LGBTQ+ issues. She's a very interesting individual. She has called four different countries home. She recently retired from a career in hotel management.

She's been active as a lay leader in the Diocese of Northern Indiana and the dioceses of East and Western Michigan. At any given point she's reading at least 20 books and she loves spending quiet evenings with her two cats, who are named after the main characters in *Finnegans Wake* (guess what one of my questions will be!). Please join us and show Freya some hospitality, St. John's style.

Rev. Mary Jo Schuetz returns to St. John's on June 30th!

We so enjoyed our time with Rev. Mary Jo, we just had to invite her back for a guest appearance. Let's give her a warm welcome back!



Have you noticed our new Hymn Board?



The old hymn board was cracking with age and it just wouldn't hang straight, no matter what! I don't know when Jack found the time, but he put together a lovely replacement and Ida Lynn ordered new, larger numbers and it looks absolutely lovely! Thanks to both of them – they are such a blessing for our congregation.

June 16th – Happy Father's Day

to anyone in our lives who we see as protector, fixer of all broken things, wise listener and teacher. We bless you for all you have given us.



Another Successful Garage Sale!



Thanks to everyone who helped with our annual Garage Sale! Connie and Ina helped the rest of us get organized for the big day. Many of us got a head start on spring cleaning. Based on last year's experience, we decided that Thursday was the best day for customer traffic and it was just fine. All goods were free will donations and some folks were very generous. We received just over \$400 for the day. Those funds go to help our student outreach efforts. Great work!

SOLD OUT



Spring Concert was Phenomenal!

On Saturday night, May 11th, St. John's hosted our third spring music concert. This spring's event featured Rev. Robert Jones – a renowned gospel/blues musician and story teller. Everyone there was blown away by his talent – and there was a bonus. Rev. Jones's wife, Bernise, sang for us too and she almost took the roof off! The after-party was lots of fun as well. If you were there, you know what I'm talking about. Thanks to all the volunteers that helped with the advertising, parking lot assistance, ushers and refreshments. Most of all, thanks to everyone who showed our guests what a warm and special place this is. If you missed this performance, maybe you can join us in the fall when we have another high-quality act coming to town – Mustard's Retreat. I hope to see you there!



Jason Foltz is an avid historian who loves uncovering traces of the past for the Dryden area and for St. John's. He recently discovered the gravesite of the priest who performed the very first baptism at St. John's in 1893 – Fr. Frederic Hall (1858 through 1903). It looks like other members of his family are remembered on this headstone. Thanks, Jason, for this find. There may be other gravestones connected to St. John's. I bet Jason would love some help.

What is Uncommon Prayer? And why do we do it?

This is the third year that St. John's will use an approach to Morning Prayer that we call "Uncommon Prayer". We didn't create the idea – Connie Ogg brought it to us from her time up north. They developed this approach for Sundays without clergy and found it brought them closer to God and each other in the process.



Basically, Uncommon Prayer is a more relaxed version of Morning Prayer. We still follow the structure of Morning Prayer but the Worship Leader acts as a facilitator who encourages people in the pews to volunteer to read different sections of the liturgy or the scriptures. And the space usually reserved for a sermon is used for a group discussion of the day's chosen readings. No one is put on the spot – but hearing different voices throughout the service is more engaging. And the comments during the reflection period have shown me that the Holy Spirit is very present among us. We sit in the back of the church (since that's where most people want to sit anyway) and move the Worship Leader's chair back there too so we're all close together. Somehow, it seems in tune with summer. Come and see for yourself – it's really pretty cool!

Episcopal Church unveils new Pride shield in celebration of LGBTQ+ inclusion

A new Pride shield to celebrate LGBTQ+ inclusion

In affirmation and celebration of the LGBTQ+ members of The Episcopal Church, the Office of Communications is pleased to introduce a new Pride shield available online for churchwide use.



The design retains the upper-left blue corner of The Episcopal Church's shield logo and incorporates elements of the traditional Pride flag as well as the Progress Pride flag and Philadelphia Pride flag. In their use of black, brown, pink, and light-blue diagonal lines, the [latter two flags](#) represent intersectional progress in acknowledging people who are often overlooked by the mainstream LGBTQ+ movement: communities of color; the transgender community; and the many thousands harmed by anti-LGBTQ+ policy—from those who lost their lives in the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and '90s, to those still disproportionately impacted today.

"As a longtime ally of LGBTQ+ people, I was so excited to work on this Pride shield for The Episcopal Church," said Melissa Walker, senior graphic designer. "I hope many more people feel seen and included by this new graphic as we enter Pride month."

For [half a century](#), Episcopalians have been working toward a greater understanding and radical inclusion of all God's children. Resolutions from General Convention in 1976 recognized LGBTQ+ people as children of God with an equal claim to the pastoral care of the church and equal protection under the law. In 1994, General Convention amended the church's canons to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, providing equal access to the rites and worship of the church, [including ordination](#). In 2015, General Convention voted to amend the canons that regulate [marriage](#), permitting any couple the rite of holy matrimony.

In June 2023, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry issued a [video message](#) of encouragement to "all of my LGBTQ+ family members," noting, "I believe deep in my soul that God is always seeking to create a world and a society where all are loved, where justice is done, and where the God-given equality of us all is honored in our relationships, in our social arrangements, and in law."

April Financial Report

April is the last month available for Vestry review.

April 2024	Monthly Budget	Monthly Actual	Better or Worse than Budget	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	Better or Worse than Budget
Income	\$5,500	\$4,322	\$1,268	\$22,000	\$37,181	\$15,041
Expenses	\$5,388	\$5,068	\$319	\$21,550	\$23,312	\$1,762
Net Profit	\$202	-\$747	\$949	\$590	\$13,869	\$13,279

Income: The monthly income is really better than it appears. Last month, some members contributed all of their annual pledge in one month. The short-fall this month (and in months to come) is really because their monthly contribution is not there. If the income number is adjusted for that, we are only slightly lower than budget this month.

Expenses: We had some residual expenses from Holy Week & Easter for Organist, Postage, Administrative Assistant. We also had some annual subscription charges for Zoom and Tech Soup (website with good deals on techie stuff for churches). Late snow fall means we paid for snow removal one more time. Let's hope that's it until next winter. Utilities were under budget for the first time this year. That should continue for the summer months. In spite of all this, we came in under budget for expenses which is good!

YTD Income: Looking VERY good due to the annual contribution in March described above. Even with that taken into account, we are above budget numbers for the year.

YTD Expenses: Last month was over budget by more than \$2000 YTD. This month shows improvement. Some accounts like Utilities will smooth out over the summer month. I'm hoping Office Supplies and Postage will also come down over the summer as well. The YTD number should come back in line over the next few month.

Net Profit: Looks wonderful! Even backing out the annual payment, we are still well in the black.

Vanguard Funds:

Total Stock Fund Balance as of 04/30/2024 - \$77,338 – Over \$12,000 increase above our initial investment of \$65,000

CD of \$22,000

Matures 02/28/2025 at 5.41% interest

CD at Oxford Bank –

\$10,000 CD at 5.65% maturing in August 2024

\$10,000 CD at 5.27% matured in May of 2024 with close to \$400 in-



Pentecost!

Always a great Sunday – the birthday of the church AND the official start of the church’s summer season of Pentecost (which lasts FOREVER but that’s another article). Neil Hargrave was our Worship Leader and did a fine job. And look at the smiles in our annual Pentecost picture. Red seems to suit everyone!



<u>Date</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Ministry Schedule</u> <u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Video</u>	<u>Counting Member 1</u>	<u>Counting Member 2</u>
06/02/2024	Ina			Kitty	Ina	Neil	Russ
06/09/2024	Margaret	Jack	Neil	Fr. Schneider	Ida Lynn	Connie	Mary
06/16/2024				Becky	Sherry	Russ	Jack
06/23/2024				Neil	Ina	Mary	Becky
06/30/2024	Beth Ann	Neil	John	Rev Schuetz	Wes	Jack	Neil

Remember St. John’s in your will:

Please consider helping the mission and ministry of St. John’s by remembering the church in your will. You can do so by using the following wording:

“I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to St. John’s Episcopal Church, a non-profit church, with the current address of 4074 S. Mill St., Dryden, MI 48428, and its successor, the greater of \$_____, or _____percentage of my gross estate, to be used in such manner as determined by its vestry.”

St. John's Episcopal Church
PO Box 86
4074 S Mill St.
Dryden, MI 48428

