

Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*

A Plan to Reenter Public Worship *Phased Plan Begins with 9:27 on June 28*

By Pastor Rhodes Woolly

As the Covid-19 pandemic makes its way into summer, Americans are trying to discern best practices for returning to work, play, and, yes, worship. We'd like to share with you our plan for reentering public worship at St. John's.

March 15 was our first fully digital live worship service at St. John's, something we've been able to continue each week since. Because we had over a year of digital worship under our belt, the transition was relatively easy. From an "audience" perspective, you've figured out how to worship in your living rooms, surrounded by distractions and interruptions. Not the "sacred space" we've been used to, but we've made it work. Kudos to you for that!

Throughout, we've longed for the time that we would return to public worship. Please note, we're not saying "return to church." *You've been the church all along.* We hear story after story of how you have cared for your neighbor, lifted up the lowly, and offered encouragement to the downtrodden. You've been faithful in your stewardship and consistent in your prayers. Thank you for being the church throughout this crisis. And keep it up! ... because God needs the church to provide hope and encouragement during these troubled times.

But the question persists: When is the best time to return to public worship? What metrics will we use to discern the "right" date. As we develop a plan, we are particularly sensitive to the following:

- What is the advice of our public health officials based on local and state-wide data?



- What is the broader advice of medical workers, scientists, the CDC, and others who study the trends for such a virus?
- How do we evaluate that advice alongside the growing desire among many (not all, but many) to reenter public worship?
- What is our own congregation's unique demographic? Yes, we are blessed with a large number of elderly folks; but we also have a sizeable number of young worshippers who are less-vulnerable to the effects of Covid-19.
- What is the recommendation of our Synod and other downtown congregations?
- What is the advice of health professionals in our own congregation, those on the front line of work in Rowan County?

Evaluating all of that input isn't easy, but it's necessary if we are to produce a plan that is right for St. John's and holds the trust of our congregation.

In developing this plan to reenter worship, we appealed to

Continue reading on page 9.



Sisters and Brothers,

Have you ever had a song that won't get out of your head? I remember when I was young, randomly someone would start singing "The Song that Never Ends." It only took the first couple of words and my brain would come back to that song for at least the rest of the day. Now, it seems as though Disney songs get stuck in my head as I

listen to "Let it Go," "Hakuna Matata," or "Show Yourself." My Disney loving kids have to listen to those songs on repeat. I find that I start singing them in the middle of writing a sermon, a Zoom call, or whatever else I am doing.

During the last month though, I have had a different song stuck in my head. It is the worship song "Stand in Your Love," by Bethel Music and Josh Baldwin. I play it on repeat over and over again. "My fear doesn't stand a chance when I stand in your love." It keeps playing in my head. I wake up in the middle of the night singing this song. I belt it out at the dinner table. I sing it while I am getting ready or playing with the kids or... really all the time. "My fear doesn't stand a chance when I stand in your love."

After a good two weeks of it playing in my head, I felt like Samuel in the middle of the night hearing a voice saying, "Samuel! Samuel!" Every time he heard the voice, he got up and ran to Eli to ask why he called him. Eli would reply, "I didn't call you. Go to bed." Finally, after the third time, Eli

said, "It is the voice of God. Ask God what God is trying to say." The next time he heard it, "Samuel! Samuel!" He replied, "Speak, for your servant is listening." I finally surrendered to God too. "Speak, I am listening."

I would like to say that I know exactly what God is saying to me through this song but I don't. God is still working something out in me with this song. It takes silence. It takes listening. It takes time.

Maybe you are in a similar boat right now. God is trying to speak something to you but your head and heart aren't figuring it out. That's ok. Keep at it. Keep listening. Keep still long enough for God to move you. Keep trying to discern the voice of God.

God is on the move in the world right now. I can feel it. "My fear doesn't stand a chance when I stand in your love."

Grace and Love,
+Pastor Laura



It's Time to Listen

Wednesdays at 8 pm via Zoom

By Pastor Rhodes Woolly

The last week of May was a particularly trying, frustrating, grief-laden week. As we worried over reentering public space in the midst of the pandemic, we encountered horrifying images of another African-American killed at the hands of hate and fear. It begs the question, "Why, O Lord, why?"

When the people of Israel asked that question, God sent prophets to proclaim a message most were not willing to hear. In all cases, the message began with this word: "Listen."

In this age of sound bites, bumper sticker campaigns, and twitter statements limited to 280 characters, we've become obsessed with hearing ourselves talk at the expense of listening to others. *Really* listening.

When I look in the mirror, I have to raise my own hand. This past week, for example, I found myself obsessed with what I needed to say related to the killings.

Until God placed on my heart the word shared with the prophets: "Listen." And it struck me that perhaps it's time I stop agonizing over what I need to say and, instead, make room for the voices of others, especially our black and brown brothers and sisters.

I believe it's time for the church to enter into a time of deep listening. Let's listen to each other, especially to those whose voices aren't often heard. Let's listen to the vulnerable, the oppressed, and those without privilege. Let's listen, without

spending time trying to form a response or seek a flaw in their argument. Let's just listen, praying that God might bring to us a nugget of truth and clarity along the way.

It's time to listen. For the next few months, I'd like to invite you into a Zoom call where we'll listen to voices that often aren't heard. Together we'll listen to the rather short, 5-15 minute talks about one thing or another, and then spend time asking the question, "What did I learn?"

For those who worry about things like this, I assure you there's no political agenda here. I'm not at all interested in promoting one party/candidate/platform over another, although some will think so without even joining in. Our goal is to provide space for minority voices who dare to speak about core ethics of our faith: mercy, justice, peace, wholeness, love.

Interested? Then join us Wednesday evenings, beginning June 10 between 8-9 pm. Will we be challenged? I hope so. Will we learn and grow? I hope so. Will it make a difference in our lives and in this world? One never knows ... but I'm pretty sure we'll never answer that question without listening.

I know I need it. I hope you'll join me on this important journey.

The zoom link will be available each week via FaithLife or contact the church office.

Be of Good Courage

Hear from Stacey Shafer about Kingdom Kids "at Home"

Tell us a little more about one project in particular in which you've found great meaning.

The Kingdom Kids drive through in May was very successful! Seeing many of the children's faces brought us great joy. Pastor Laura, the Young Family and the Carter Family parked and waved to the families as they drove by after receiving their fun bags and lemonade from Mrs. Elissa and the Shafer family. Children's Ministry would not be as successful as it is without the leaders who volunteer their time and energy.

Saturday, June 6 we will have our second drive through from 10 - 11 am under the awning near the Pit entrance. Our 3 and 4 year olds will receive a fun Ollie the Owl activity book, a placemat for the summer months with their memory verse, theme, bottom line and bible stories for each week and a t-shirt! Our elementary school aged kids will receive a popcorn container filled with a bag of popcorn for a movie night with their families, a t-shirt and print outs for the summer and VBS theme "Focus."

We are taking a break from Facebook Live and Zoom meetings during the month of June, but will continue to stay connected through our weekly emails which include bible stories, videos, and more!

Be of Good Courage T-Shirts

Kingdom Kids will shine bright as they will be receiving bright yellow tie-dye t-shirts with "Be of Good Courage" on them! Hoping when we can be out and in the community again these shirts will encourage others to focus on the positive in that we are all in this together!



Register Online for VBS Now!

VBS plans are in "Focus" for Aug. 2, 9, 16, and 23. Sunday afternoons from 3 - 5:30 pm will be filled with fun and excitement for 3 year olds through 5th graders. Registration starts June 1 online!

VBS volunteers are needed! Contact Stacey, Stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org to volunteer.

Be of Good Courage!- Read a good news story about one of our kingdom kids on page 15!

Be of Good Courage

Pastor Laura Shares How Our Youth Are Engaging Online

In what new ways has your ministry area been able to stay connected and think creatively about faith formation in May?

May has been a month of building faith through showing care for our Class of 2020 and others that are struggling with different things. I feel as though we are Zoomed out so we will be practicing some Sabbath rest as we gear up for July and the fall.

Tell us a little more about one project in particular in which you've found great meaning.

I have really found joy in getting together the Senior Spotlight videos. I was amazed at the response of parents who were eager and willing to go along with a crazy idea and took time out of their schedules to sit down and zoom with me. It was adorable seeing the baby pictures and looking at how much these wonderful seniors have grown. One of my favorite parts of it was finding the music that matched each student's character. Each video had a different twist with the parents' comments but I got to add in the music to tell the story. I would go to the website and after a few times, even though I was working on one senior's video, I would be downloading music because it was so "this student's" style. My husband was the one that watched the final edit and would tell me, "The music is too loud at this point" or "The voices need to be cranked up at that point" or "You forgot a caption here." Even my littles got involved in the fun and were curious to watch each senior "grow up" in front of their eyes. It really was a labor of love!

Some Good News.

On May 22, 13 out of our 15 seniors were to graduate. I began thinking about how hard that day was going to be. Through a Thrivent Action Team grant and with the help of a couple of my Small Group Leaders, we delivered 13 signs reminding them that their St. John's family loves them and played an old fashion game of "Ding Dong Ditch," where we left a gift bag for students and a little something for their parents too!



Mitch Jeter will attend the University of South Carolina

Also, we took the youth auction to a virtual setting and raised \$10,072 for our students and mission partners. There are still more goodies to auction off in August (we are waiting to see what regulations there are on sports and gathers.) We are so thankful and humbled by the generous support of the congregation in caring for our students! Thank you!

Be of Good Courage

Diane Poole Shares How Senior Seasons is Connecting Digitally

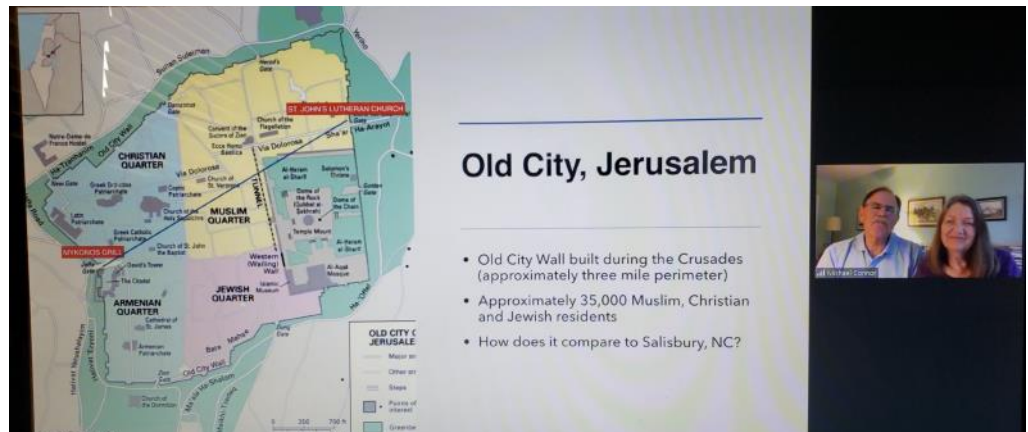
In what new ways has your ministry area been able to stay connected and think creatively about faith formation?

The ministry to the Senior Seasons group has had to stay connected via bi-weekly caring calls and through electronic media. Many seniors' families have encouraged them to learn how to use their computers, phones, and other devices for FaceTiming, Zoom Meetings, Facebook and other ways to stay connected. Family members have helped seniors get set up to watch worship services online and to use their webcams to talk to others. This factor has helped us develop programs seniors can participate in at home.

Mike and BJ Connor were the first to speak to seniors in a Zoom Meeting about their trip to Israel on May 19 and 26. Both sessions have been recorded for those who missed their presentations. Note that the shared files cannot be downloaded or posted on social media.

Tell us a little more about one project in particular in which you've found great meaning.

Faith formation and continued faith focus have been a common theme in all St. John's communications. The Friday email blast to Seniors is no exception. Through a Facebook post on Thursday, members can hear a brief description (clue) of the "Thought for the Day" devotion that has been included in every email. This is particularly rewarding for me because (1) it gives me a scripture to ponder all week, and (2) I enjoy writing. There have been a few encouraging comments, which are "icing" on the cake.



Mike and B.J. Connor share about their experience in the Holy Land.

Upcoming—June Lunch-n-Learns

Zoom meeting links will be provided in the Friday email blasts.

Wednesday, June 3, 2020, 12-1 pm: Amy-Lynn Albertson,

Rowan County Extension Director and Extension Agent, Agriculture – Horticulture, will speak on "Container Gardens," which includes flowering plants and vegetables. During the phased recovery of Covid-19, container gardens can help people get outside for exercise, enhancing yards and providing food instead of purchasing from retailers.

Wednesday, June 17, 2020, 12-1 pm: Toi N. Degree, Rowan

County Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences, will speak on healthy snacks and eating the Mediterranean way to avoid weight gain and health issues during the quarantine. Even if you have not gained weight, healthy eating is not the same as dieting. It is possible to eat healthy and enjoy the flavors at the same time.

Be of Good Courage

An Update on Adult Discipleship from Danny Hines

In what new ways has your ministry area been able to stay connected and think creatively about faith formation?

We are looking to re-engage our small group ministry here at St. John's and have found some new and exciting ways to get this started. We will have to begin this in a Zoom format but can easily transition to meeting in person when we are allowed to do that. We will provide more information about this through our weekly FaithLife email and on all our social media platforms.

If you are looking for thought provoking weekly bible studies, BibleProject.com offers some very insightful studies on their website. You can access the weekly Bible Studies at the top of the opening page. These Bible Studies are geared for individuals and families.

Tell us a little more about one project in particular in which you've found great meaning.

Reflections is up and running on Sunday nights at 7:30 pm. We decided to move it from Monday night to Sunday night so we wouldn't interfere with bible studies that meet on Monday night. We take time each meeting to check in with everyone and discuss how they are doing and any concerns that we can lift up during our opening or closing prayer. We have added a new component that will be very helpful in our discussions. The pastors are providing several talking points with their sermon text to help us kick off our discussion. We hope you will join us on Sunday nights at 7:30 pm.

Anyone that wants to participate can email me at danny@stjohns-salisbury.org and I will provide them with the Zoom link to join in on Monday night.

Women's and Men's Bible Study Continues

On Tuesday mornings, 8-9 am, the women of St. John's are meeting for the regularly scheduled bible study, led by Pastor



Laura. The Men's Bible Study, led by Pastor Rhodes, continues to meet on Thursdays, at 8-9 am via zoom, as well. In the midst of a pandemic, we want to extend that invitation to YOU. If you would like to join either the Women's or the Men's Bible Study, email Deborah, deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org so that she can add you to the list. You will get the Zoom link and bible text for the week.

Just For Moms!

Stacey Shafer has started a Mom Support Zoom on Wednesday evenings. They talk, support, encourage, cry, laugh and pray together. If you would like to join the group, please send Stacey an email, stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org, and she will be happy to add you to her list! Whether you have a baby, toddler, elementary age, teenager or college student, this group is for you!

*Don't fear, because I am with you;
don't be afraid, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you I will surely help you;
I will hold you with my righteous strong hand.
Isaiah 41:10*

Even When Steeples Are Falling

by Rob Durocher

A little over a year ago on April 19, 2019 the world was stunned to hear that the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was literally burning down. While this tragedy was unfolding there were many people lining the streets singing together. Many of them were singing a beautiful song *Je Vous Salue Marie* (Hail Mary, or Ave Maria). I watched a YouTube video(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iH8Pbcd4z80>) of this and was



Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris

struck at how even in the face of apparent destruction a vast community stood together on the streets outside of the Cathedral singing and praying as they helplessly watched a place of comfort, worship and history being slowly devoured by flames! The haunting melody spoke of a sense of disbelief and despair over what they were witnessing – and yet at the same time a sense of hope as they remembered and sang a hymn to the lowly virgin, the mother of our Lord. Why were they singing? What was the point?

For them music created a sense of community, of belonging and participation in the face of the unspeakable and the unknown. There was something of their collective strength and determination that was so inspiring as if they were saying *these flames will not destroy our spirit and we will worship and sing in this house of God again!*

In these days of COVID-19, when we were experiencing tremendous anxiety a month or so ago, we are finally beginning to see a way through and a way back to our houses of worship. It has been such a blessing for us to be able to continue to bring worship to you and to worship together with you. While for many there has been a feeling of isolation from what has been most familiar, as we watched the proverbial steeples of our lives start to crumble in a day of social distancing. But just as music and singing was a great source of comfort to the Parisians at the burning of Notre Dame, I believe digital worship has been a source of comfort, bringing us together when we cannot gather in place but rather around our devices. So very many of you have expressed incredible gratitude for the opportunity to sing and pray along with us as we lift up songs and hymns, both new and familiar. Singing reminds us that we belong not only

together but to a God who inhabits the praise of his people!

We have heard from many medical and music professionals both inside and outside of the greater church that singing together, especially in small spaces is to be discouraged at least for a while due to how the virus can spread through droplets or aerosole transmission. While this is pretty sobering and even discouraging to many, I guarantee that anything we do as we look to return to worship in stages will always be with the health, well- being and safety of all.

But even that should never discourage us from singing the songs of Zion. We'll just sing them differently! Sing like there's no tomorrow in the relative safety of your home, your yard or even with members of your family respecting space and distance! Listen to the music and songs that inspire you, be they sacred or secular, new or old, and take advantage of the music offered through our St. John's social media, "Be of Good Courage" emails, and through many other streaming resources!

One of my favorite cassette tapes (hey this was over 35 years ago!) was called GREAT HYMNS OF THE FAITH recorded by the National Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Choir and the Amen Choir of the First Baptist Church. I wore that out many years ago but so many of these inspiring hymns can be found on YouTube if you'd like to hear and sing along. I highly recommend them!

I encourage you to pray for each other as we look at better days ahead, rebuilding the fabric and steeples of our lives. No doubt a safe and hopeful return to a sense of corporate worship will continue to sustain us. Notre Dame is being rebuilt and soon we'll be worshipping together (safely!) again.

In closing I'd like to share the following words from Nikolai S.E. Grundtvig, a 19th century Danish Lutheran Pastor and hymn writer:

Built on a rock the church shall stand,
even when steeples are falling;
Crumbled have spires in every land,
bells still are chiming and calling –
Calling the young and old to rest,
calling the souls of those distressed,
Longing for life everlasting. "My peace I leave with you.
Amen." (ELW 652)

Rob Durocher, deacon, is Minister of Worship and the Arts.

A New St. John's Podcast Begins June 1

Listen to both podcasts on your preferred platforms

St. John's podcasts are now available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and iHeart Radio. Listen to St. John's sermons on the sermon channel, updated weekly. You'll also discover a new podcast called "Conversations that Matter," during which Pastor Rhodes interviews someone in our community who has made a significant impact in our community.

"We have some remarkable leaders in our community whose stories need to be heard," says Pastor Rhodes. "We also have some folks doing some really hard, necessary, sometimes controversial work. This podcast is a platform for their voices to be heard."

In June, you'll hear Pastor Rhodes interview Marvin Moore, principal of Isenberg Elementary School in Salisbury. Moore was a hero on the basketball court at Catawba, but his broader story — the part most people don't hear — is what made him who he is. Be sure to listen to this entertaining and provocative interview.

New content will be uploaded on the first day of every month. In July, Pastor Rhodes interviews four women-in-ministry, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in the Lutheran church. You'll hear from Pastors Laura Henrik, Danielle DeNise, Adrienne Martin, and Adrienne's mom, Debbie Martin Purpur, who served as a pastor's spouse for 45 years.

In August, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton joins us in conversation. Eaton is the first female presiding bishop of the ELCA.



Marvin Moore

To listen, just search "SJLC" on your preferred podcast platform. Make sure to subscribe!

Public Worship, Continued from page 1.

several of our medical professionals for their advice. Dr. Chris Agner is a recently retired internist who specialized in infectious diseases. He offered the following thoughts:

"As new information accumulates at a rapid pace, we can now take measured steps toward returning to the intimate group worship experience we all cherish. Despite hopeful reports, the likelihood of a safe and effective vaccine in less than two years is very low and waiting for a vaccine before we return to worship is impractical.

"So then what could be considered? A reopening of the 9:27 service whose attendees are generally in the low risk group would seem to be reasonable assuming those in the high-risk groups or anyone with symptoms self-select to not attend. I would recommend delaying the 8:30 and 11 am services — with, generally speaking, a much older demographic -- until the virus has largely cleared the community."

Taking all of these considerations in mind, our worship team offers the following plan for reentering worship at St. John's:

- Continue to offer online worship every Sunday at 11 am.

- Beginning Sunday, June 28 — the Sunday after the governor's phase 3 order takes affect -- offer the 9:27 service in the Faith Center. Details are forthcoming.
- On Sunday evening, June 28, offer an outdoor worship event on campus.
- Beginning Wednesday, July 1, offer a mid-week service at 12 pm in the Chapel. Masks will be required.
- Continue to discern the best date to begin public worship on Sundays at 8:30 and 11 am in the chapel/sanctuary.
- A medical team chaired by Dr. Chris Agner and Dr. Neil Patel, ICU chief at the Rowan Medical Center, will recommend best practices for our return to worship.

We are fully aware of the wide variety of opinions regarding a return to public worship. Our hope is that our members, friends, and the broader community will respect our decision and trust that it is made in the best interest of all.

Of note: All on-campus activities are cancelled through June 27. We will begin opening church facilities in phases for on-campus small group meetings after June 28. Thank you for your faithfulness during these difficult times and for your continued support of our ministry to St. John's.

Congratulations to Our High School Graduates



Claire Allen graduated from Rowan Early College. The daughter of Angie Allen and Brad Jordan and David Allen, Claire plans to attend Gardner-Webb University to study English or History.



Madison Anderson graduated Jesse C. Carson High School. Daughter of Bryan and Christy Anderson, Madison plans to attend RCCC to pursue a degree in Nursing.



Archie Dees graduated from Salisbury High School. The son of Jay and Meg Dees, Archie plans to attend UNC-Chapel Hill to study Media and Journalism and Sports Administration.



Caroline Houpe graduated from East Rowan. The daughter of Dean and Carole Houpe, Caroline plans to attend Concord University to pursue a degree in Elementary School Special Education.



Julie Kenny graduated from Salisbury High School. The daughter of Gary and Alex Kenny, Julie plans to study Marketing at Appalachian State University.



Emma Myers graduated from East Rowan High School. The daughter of Michael and Tabitha Myers, Emma plans to attend UNC-Greensboro and study Criminal Justice.



Cali Proper graduated from Cannon School. Daughter of Tim and Trisha Proper, Cali plans to study Business and Chinese at the University of Southern Mississippi.



Hank Robins graduated from Salisbury High School. Son of Clint and Jody Robins, Hank plans to attend Lenoir-Rhyne University to study Business.



Nina Sachse graduated from Gray Stone Day School. Daughter of Tom and Michelle Sachse, Nina plans to attend Campbell University to major in Biology: Pre-Medical and ROTC.



Sydney Sims graduated from Salisbury High School. Daughter of Joe and Janet Sims, Sydney plans to attend UNC-Chapel Hill to study Biology with a pathway to pre-med.



Skyler Smith graduated from Jesse C. Carson High School. Daughter of Matt and Kristin Losh, Skyler plans to attend East Carolina University to study Child Life.



Katherine Sullivan graduated from Salisbury High School. Daughter of Robert and Sandra Sullivan, Katherine plans to major in Elementary Education at Appalachian State University.

Congratulations to our High School Graduates



Chad Van der Poel graduated from Salisbury High School. Son of Cheryl and Jack Van der Poel, Chad plans to attend The University of Tennessee to study Business.



Anna Grace Woolly graduated from Salisbury High School. Daughter of Rhodes and Krista Woolly, Anna Grace plans to attend Appalachian State University to study Sustainable Development.



Mitch Jeter graduated from Cannon School. Son of Andrew and Stacy Jeter, Mitch plans to attend University of South Carolina to major in Biological Sciences.

St. John's awards \$26,256 in scholarships

St. John's awarded scholarships to 34 students totaling \$26,256. The scholarships are the result of generous gifts from members who want to encourage and support students in their post-secondary education. The scholarships are part of the St. John's Benevolent Foundation, a \$9 million foundation started in 1974.

Congratulations to the following recipients:

The Thomas E. Gilbert and Viola H. Bailey Scholarship: Mallory Braun, Mary Kaufman, Brenna McCormick, Nina Sachse, Sydney Sims

The Dorothy Click Fesperman Scholarship: Claire Allen, Gemma Brown, Tessa Brown, Abby Buechler, Archie Dees, David Derrick, Spencer Everhart, Grace Faller, Elizabeth Graber, Julie Kenny, Callie Kirchin, Rebecca Lewis, Sam McNeely, Emma Myers, Carsyn Parrott, Cali Proper, Thomas Robins, Emma Ryerson, Bethany Stauffer, Caylynn Westberg

The Scott Rierson Memorial Scholarship: Claire Allen, Spencer Everhart, Callie Kirchin, Scott McNeely, Nina Sachse, Sydney Sims, Bethany Stauffer

The Emily May Brown Memorial Scholarship: Lillian Huebner, Juan Salazar, Dulce Torres

The Bruce Alden Ketner Jr. Scholarship: Luke Brady, Mallory Braun, Lillian Huebner, Mary Kaufman, Julian Morgan, Hans Roemer

The Margaret Cline and Ernest Crawford Safrit Sr. Scholarship: Victoria Plyler, Skyler Smith, Katherine Sullivan

The Hugh B. and Lena B. Lyerly Scholarship: Victoria Plyler, Skyler Smith, Katherine Sullivan

Courtney Bost Resigns as CDC Executive Director

After 20 years of ministry at the St. John's Child Development Center, Courtney Bost has resigned as executive director to pursue other options in early childcare.

"Courtney has been an amazing advocate for kids and such a strong, consistent presence at the CDC," says Pastor Laura. "She will certainly be missed."

Courtney has been a hands-on staff member since the CDC opened 20 years ago. She has occupied nearly every position at the CDC, elevated to executive director in 2018.



Courtney's heart will be around this place for a long time," says Pastor Rhodes.

"We are so thankful her for her dedication, faithfulness, and calm/gentle spirit."

During the transition, the two assistant directors, Lonna and Kristy, will assume many of the roles of the executive director. An interview team has been formed, and it is hoped that a new director will be in place by the beginning of the new school year.

Join us in thanking Courtney for 20 years of ministry!

The CDC has been Courtney's first and only job. "A little bit of

Mark Bias Steps in as new Bookkeeper



A special welcome to Mark Bias, who joins our staff as part time accounting staff.

Mark attended Austin College in Sherman Texas and has extensive work experience as an operations manager and in auditing. He worked at the Historic Salisbury Foundation

for seven years and most recently with NSC Behavioral Concepts.

Mark says of the opportunity to work with St. John's, "I like

being able to put my varied skillset to work for a non-profit organization that needs to operate as efficiently as possible in order be a respectful steward of its gifts and mission. St. John's, with its many significant faith-based outreach and congregational programs, is the perfect fit.

"Everyone has been so welcoming. I look forward to meeting the many volunteers who are unable at this time to come by the office due to social distancing measures."

Mark is a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

Welcome Mark!

Update from Bethlehem

May 26, 2020

Dear sisters and brothers, partners and friends of Christmas Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church: Greetings from Bethlehem!

Yesterday the Palestinian government announced that the lockdown that was imposed beginning of March 5 because of Covid-19 has come to an end. This all started in March 5, 2020 when six cases of Covid-19 virus were discovered among the staff of a hotel in Beit Jala, and it is likely that they caught it from a tourist group that stayed there.

The Palestinian government took this seriously, especially since we do not have enough resources or hospitals to control a spread of a pandemic. It imposed strict social distancing measures; schools and University and houses or worship and all other forms of gathering were closed. We stayed home mostly. For twelve Sundays, we broadcasted the church to the houses of our congregants through the internet. The spread of the virus has been controlled, and Bethlehem has been without any new cases for almost two weeks – praise God! Next Sunday will be our first in 12 weeks when we all gather. It will be Pentecost Sunday; a time of celebration and thanksgiving.

It is hard to underestimate the effects of this pandemic on Bethlehem and the Palestinian people. Bethlehem depends a lot economically on tourism. Many lost their only source of income; and those who suffered the most are those depending on daily wages – the most vulnerable. Moreover, many who go for labor in the Israeli side had to stay in Bethlehem. Christian organizations and schools whose source of income included tourism and/or school fees also suffered heavily and some were forced to decrease their monthly salaries – some by 50%. It is going to take years before we recover.

To add to an already difficult situation, the Israeli government announced that it would move forward with its annexation plan, which will have severe consequences of the chances of peace and a viable Palestinian state.

Our church has responded to this crisis from the beginning. We supported many families from within the congregation and from the community – those who lost their income because of the closure.

While some church members were affected, others have given generously to our small and humble relief efforts. We established a small fund to stand with families affected by the crisis, as we anticipate that the months ahead do not look promising.

Our budget in the church has taken a hit as well, as we did not have services or visitors for three months. Our Sunday offering generally make 45% of our annual income, and we anticipate that it will be reduced by at least a half. I am confident that some members will give generously during the service on Sunday and the coming months, but at the same time I know for a fact that many will not be able to do so because of the above mentioned challenges.

Things do not look promising. And if any land knows about the miracle of life from the dead, it is this land. Because of this, we continue to hope!

I am writing this letter to appeal for you to support our church and recovery efforts. We are hoping to raise no less than \$15,000 by the end of the year to sustain our work in the church and enable us to continue to support and stand by affected families.

I am making this appeal while fully realizing that this is a global crisis that we are going through. During these last three months, I was reminded of the powerful words in Gen. 4:9: “Am I my brother/sister’s keeper?” Covid-19 reminded our world – we can only hope – that we are all in the same boat together. We have to stand by one another; and we need one another, and to coordinate our efforts, in order to survive. We are indeed one another’ keepers!

Thank you for your support and prayers!

In peace, the Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, Pastor



“Be of Good Courage”

Sophie is Reunited with Her Mommy for Her Mommy’s Wedding

By Stacey Shafer

After the virus interrupted everyone’s life, Michele Johnson and her parents Richard and Delores Imblum made a decision that it would be best for Sophie to “move” into her grandparents home for a while to help all of them not have direct contact with Michele, a nurse practitioner at Autumn Care retirement community.

Sophie was excited at first, but soon became very sad to not have her mommy’s hugs and kisses. Their fun time came each evening during a FaceTime call while reading stories together. Doing online school work, riding her scooter, playing Old Maid with her grandparents, and watching all seasons of Madeline, kept them on the bright side.

Sophie even celebrated her birthday in April away from home. Keeping tradition, Sophie was able to go to her house after her mom left for work and sit on her bed filled with lots of pink balloons filled with birthday love as Michele does for her every year.

As you can imagine, she missed her mommy, dog, and her own bed so much that the family made the decision it was time for her to return home after six weeks. And what a special day it was!

On May 16th Sophie and her grandparents were able to rejoice in Michele’s wedding to Eric Knorr while standing side by side for photos. What a very happy moment for all of them to witness the love Jesus had for all of them that day!



Michele and Sophie reunite outside the St. John’s Chapel

Richard and Delores are very proud of Michele in how well she has taken care of her patients in the health care profession and how she has fully focused on their well-being. This family’s courage has shown how, together, things can be overcome through God’s goodness.

I would say this family has shown quite well what it looks like to “Be of good courage.”

Stacey serves as the Children’s Minister at St. John’s.

Church-Wide Retreat, September 18-20, 2020



The 2020 Church-Wide Retreat is still on the schedule for Sept. 18-20, 2020. This year's theme is "Unified in Christ" and will focus on the beautiful passage from John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Register for the retreat today! You can mail in the form on page 13 or register online at stjohns-salisbury.org/retreat.

Church-Wide Retreat, September 18-20, 2020

Register early — only 200 spots available! Deadline is Friday, September 4 at 5 pm. You may also register online at stjohns-salisbury.org.

Registration includes lodging, meals and programming — a fun filled family weekend! Want a closer look? Take a tour of Lutheridge by visiting lutheridge.com. Lodging is appropriate for people and families of all ages, including hotel-style accommodations. Family and small group accommodations are available. All lodging includes linens except Beam. **You will receive your room assignment at check-in.** Questions? Call Carol Everhart at 704.637.2893 or 704.798.2894.



Adult Name(s): _____

Children's Name and age/grade: _____

Children's programming and childcare is available during Saturday programming and Sunday worship.

_____ # of children requiring care, 3 and under

_____ # of children Pre-K to 5th grade

Mailing address: _____

Preferred phone number: _____ Email: _____

Cost	# of individuals	Total Cost
Adults: \$75	_____	_____
Middle/High School: \$50	_____	_____
Children — Pre-K - 5th Grade: \$25	_____	_____
Children — 3 and under: Free	_____	_____
Note: Sunday breakfast and box lunch are included . Please indicate how many box lunches are needed.	_____	included
Please note: This year middle school children will stay with their families.	TOTAL DUE:	_____

To secure your spot, please return a registration form and non-refundable \$50 deposit as early as possible. Make checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Church and mark "Retreat 2020." Please mail or bring form and check to the church office.

I have special needs for lodging: _____

I have special dietary needs/allergies: _____

I have special needs for mobility around Lutheridge. *Golf carts with drivers will be available.*

I am asking for financial assistance. I am able to pay: \$ _____

I would like to include a donation to assist others in need of financial assistance: \$ _____

I will need help with transportation to Lutheridge.

Pastor Rhodes Earns Doctorate in Ministry

By Susan Shinn Turner

Congratulations to Pastor Rhodes Woolly, who completed a doctorate in ministry this spring from Emory University. This year, he and Krista are also celebrating 25 years in ministry together.

His graduation is the third for the Woolly family during 2020. Anna graduated from Salisbury High School, and Matthew will graduate in December from N.C. State University.

Pastor Rhodes received a degree in political science, economics and German from Lenoir-Rhyne University, followed by a master's in international studies from the University of South Carolina. Even though his father was a pastor, he says, he "put it off for so long."

"Part of me knew that ministry was a safe place," he says, "and I wasn't sure I wanted to choose the safe option."

He adds, "I grew up in the church. I loved church. But it didn't feel like a call to me. I needed to explore something else."

He entered graduate school in 1988, assuming he would end up with a career in foreign service or with an international relief agency. "But those opportunities never presented themselves to me."

Instead he worked as a lobbyist in Washington, advocating on behalf of vocational rehabilitation. Ironically, Krista worked in the same industry — as a counselor with the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department.

While in Washington, a friend asked Rhodes to speak to a group of high school students who were learning about social justice and advocacy. "Right down my alley," he thought ... until the conversation turned to faith. "The second we shifted the conversation from politics to faith, I found my energy."

Soon after, he and Krista made the decision to go to seminary. He left Washington on his birthday, March 30, 1992, the two



were married on May 16, and he began a summer Greek class three weeks later. He graduated four years later, and they accepted a call to Bethel Lutheran Church in Winchester, Va., where he served as pastor for 13 years. Pastor Rhodes accepted the call to St. John's in March 2009.

Why a doctorate? And why now?

"Ministry is very time-consuming," he explains, "and if you're not careful, you forgo time spent reading and learning. After 22 years in ministry, I needed a booster shot, and a highly-focused program like this one seemed to make sense. I needed the focused, disciplined opportunity to think critically, to be engaged with new authors and theologians, and walk alongside other pastors who were in similar situations."

Pastor Rhodes started work at Emory in 2017. Over six semesters of study, his 12-person cohort — pastors from 7 different denominations from around the country — focused on the broad category of "community and congregational leadership." They spent significant time assessing themselves as leaders, their communities, and their congregations. There were other courses on worship, the Psalms, and theology, but all were presented through the lens of leadership.

Continued ...

Continued from page 18

Throughout, cohort members were developing projects that tackled particular leadership needs in their communities. Pastor Rhodes addressed the challenge of preparing early career adults for community and congregational leadership, inviting a group of 8 young adults into an 8 month cohort that included weekly, full group study and 1x1 mentoring with trained mentors.

“It was a group effort,” he quickly adds. Sure enough, Pastor Rhodes led the cohort with the help of co-teachers Cyndi Osterhus and Mark Ritchie, and Mike Connor, who trained the vocational mentors.

The pandemic cut the mentoring piece short, but seeds had already been planted, and confidence grew that this program was an effective way to engage and form young adults for Christ-centered leadership.

“We desperately need that kind of leadership in our community and congregations,” Pastor Rhodes says. “We need a new generation of leaders who look through the lens of faith and lead with the heart of Christ. This is exciting work.”

As for his new degree, Pastor Rhodes says it has helped him to be a better pastor at St. John’s and a better community member in Salisbury.

“It was hard to read a chapter or journal article without thinking about our very unique community,” he says. “The program has definitely given me a lot more tools in my toolkit, and a lot more focus and energy for our work in Salisbury.”

Trinity Living Center Hosts Annual Un-fundraiser

Trinity Living Center is an adult day service program and a ministry of Lutheran Services Carolina, 7:15 am –5:15 pm, Monday– Friday. Participants spend time with friends, receive medical care and “spa treatments” (assisted bathing), and enjoy fun activities and nutritious meals while their caregivers are at work or at rest.

TLC relies on the heartfelt generosity of supporters and donors through the annual Trinity Living Center Un-fundraiser. The purpose of the Un-Fundraiser instead of a big fundraising event, you can make a little magic happen from the comfort of your own home by making a simple gift to the Trinity Living Center Un-Fundraiser. Your gift will be used directly to support the program at 100%.

What can your gift provide?

- \$50— Two opportunities for participants to receive bathing services. This particular service not only helps participants but also takes the weight off caregivers struggling with bathing at home.
- \$100— A full day of adult day services, bathing services,

and transportation to and from the program.

- \$250— An adventure within the community for 12-15 participants, broadening the day’s programming and connecting participants to the community.
- \$500— Two months of groceries to provide soul-warming breakfasts and afternoon snacks.
- \$1000— 300 delicious and nutritious hot lunches for grateful participants.

No matter the amount every gift will have a positive impact on the lives of those who attend TLC.

Trinity Living Center and Lutheran Services Carolinas thank you for your support.



An Update from NovusWay

May 22, 2020

To honor our commitment to providing the healthiest and safest environment possible for our campers, counselors, staff, and guests, and after prayerful and informed consideration, our executive team and the NovusWay Board of Trustees has made the difficult decision to suspend all scheduled camp programming for summer 2020 at Lutheridge, Lutherock, Luther Springs and Lutheranch. With campers, parents, counselors, and congregations, we share the disappointment and loss this painful news brings.

The recommended guidelines on how to conduct camp in this time of pandemic, published by the American Camp Association (ACA) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), present constraints that greatly limit the positive impact and experience of summer camp. Even with our skilled program leadership and summer counselors, the cloud of this pandemic creates significant limitations to building the kind of life-giving community we have grown to love and expect at camp.

NovusWay's registration team will send out emails to registered camper parents, guardians, and leaders providing options and next steps for existing registrations. Our registration team is working tirelessly to develop a system to respond to everyone's account in a timely manner. You will receive an email to the address you provided on Friday, May

22 to guide your decision-making.

Our dedicated staff members are developing alternative plans to provide you and your family a way to return to the camp you love in a safe and life-giving way later in the summer. We will communicate those opportunities by early June through email, on our website, and on our social media.



We know that in this time of uncertainty and isolation that children, youth, and adults need camp. As the strong and loving camp community we are, let's stay connected, draw on our memories of times at camp, and tell our camp stories. Your stories and the stories yet to come will light the fire that carry us all through the next 12 months until we can gather again for summer camp.

Until then, we know that Jesus continues to walk with us. While we all may struggle to recognize his face as we walk through the valley, like his companions on the road to Emmaus, we will say, "Were our hearts not burning within us?" And then, gathered again, we will see clearly and rejoice for all that God has done. We can't wait to meet you there.

An Update from Kure Beach Agape Ministries

May 28, 2020

Dear friends,

We hold dearly the core values of our ministry, and have built a strong reputation for quality programming by living our 7 Major Goals. Goal #3 is "Providing a Safe Environment" for campers, guests, and staff. Whenever we face a question about direction, purpose, or innovation we have been diligent in holding our core values and goals up to any decision.

We hold you, the people we serve, in constant prayer as we are confident of your prayers for us. In conversation with

healthcare professionals, our Board of Directors and leadership staff have made the difficult decision to suspend all Summer Camp programming for our resident and day camps in the Summer of 2020.



Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Randy Youngquist-Thurrow, director



Dear St. John's Family,

Following my sudden and very unexpected diagnosis with Covid-19, I was understandably concerned about my health, and especially about Karl's well-being. It did not take long for the reality of illness and quarantine to set in!

But God was with us during that month-long experience, and used angels to minister to us in the form of our St. John's family. You provided meals, groceries, crucial items from the drug store, phone calls, emails, texts, and flooded our mailbox with beautiful cards and messages of encouragement. Most importantly, you lifted us up in prayer!

Karl and I have been privileged to serve this church for many years, and we have always felt blessed to be a part of this congregational family....But after this experience we feel doubly blessed! We can never fully repay your many kindnesses, but are going to try to "pay it forward" in your honor. We are truly and humbly grateful for your love and care during this time, holding you in our hearts and our prayers, and thanking God daily for you!

With love and gratitude,
Rosemary and Karl Kinard

Dear St. John's family,

First, thank you for your prayers, love, and encouraging emails for the two and a half months while we were volunteering at Ecce Homo Pilgrim House in Jerusalem, and for our safe return March 17.

Second, thank you for your prayers, love, and cards after the loss of Michael's mother, Antoinette Connor, to COVID-19 on April 21, in Pennsylvania. It's humbling to be the recipients of such thoughtfulness.

Michael and B.J. Connor
Nichole, Erron, Connor, and Jillian Towns (to whom Antoinette was "MeMom")

I would like to thank members of our congregation for their prayers during my recovery from surgery. It does mean a great deal to know that so many people continue to care for each other. My surgeon is pleased with my progress and I will be released from his care this week.

Thank you,
Henry Kluttz



Creation Care

Good news: St. John's energy savings in April were significantly higher than normal. Thanks to cost savings brought on by the pandemic and the solar energy generated by our 199 solar panels, energy consumption was one-third what it was this time last year.

Update from Meals on Wheels

Dear St. John's friends,

Greetings from Meals on Wheels Rowan! We hope you are all well and safe! Thank you to all of you for your support, your prayers, and your gifts. As many of you know, we are currently delivering five meals each Monday to our homebound seniors. To support folks who are at high-risk for food insecurity and infection, we are also delivering extra 2-9 meals per week, depending on individual needs. Many of our volunteers are making comfort calls to participants during what would be the "normal delivery" time each Tuesday through Friday.

Additionally, our staff is delivering USDA Food Boxes for Rowan Helping Ministries to individuals who cannot and should not be leaving their homes. A small cadre of volunteers is purchasing and delivering groceries and supplies to adults who are in need.

Currently, our Monday volunteers are delivering to over 280 participants compared to the 240 folks we were seeing each Monday through Friday in early March. We miss seeing all of our volunteers and hope that we will get back to delivering daily hot meals sometime this summer.

Thank you for your continuing prayers and support! We look forward to seeing our volunteers again soon.

WE DELIVER!

Sandy Combs, Program Director
Cindy Fink, Executive Director



Route 2 Needs Volunteers

Amy Ritchie's St. John's team that delivers the first Wednesday of every month has an open route in need of a volunteer.

Route 2 (within Salisbury city limits) needs a volunteer to deliver first Wednesday of every month. (It is Preferable to have 2 volunteers that would deliver as a team).

Interested? Contact Amy Ritchie, St. John's MOW Coordinator (first Wednesday of each month), 704.798.3665.

Happy Birthday!

Congratulations to our Octogenarians

June Birthdays:

Dottie Bedford, Jim Boger, Jack Connery, Jill Connery, Hal Furr, Jim Rabon, Lorna Reasor, Gloria Samuelson, Ed Shinn, Anne Steele, Gail Swan

Consolation

Scott and Jodi Plyler, and family, on the passing of Scott's mother, Joyce Plyler on May 14.

Kim and Scott Robinson, and family, on the passing of Kim's father, George Kelling, on May 8.

David and Dawson Carr on the death of their wife and mother, Julie, on May 29. A family service was held in the Faith Center on June 5.

Montye Furr and family on the death of her father, Burt Harris, on June 2. Burt's graveside service was held at Rowan Memorial Park on June 5.

Marilyn Smith upon the death of her husband, Dr. Ron Smith, on June 3. As of press time, Ron's service had not yet been scheduled.

Congratulations

Dean and Tammy Safrit have a new granddaughter. Tatum Safrit was born May 1. Chase and Ashly Safrit are the proud parents. Ellen Fink is great grandmother.

Charles Henry "Hank" Michalec, son of Russell and Sarah Michalec, grandson of Nancy and the late Steve Shirley. Born May 1.

Claire Corriher and Nathan Hoekema were married on Saturday, May 2, 2020 at the home of Darryl and Barbara chele Johnson and Eric Knorr were married on Saturday, May 16 at St. John's.

St. John's Leadership

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2020 President Cindy Fink
Vice President Rosalind Hines
Secretary David Phillips
Treasurer Tommy Page
Financial Secretary...Cory Gebhardt
Personnel Secretary ... Jeanie Moore

Term Expires 2020

Larry Cesario
Cindy Fink
David Phillips
Wesley Rhyne
Aleksandr (Sacha) Witt

Term Expires 2021

Randy Overcash
David Hord
Mike Agee
Mary Wymbs
Larry Britt

Term Expires 2022

Christopher Derrick
Mike Edwards
Penny Moss
Dennis Rogers
Rosalind Hines

Youth Members

Grace Shafer and Elizabeth Jones

Benevolent Foundation Trustees

John Henderlite, Chair
Chip Bridges
Chris Agner
Margaret Kluttz
John Denker

MINISTRY GROUP STAFF CONTACTS

Worship & The Arts – Rob Durocher
Discipleship – Pastor Laura Henrik
Mercy & Justice – Pastor Rhodes Woolly
Congregational Life – Diane Poole
Stewarding God's Resources – Ruth Ann Diehl

St. John's Ministry Staff

Pastoral Ministry

Senior PastorRhodes Woolly
Pastor of Youth and Discipleship.....Laura Henrik
Visitation.....Wade Rouzer

Worship and Music Ministry

Minister of Worship and the Arts.....Rob Durocher, deacon
Associate Parish Musician.....Rosemary Kinard
Director of Music Emeritus.....Karl Kinard, deacon
Director, St. John's Men's Chorus..... Jason Harwood
Assisting Organist.....Deanna Boksleitner
Bell Choirs.....Kimberly Lentz
Production Manager.....Taylor Hutchins
Contemporary Worship Leader.....Bradley Chestnut

Program Ministry

Adults.....Danny Hines
Children.....Stacey Shafer
YouthLaura Henrik
Senior AdultsDiane Poole
St. John's Kindergarten (4 and 5 year olds)Teresa Stoner
Child Development Center (infant –age 4 and after school).....

Administrative Team

Business ManagerRuth Ann Diehl
Office Manager.....Deborah Cross
Accounting.....Mark Bias
Communications Specialist Angel Owens
WriterSusan Shinn Turner
Facilities Manager.....Jon Koppe
Maintenance.....David Ellenburg

The Rev. Dr. Timothy M Smith, Bishop of the NC Synod
The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

The best way to contact staff at this time is by email.

Staff Email: first name@stjohns-salisbury.org
Visit us on the web at stjohns-salisbury.org
Kindergarten 704.636.4404
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org
Child Development Center 704.636.6756
cdc@stjohns-salisbury.org
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org

Office hours

The office building is closed while church staff members work from home.

Monday-Thursday, 9 am-5 pm; Friday 9-12.
Telephone 704.636.3431; Fax 704.636.4461

Sunday Worship During Covid-19 Restrictions

Online worship at 11 am

Visit stjohns-salisbury.org and click "listen live,"
watch on Facebook Live, or search "SJLC" on YouTube

Listen to worship each Sunday morning at 11 am on
stjohns-salisbury.org, and click Listen Live. Listen to previous
week's service at 9 am Sunday on WSAT 1280 AM.

EAGLE'S VIEW (USPS 716—020)

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Eagle's View Deadline

The July Eagle's View will be published in June.
Please email stories and news to
angel@stjohns-salisbury.org by **June 12!**

On Call List

If there is a pastoral emergency, please call **704.856.9751**
to reach the pastor on call.

Prayer Chain. Our Prayer Chain is updated daily and
emailed to interested persons Monday through Friday. To
add or subtract a name, please contact Deborah Cross at
deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org. Also let Deborah know if
you would like to receive the daily Prayer Chain.



Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*