

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



By Susan Shinn Turner

Finally! It's Graduation Sunday for St. John's Class of 2020!

Our congregation's high-school seniors will receive recognition during the 11 am service on Sunday, August 2, wearing their caps and gowns (and masks!), representing nearly every high school in Rowan County.

Annual scholarship recipients also will be announced, according to Pastor Laura Henrik.

"Although the 11:00 service is a virtual worship service, we've made provisions so that our grads can enjoy the honor of walking down the aisle in their caps and gowns," says Pastor Rhodes. "They weren't able to do that in their own schools, so no doubt this will be a special moment for them."

Immediate family members will join the grads in the sanctuary — honoring all safety protocol, of course — while hundreds of others will be cheering online.

"Our seniors have had such a strange final semester in that they've had to miss out on a lot of things," Pastor Laura says. "Our hope is to provide some normalcy and lift them up before the next step, whatever that will look like."

Again, congratulations to:

Claire Allen (Early College), Madison Anderson (Carson), Archie Dees (Salisbury), Caroline Houpe (East Rowan), Julie Kenny (Salisbury), Emma Myers (East Rowan), Calie Proper (Cannon), Hank Robins (Salisbury), Nina Sachse (Graystone), Sydney Sims (Salisbury), Skyler Smith (Carson), Katherine Sullivan (Salisbury), Chad Van der Poel (Salisbury), Anna Grace Woolly (Salisbury), and Mitch Jeter (Cannon).



Dear friends,

Two weeks ago, Carter, Matt, and I enjoyed a week of hiking in Colorado. They had never been to the state and, well, why not take advantage of an incredible opportunity. So we rented a van and off we went.

*The Black Canyon, Gunnison National Park*

5,200 miles later, we're back. What a trip.

On a Thursday we hiked up the Midland mountain range in Buena Vista, right along the beautiful Arkansas River and nestled between the 14,000' Collegiate peaks and the Front Range of Colorado. It was a crystal clear day with super low humidity.

These are no Blue Ridge mountains — i.e., very few trees — which meant that we could see for miles and miles from nearly every resting spot. The mountains' crevices and dimples were in full view, as was the entire geological landscape of the vast Upper Arkansas River Valley that lies between the Collegiates and the Front Range. One could almost imagine the hand of God pinching the mountains into shape and tracing a river into the ground.

The Psalmist puts God's creative power into perspective: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Psalm 90:2).

Hiking in Colorado was so very peaceful ... and felt so very normal. Sure, there were a few other hikers on the trails, but for the most part we had no reason to worry about a pandemic, masks, or social distancing. Alone in our rented SUV, we listened to music, old podcasts, and a book on tape (Shout out to John Hart). We talked about everything BUT the pandemic, including more than I'd ever need to know about European soccer leagues and NC State football. We ate food that Krista packed into a big box and passed by iconic places like Beall Street in Memphis, The Ozarks in Arkansas, oil rigs throughout Oklahoma, massive cattle ranches in Texas, and the amazing Red Rocks amphitheater just 30 minutes from downtown Denver.

John Denver deputed "Rocky Mountain High" at Red Rocks in 1973 during the roughest stretch of the Vietnam War, just after the resignation of a vice-president, and the beginnings of Watergate. There were a lot of worries in 1973, but Denver's songs seemed to transcend the moment. Songs like "Sunshine on my Shoulders," "Take me home, Country Roads," "Sweet Surrender," and "Thank God I'm a Country Boy." (Makes you want to pull out that old CD, doesn't it?)

As we drove through Colorado and sang songs at the top of our lungs (Matt and Carter will never admit it), it struck me that I really needed a few moments when I wasn't thinking about a global pandemic. I needed a break. We all do.

In 2 Chronicles is an oft-forgotten prayer that King Jehoshaphat prays before battle. His future is unknown, and the way before him is entirely unpredictable. In the midst of his weariness he prays out loud so that all of Israel can hear: "We do not know what to do, Lord, but our eyes are on you."

Driving and hiking and camping through Colorado led me to an important discovery about myself. I'm weary these days because I'm feeling rather weak. This pandemic has made me increasingly aware of my limitations, my vulnerability, and my fear. It just has.

But last week's trip returned me to an even more important discovery: that God's strength is perfected in my weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). The God who sculpted the mountains has said, "I'm strong enough for you." The God who flattened the valleys and formed streams of water into roaring rivers: "Strong enough."

So as I enter into "real life" again, a leader in this remarkable church and community, may I offer the same prayer offered by Jehoshaphat: "May we keep our eyes on you, Lord. For in you is our hope and our strength. Our light and our path.

Peace to you, my friends.  
+Pastor Rhodes

# “Dipping our toes back in the waters of live worship”

By Susan Shinn Turner

As St. John’s slowly reopens its doors this summer, here are some of the many activities from which we can choose to be of good courage together.

“We’re used to big church activities at St. John’s, but now we’re thinking small,” says Pastor Laura Henrik. “We’re looking at how to have meaningful ministry with small groups of people.”

“It’s not just the Sunday aspect, but day-in-and-day-out,” she says. “Pastor Rhodes and I have been reflecting on our own youth experiences, and they were just as powerful and meaningful as the big experiences we’ve had here. It’s exciting to think about it that way, because that’s what ministry will look like this next year.”

Including worship. On June 21, the 9:27 service reopened to good response. “It’s like dipping our toes back in the waters of live worship,” says Pastor Rhodes. Attendance averages less than 50, which is what organizers expected.

With the tagline “a smaller, gentler service,” the worship team has tried to create a living room feel to the worship space. “We’re honoring strict health protocols, but we really want the space to feel comfortable, not restrictive.”

“It’s been nice to be back with people,” Laura says. “You don’t know how good it feels to preach to people versus a camera. It still has that intimate feeling but it’s still worshipful.”

“I’m thrilled to be back,” says Cheryl Sjoblom. “It’s gone really well. Everyone comes in smiling with their masks on.”

**A new mid-week service.** You might also have noticed that a simple mid-week communion service began on July 22 at 12:15 pm in the chapel. The 30-minute service continues every Wednesday at 12:15, honoring strict health and social distancing protocols, says Rob Durocher.

“To ensure your safety, we are adhering to best practices and guidelines. Space will be limited due to social distancing, and face masks will be necessary. Face masks will be available if



you should need one. We ask that you enter by way of the breezeway where you’ll be greeted and guided to a seat.”

The service includes a simple liturgy, a 5-minute reflection from one of our pastors, special music, and the distribution of holy communion.

## Worship at St. John’s

Sundays at 11am	Broadcast online from the Sanctuary by visiting our website or YouTube channel. Search “SJLC”
Sundays at 9:27am	In-person worship in the Faith Center. A gentle, 45-minute service led by our worship team. Thanks for wearing masks. More details on our website.
Wednesdays 12:15	Our mid-week communion service in the Chapel. Strict health protocols are followed.

# Be Like Marty!



*The Martin Luther statue at Lenoir-Rhyne University is the tallest Luther statue in the world (from foot to head). Recently someone decorated the statue with an appropriately-colored red mask. The article to the right is drawn in part from an article in Christianity Today, May 19, 2020.*

The coronavirus continues to stoke fear and disruption across the globe, with 655,000 having succumbed to its deadly effects (as of July 28).

Reactions and responses have been varied, some rooted in genuine concern while others are stoked by political pressure. More than a few refuse to wear masks because they believe doing so limits their freedom. Throughout, a critical question emerges: *How are followers of Jesus to respond?*

In the 16th century, German Christians asked Martin Luther for a response to this very question.

In 1527, less than 200 years after the Black Death killed about half the population of Europe, the plague re-emerged in Luther's town of Wittenberg and neighboring cities. In his letter "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague," the famous reformer weighs the responsibilities of ordinary citizens during a pandemic. His advice serves as a practical guide for Christians confronting infectious disease outbreaks today.

Those in ministry, Luther wrote, "must remain steadfast before the peril of death." The sick and dying need a good shepherd who will strengthen and comfort them and administer the sacraments. Public officials are to maintain civic order. Public servants, including physicians and police officers, must continue their professional duties. Even parents and guardians have duties to teach and expect of their children appropriate responses to the pandemic.

Luther did not limit tending the sick to health care professionals. Luther challenges Christians to see opportunities to tend to the sick as if tending to Christ himself (Matt. 25:41–46). Out of love for God emerges the practice of love for neighbor.

But Luther does not encourage his readers to expose themselves recklessly to danger. His letter constantly straddles two competing goods: honoring the sanctity of one's own life and honoring the sanctity of those in need. "All of us," he says, "have the responsibility of warding off this poison to the best of our ability because God has commanded us to care for the body." He defends public health measures such as quarantines and seeking medical attention when available. In fact, Luther proposes that not to do so is to act recklessly. We should stand "obedient" to the rules and guidelines of the state in the way we "take care of one another."

## Be of Good Courage

*Hear from Stacey about Kingdom Kids “at Home”*

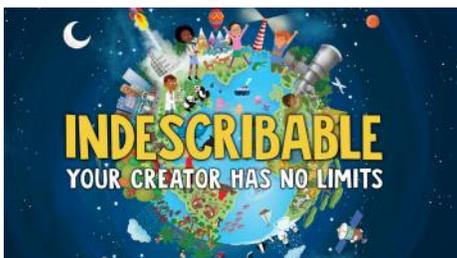
After a brief summer break, our Kingdom Kids email updates return in August. In September, we’ll start up a new year of Kingdom Kids *LIVE* (our weekly Facebook Live events) ... and roll out other options for a fun, safe year of children’s ministry.



### First Look — “Say Cheese!”

This month in First Look, birth to 4 years old, we will answer the question: Who made you? God made me! We smile with confidence and “Say Cheese!” when we know just how important to Go, because God made us in God’s own image!

“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” Psalm 139:14 NIV



### 252 Kids — God is “Indescribable!”

In August, our 252 Kids, K-5th grade, will learn that God’s creativity is endless. And since we’re made in God’s image, we can be creative, too. We can express ourselves AND accomplish something important in the world around us, because our Creator has no limits.

“Lord, You are great. You are really worthy of praise. No one can completely understand how great you are.” Psalm 145:3 NIRV



### Upcoming Milestones

3rd Grade Milestone on Aug. 30 in the Pit: “Good News, God News.” RSVP to [stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org) by Aug. 23.

4th Grade Milestone on September 13. More information to come!



### September 13 “Rally Day”

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Sunday School Rally Day on September 13. Sure, it will be a bit different this year, but that just means it will be extra special.

A note from Stacey to parents: “Please check your email for more information and for a special request. I am looking forward to hearing from you!”

## VBS 2020 Cancelled

From Stacey: “It’s one of the hardest decisions I’ve had to make, but after much thought and prayer, we’ve decided that this year’s VBS will be cancelled. I’m so sorry to our kids and volunteers, but we know it’s the right decision.”

With over 250 participants, our VBS takes on a life of its own each year. After exploring every option — from a shortened to a fully online format — the decision was finally made that our energies can best be spent getting ready for an outstanding new year of Sunday School.

“And you just wait: next year’s VBS will be AWESOME!”

## Be of Good Courage

### *Diane Shares How Senior Seasons is Staying Connected*

By Diane Poole, Senior Adult Minister

There are a few ministries I'd like to lift up this month:

#### **Call Ministry**

The Call Ministry to members 60 and above has continued all summer. It is gratifying to talk to members who really appreciate the church's outreach, particularly since they have been sequestered at home for so long with limited ability to get out. Also, providing comfort meals to those who request it is another way to serve our fellow human beings in a time of need. Both projects require many volunteers, and it is gratifying to see just how committed they are to serving others. Thanks to everyone who has made it all possible.

#### **Zoom Tuesdays**

We're continuing with our Zoom Tuesdays Bible study for seniors. Our final 3 sessions will be on Tuesday, August 4, 18, and 25, 11 am-12 pm. The title is *"Irresistible, Reclaiming the New that Jesus Unleashed for the World,"* by Andy Stanley. We've really enjoyed how this study focuses on the new covenant that Christ established through His death and resurrection.

#### **Senior Academy Begins in September**

##### ***Kick-off Sept. 1, 10 am in the Faith Center or Zoom***

The Fall Senior Academy kicks off on Sept. 1 at 10 am. You can join us in-person in the Faith Center or via Zoom. Classes will begin the following week (Sept. 8) and continue through October 13.

#### **Two Classes Offered in this Fall's Academy**

*Join us on-site or via Zoom*

**The Morning Class** is a Bible study led by Pastor Rhodes entitled *"How to Read the Bible in 2020."* "There are lots of competing voices telling us how we should read the Bible," says Pastor Rhodes. "Do we read the Bible differently today than our ancestors did 100 years ago? 500 years ago? Should we? Let's explore those questions together."

The class meets from 10:00-11:30 am.

**The Afternoon Class** is led by Rob Durocher, titled "Music Appreciation. The class meets from 12:30-2:00.

Online registration is available or you can email Diane at [diane@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:diane@stjohns-salisbury.org).

If attending onsite, we're asking that you bring your own lunch and beverage so that we can honor good health and safety protocols. Please know that we'll do everything possible to create a safe, enjoyable environment. Be sure to wear your masks!

#### **Pictorial Directory**

We Seniors have continued to stay connected electronically, however another way we can enhance connection with our entire church family is with a new PICTORIAL DIRECTORY. Photo dates are August 19-22 and 25-29. Learn more about registration, discounts if you choose to buy photos, volunteering, and what to expect the day of on page 17.

## Be of Good Courage

### *Danny Unveils New Learning Opportunities for Adults*

By Danny Hines, Minister of Adult Discipleship

As we discussed last month, 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 begin our groups in a Zoom format, but groups can easily transition to meeting in person when we are allowed to do that. We will have 3-4 week studies/discussions on the topics listed below.



#### **The Chase – 3 week series**

When it comes to our faith a lot of us feel like the Christian life comes with a finish line we'll never quite reach. If you're worn out, weary, or just plain overwhelmed this series is for you.



#### **Together – 3 week series**

There are things in life that were intended to be experienced together. A team is better together – that's the idea we are going to talk about in this series.



#### **Connect – 3 week series**

Good small groups can be the place where those "share anything" relationships start. This is a perfect beginning for getting your small group started and energized.



#### **Into the Wild - 3 week series**

Sometimes God calls us to take a step of faith out into the wild or unknown. This is an incredible series, based entirely on the story of Abraham, the "father of our faith."



#### **Divided – 3 week series**

Win the relationship, not the argument. It's ok to disagree – it is actually healthy. Pursue connection over conflict. We'll see how Jesus navigated the tricky world of politics.



#### **Limitless – 4 week series**

Moses chose to let *God* determine who he was, who he should be and where he was headed. How? By eliminating the labels others put on him. How about you?

#### **Women's and Men's Bible Studies 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](mailto: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 at 8 pm. 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](mailto: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!

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#### **Next Steps:**

*Want to learn more about a small group or one of our studies?*

*Interested in starting a small group?*

*Want to learn more about being a small group leader?*

*Easy! Just contact Danny Hines at [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org).*

## “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

By Rob Durocher  
Minister of Worship and the Arts

For many of us it can be said that without the musical voices of the faithful worship might be somewhat inconceivable. We know that in both church history and in the scriptures that the earliest Christians sang as part of their worship. They sang in thanksgiving to our gracious God and they sang in lament. Perhaps in our lament of empty houses of worship, the suspension or tentative nature of singing in small worship gatherings or the use of choirs and instrumental ensembles in this day of COVID-19, the question surrounding all of this is: *How can I keep from singing?!*



Although many churches have set singing aside for now, at St. John's the thought of stopping all music and singing from our worship experience has never been an option because our love for God and worship of him requires it. Sure, we've learned that congregational singing during these days cannot happen without the wearing of face masks. Proper spacing is also important, since absolutely committed to following best practices and protocol when we worship and when we are gathering, even smaller groups.

It's also a comfort to know that many people in the science and arts communities have risen up to work on the concerns of singing safely. Why? Because they know how important it is for our souls.

And that's just it, isn't it? For a moment at least, I'd like to step away from the do's and don'ts of singing — as important as they are — and speak more generally about our *need* to sing. All that we have endured these last five months as a people of faith reminds me of a hymn by a 19<sup>th</sup> century composer, Robert Lowry, who penned the following words:

*My life flows on in endless song, above earth's lamentation.  
I hear the clear, though far off hymn that hails a new creation.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm  
while to that Rock I'm clinging.*

*Since love is Lord of heaven and earth,  
How can I keep from singing?*

Robert Lowry (1826-1899) was a Baptist minister and hymn writer who preached throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He's best known for his song, "Shall we gather at the river," which was written in 1864 during a killer heat wave that caused many deaths. Unfortunately, not very much is known about the history of *How Can I Keep From Singing*, except that the text speaks words of comfort throughout the joys and trials of life. He reminds us that, for Christians, we have faith in the much larger reality of our sovereign Lord, who has redeemed the world and who will one day return for us!

The hymn text reminds us that "while we are in God's hands, it does not ignore the fact that on earth we still lament and still face different forms of strife, like this pandemic. And yet, in the midst of our laments, the underpinning of our lives is a different tune — a peaceful, hope-filled song of faith, and *How Can I Keep From Singing* can be the song of our hearts!" (From Pastor Joyce Berger, *Reformed Worship*, May 7, 2013)

*Continued...*

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*Singing during COVID.* There is singing at our 9:27 Sunday worship, although folks are greatly spaced apart with masks on. At our 12:15 Wednesday chapel service, the worship leader sings on behalf of the others who have gathered for holy communion (read more on page 3). If you are tuning into our Sunday 11 am live streaming worship, you might be singing along with us in the safety of your homes. It's all very different, but participation is a critical part of our worship experience.

*Can we participate without singing?* Sure! Participation can mean listening with your hearts and minds in meditation as our song leaders and keyboardists safely lead us in the song. It could mean mouthing the words or humming softly in your mask. Or — preferably if no one else is around — it could mean singing as loudly as you possibly can “for all the world to hear!”

I have stated several times in past articles that I know we'll be singing together one day again. In the meantime, I urge you to remember the song that God began to sing to you at your baptism — a song reminding you over and over again that “you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever!” (Ephesians 1:13)

Robert Lowry's hymn text ends with “*the peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing! All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing?*” One of the timeless promises of Christ's resurrection and ascension is that however crazy and fearsome things may seem, the Holy Spirit is always present to advocate, inspire and to light our paths. Whatever joys and comforts may come or go, the Lord our Savior lives! Whatever darkness gathers round songs in the night he gives! Storms, sickness, pandemic, absence of corporate worship and singing cannot “*shake our inmost calm*” because we have a Rock to cling to who is also Lord of heaven and earth — so, HOW can we keep from singing!

Be strong and courageous, friends, and don't forget to sing God's praises *safely* wherever you are able to, because in so doing you join your voices with mine and many others as “we find an echo in our souls. How can we keep from singing?”

Enjoy *How Can I Keep From Singing*, arranged by Bradley Ellingboe, on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNlyp-8RJX0>.

## The Chancel Choir Recording Project

A note from Rob:

The last time the Chancel Choir rehearsed this year was on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 following the Mid-Week Service of Evening Prayer. On Thursday of that same week, St. John's had to begin the process of suspending all activities and in-house worship due to the severe spreading of COVID-19.

Since then, the Chancel Choir has felt a nagging sense of absence from the singing and leading of worship that was such a part of their life and ministry's rhythm. While it is still not possible for them to

convene even as a smaller ensemble, it is possible for them to gather in very small groups of 4 or 5 socially distanced and masked to partake in what we are calling **the Chancel Choir Recording Project**.

Our hope is that as we advance to Phase 3 of the COVID-19 shutdown, we will begin recording four or five loved anthems in small groups with the goal of eventually layering ALL 40-50 voices together for each anthem, which would be shared during online worship and through social media.

## Looking for a Good Podcast or Book to read?

*St. John's Staff Members Share their Recommendations*

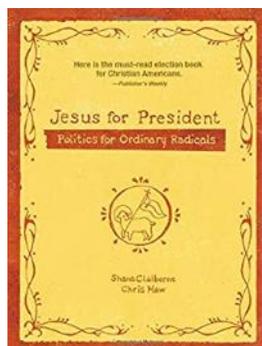
During our weekly staff meeting in July, we started talking about some of the books we have been reading. What started as a conversation about potential book studies and bible studies ended as a discovery that we are all consuming interesting things in response to the times. And we are consuming them in different ways.

We aren't just reading books on our own. We are consuming books and devotionals on tablets and apps. We are listening to audiobooks because they offer more than entertainment. We are listening to podcasts that inform, and watching sermons from fellow congregations. We are finding community in book clubs and thoroughly enjoying some new devotionals and podcasts.

Below is a list of resources we're currently enjoying. Let us know what you have enjoyed too!

Angel:

I just finished *Jesus for President*, by Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw on audiobook. It is a challenging, but fun, listen. With three narrators (the authors and a little boy) and musical interludes, it tackles ideas of patriotism, ethical buying, violence and more -all through the lens of the life and teachings of Jesus.



Danny:

Emanuel Cleaver III is Senior Pastor of St. James United Methodist Church in Kansas City, MO. St. James and Church of the Resurrection (also in Kansas City) have partnered for 5 years to bridge the racial gap in their area. Cleaver's June 14 sermon is worth listening to.

[https://cor.org/leawood/sermons#d/sermon/28534/cor\\_1](https://cor.org/leawood/sermons#d/sermon/28534/cor_1)



Pastor Laura:

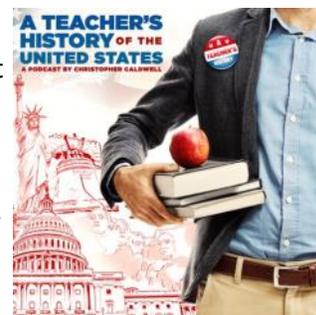
Brene Brown interviews Austin Channing Brown, author of *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* on her podcast, *Unlocking Us*.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/unlocking-us-with-brene%C3%A9-brown/id1494350511?i=1000477381573>



Pastor Rhodes:

"During the pandemic I've picked up running, which I hate. To make it manageable (sort of), I've been listening to a great podcast, *A Teacher's History of the United States*. It's everything it sounds like. I feel like I'm in a classroom, reconnecting with parts of America's history I've long since forgotten but are essential if I'm to better understand contemporary issues surrounding race/slavery, freedom of speech, the evolving character of this American experiment, and leadership.



Taylor:

Movie- Well, I am constant singing the music from *Hamilton*, and it was just released on Disney+ (The original Broadway production of the award-winning musical that tells the story of Alexander Hamilton, first secretary of the treasury, blending hip-hop, jazz, R&B and Broadway styles, filmed from the Richard Rogers Theater in New York.)



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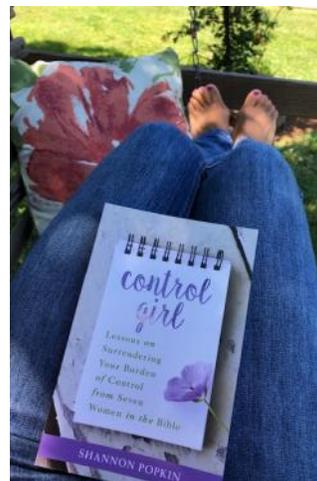
Diane:

12-week, Beth Moore video series on the Book of Daniel: "Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy." "It was an intensive look at the entire book of Daniel in two parts. (1) a look at the culture of Babylon, comparing it to today, and learning how to live in integrity in a self-centered world; and (2) a study of the eschatological literature in Daniel, including specific prophecies about Israel and the Messiah. I found it both interesting and enlightening and I think others might too!"



Stacey:

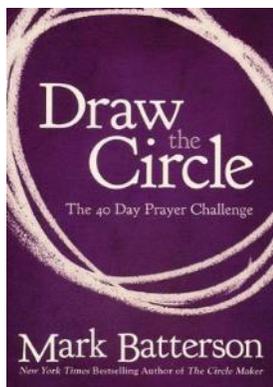
The book, *Control Girl*, was gifted to me by a friend and it couldn't have come at a more perfect time! Learning how Eve, Sarah, Hagar, Rebekah, Leah, Rachel and Miriam were all women in the bible filled with different aspects of control has helped me work through some of my controlling habits. I'm the organizer of all things in my household and to say this pandemic has thrown a wrench in my calendar is an understatement. If I can continue to learn from each of these women in the bible and turn things fully over to God, this pandemic just might have a light at the end.



Preview: (1) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUMVw-cMuWI> and (2) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyS\\_Cq2FAwQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyS_Cq2FAwQ)

Ruth Ann Diehl:

"Life has been a little overwhelming this year. Pandemic, racial unrest, economic uncertainty, all leading me to a path of fear, anxiety, and helplessness. When I reached out to cousin (more like my sister), Lisa, to find some comfort and balance, I was not expecting her to answer the telephone with the statement, "Wow God works fast!" She had been praying for God to bring her someone to share a daily devotional with her called *Draw the Circle* by Mark Batterson. Sharing scripture and prayer has brought me peace, hope, and direction."



# Returning to Worship

*“Our gentle step back into in-person worship”*



*On June 27, our 9:27 service returned to in-person worship under careful precautions, including required masks and social distancing.*

*On July 1, those who felt comfortable were welcomed to participate in Holy Communion at the 9:27 service. Our mid-week service of Holy Communion began on July 22 in the chapel.*

## Pictorial Directory Photos in August!

**Photo dates are August 19-22 & 25-29.**

**Schedule** your photo session today.

Our photography dates for our upcoming directory are fast approaching. Our directory will allow us to connect names and faces and stay connected. Photography times are still available, and everyone who signs up receives a free 8X10 photo! We need 250 people to register in order to move forward with plans for the new directory.

We are registering participants for one week at a time beginning with August 19-22. If there are enough sign-ups, we will open week 2.

Ways to register:

Go to <https://booknow-lifetouch.appointment-plus.com/ch7ljdn0/>. (The clickable link is available on the Facebook event and St. John's website event.)

If you need help registering, contact:

- Diane at 704-223-5589
- Lynn Denker at 805-455-0252
- Church office 704-636-3431

**Directory volunteers** will be on hand at each session to ensure that the procedures are as safe as possible. Sign up to volunteer at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040b48a8a823a6ff2-pictorial>.

### Safety Precautions

- Masks and social distancing are a must! The goal is to eliminate 2-way traffic.
- All Lifetouch employees have been through training for proper Covid-19 protocol, including sanitization and contactless posing.
- The registration website mentions pets. At this time, no pets will be allowed at photo sessions.

### What happens when you arrive?

- Members must enter on the Chapel side of the Faith Center. Greeters will guide you to your socially distanced seats until time for your photography session that will be in a classroom down the hall.
- After your session, you will be escorted into the viewing classroom.
- As soon as your viewing is complete, you will leave by the

door beside the 218-conference room.

**Photo times** are between 2 and 9 pm on weekdays and 10 am -4 pm on Saturdays.

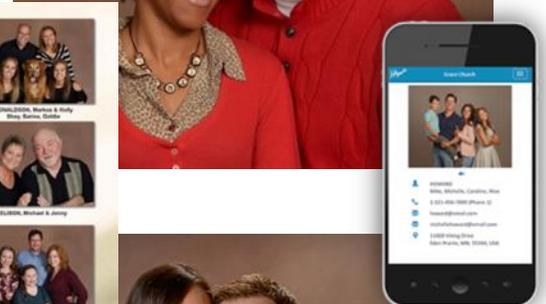
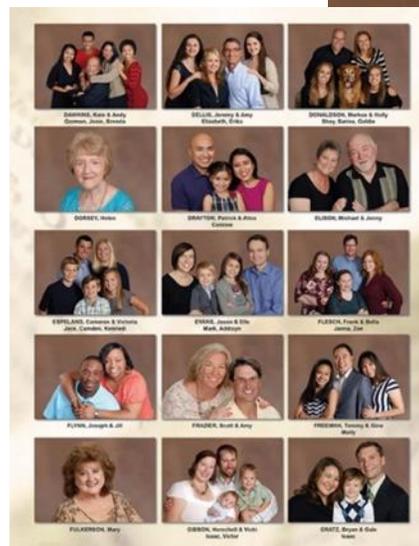
**Discounts** are offered if you would like to purchase your photos, although you are not required to make any purchases.

- 20% Senior or Military discount
- \$10 off your purchase for all who have their picture made (email or not)
- \$5 discount if they bring a can of food for Rowan Helping Ministry

### Why now?

Our last directory was printed in 2016, and there have been many changes, and we now have the option to add a mobile version. This is a tool used by members and staff alike.

Brochures with photography pricing are available in the Brochure Rack in Peeler Hall and they are posted on message boards at each Faith Center entrance. If you would like one mailed to you, please contact [diane@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:diane@stjohns-salisbury.org) or call the church office.





## Racial Equity Workshops Continue

On July 30, members of the St. John's staff participated in the most recent Racial Equity Institute (REI) one-half day "Groundwater" workshop. The workshop is being presented in our area by Racial Equity Rowan. In this lively presentation, REI organizers used stories and data to present the perspective that racism is fundamentally structural in nature. By examining characteristics of modern-day racial inequity, the presentation introduced participants to an analysis that most find immediately helpful and relevant. Visit [racialequityrowan.org](http://racialequityrowan.org).

It's a simple process: We'll amplify a voice from the Black community, give time for participants to listen intently, and then ask: "What did I learn?" Interested in participating? The zoom link will be emailed out in the weekly FaithLife. Or contact the church office for the recurring link.

## Racial Justice Resources

At St. John's, we believe the church is a place for conversations that matter — a place where we're willing to be a part of open, sometimes difficult, conversations, approached in genuine love. Our website includes a variety of resources that highlight the history and complexity of racial justice, including books, movies, documentaries, TED talks and other educational resources. Visit St. John's website and select "Conversations that Matter" under the *Resources* tab.

## Dear Church Book Study

Because of fruitful conversation, the *Dear Church* book study, led by Danny Hines, was extended. The study explores ways congregations can become more racially sensitive and diverse. Rather than reading two chapters a week, participants wanted to talk about each chapter in more depth! Join in by contacting Danny, [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org).

## A Vision for Racial Justice

*A congregation-wide effort to develop a vision and a plan*

"We're facing some very challenging cultural issues this summer," says Pastor Rhodes. "Our history of race and racism in the US isn't stellar, and it all seems to be coming together in a matter of a few months," beginning, many have said, with the death of George Floyd on May 25 in Minneapolis.

"So many of the responses have been reactionary, including the church's response," he continues. "People are trying their best to do something, say something. They've been passionate, heated, emotional, energizing, and sometimes deadly. But it's important to remember that reactions are responses to a problem we *have* to deal with in the United States."

How do we do that as a congregation? What is our vision? What is our plan?

"It's important that these questions are wrestled with as a congregation, a family gathering together to talk about an important issue that's confronting us." To do that, a team has been formed to help us develop a Vision for Racial Justice at St. John's. Team members include Ted Goins, Evelyn Medina, and Caroline Parrott.

An important part of the process is our **Town Hall zoom gathering** on Wednesday evening, August 26 from 7:00-8:30. Our goal is for at least 150 of our members to join in. After a brief presentation, we'll be divided into small groups of no more than 8 people to wrestle with questions that will help inform our vision and plan. We hope you'll join us. A zoom link will be made available closer to the event date.

### What do you think?

*Take our Vision for Racial Justice survey on the St. John's website or click the link in upcoming FaithLife emails.*

## Guatemala: St. John's Podcast

Have you subscribed to the St. John's "Conversations that Matter" podcast yet?

In August, Pastor Rhodes interviews Hannah Nadeau Girón, who heads up our partner school in Guatemala, Escuela Integrada.

Listen to their conversation by searching "Conversations that Matter" on Apple Podcast, iHeart Radio, Spotify and more.

You can also catch up on past sermons on the SJLC Sermon Podcast Channel. Search "SJLC," and don't forget to rate and subscribe!



## At Home Learning Campaign

Students at Escuela Integrada continue to learn from home with the help of their parents, family members and teachers. We are so grateful for the involvement from out who team! Please consider helping them make at home learning just a bit easier with the proper recourses!

This campaign will provide:

- data packages for the families at Escuela Intergrada

- data packages for the teachers at Escuela Integrada
- materials for families (notebooks, pencils, crayons, etc)
- other recourses for the teachers (workshops on distance and online learning)

Learn more and contribute at [www.wearegraces.org/athomelearning](http://www.wearegraces.org/athomelearning)

## Living in Palestine During a Pandemic

*An Upcoming Zoom Webinar on August 24, 12 pm*

**Gaza and the Creative Response:** How is the program in Gaza empowering students?

Especially during the pandemic, many have asked about our friends in Gaza who are especially vulnerable. We'll hear the latest from the Gaza program director, Ghada Araj and students who participated in this spring's pilot program.

Ghada Araj has a breadth of experience in assessment and evaluation in education and public health sectors. Ghada holds a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Arizona.

**PALESTINE DURING DOUBLE LOCKDOWN**  
*Gaza & The Creative Response*

**AUGUST 24, 12PM EDT**

**Gaza and the Creative Response:**  
How is the program in Gaza empowering students? Featuring DAK Gaza Program Director Ghada Araj and filmmaking student, Mira Jibrin.

**Bright Stars of Bethlehem**

**Ghada Araj**

**Student Mira Jibrin**

*Bright Stars in the US-based advocacy and fundraising arm for our partner school in Bethlehem, Dar al-Kalima University College. Dar al-Kalima is a school of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.*

## “Thank You” from Lutheridge

*During the pandemic, St. John’s Youth had to make some major changes to summer plans, including canceling camp and mission trips and moving the annual auction fundraiser to an online format. The youth and leadership decided to give 74% of the \$10,072 total to some of our mission partners and camps that they wouldn’t be able to visit this year.*

*One of those camps was Lutheridge. The following is a letter of thanks from Mitzie Shafer, Deacon and Vice President for Development at NovusWay CampMinistry.*

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

I hope this email finds you safe and well during these strange times. I wanted to take a moment to personally thank you for your generous gift to the ministry of Lutherock and Lutheridge. Our sacred spaces apart look and feel different this summer without the laughter and play of all the campers and counselors due to COVID-19. These have proven to be difficult times emotionally as campers grieve not having camp in addition to the other loss they have experienced. We know that after all the social distancing, children will need camp more than ever.

This has also been a time of significant loss to the ministry financially. The cancellation of summer camp is a \$1.8 million dollar loss to the ministry. We are working hard to cut as many expenses as possible while preserving the ministry to be ready to fully reopen as soon as we can. Annual giving is

usually only 25% of our revenue, but this year will need to be closer to 75%. To address this significant gap, we have launched the Light the Fire appeal to raise \$1.8 million between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021. This effort will allow us to be ready for summer camp 2021. As part of this goal we are looking to find 400 donors who will start a new monthly recurring gift. This will allow the ministry to plan better and will put the ministry in a position of strength and sustainability. During the first month, we have raised \$185,000 and 49 donors started new recurring gifts. We are doing the work to protect this ministry we all share, and it is because of congregations and individuals like you that we will come out on the other side of this crisis with strength for the future.

If you have any questions about the ministry you are welcome to email or call me. Thank you again for your continued support of the ministry. We miss you and can’t wait to have you all back at camp!

Peace,  
Mitzie

PS. To start a new recurring gift visit [www.novusway.org](http://www.novusway.org) and click the green donate button. You can stop your gift at any time. You may use a credit card, debit card, checking account or savings account.



## South Carolina Elects Ginny Aebischer as its new Bishop

On July 25, the South Carolina Synod of the ELCA elected the Rev. Ginny Aebischer as its new bishop, replacing its retiring bishop, the Rev. Dr. Herman Yoos, who has served since 2008.

Aebischer has most recently served as the synod's assistant to the bishop. She also has served as co-pastor at Redeemer in Charleston and Mt. Tabor in West Columbia. A graduate of Upsala College and LTSS, Aebischer was ordained in 1989. She will serve a six-year term that begins in September.

## LTSS Announces Full Scholarships for Those Studying to be Pastors and Deacons

"Freed to Serve" is an initiative to provide scholarship funds to support full tuition grants for LTSS seminarians who are in ELCA candidacy for ministry in either the Word and Service (deacon) or Word and Sacrament (pastor) roster.

Located in Columbia, SC, LTSS is one of seven seminaries of the ELCA and the church's only seminary in the Southeast.

"At Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, we teach, form and nurture women and men for public ministry in a context that is Christ-centered, faithfully Lutheran and ecumenically committed," says the Rev. Jennifer Shimota, coordinator of seminary enrollment.

"Our focus is on preparing students to excel in a variety of ministry settings—youth and family ministry, music ministry, faith formation, chaplaincy and directors of faith-based non-profit organizations." Want to learn more? Visit [www.lr.edu/ltss](http://www.lr.edu/ltss) or contact Pastor Shimota directly at [jennifer.shimota@lr.edu](mailto:jennifer.shimota@lr.edu).



## Summer rentals at Agapé+Kure Beach

With two sites, Camp Agapé (near Raleigh) and Kure Beach (near Wilmington), offer beautiful escapes from the hustle of everyday life to focus on what is truly important. Due to COVID-19, there is no summer camp this year, so now is a good time to visit our wonderful facilities for a family vacation or small group retreat.

For Camp Agapé inquiries, email Kyle, Guest Services Coordinator/Registrar; (919)777-4335. For Kure Beach inquiries, email Lynn, the Kure Beach Faith Center Registrar, or call (910) 458-0783.



## Sign Up For FaithLife

Stay up to date on all congregational news through our weekly email– FaithLife. You will receive a letter from a pastor, a weekly calendar, and some highlights from the week.

When you sign up for the FaithLife, you will also sign up for the Be of Good Courage daily email. While daily life continues to look different, the email provides videos, verses, stories and more to remind us to “be of good courage.”

If you are involved in specific ministry areas (or would like to be) make sure to contact the ministry leader to sign up to be a part of their specific contact list. All staff emails are [firstname@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:firstname@stjohns-salisbury.org).

*Giving To God's Work*  
Ways to Give

 Offering Envelope  
Drop-off or Mailed

 Online Giving  
[stjohns-salisbury.org/giving](http://stjohns-salisbury.org/giving)

 GivePlus App or Text  
Text Amount to 704-802-1349

## St. John's Leadership

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2020 President .... Cindy Fink  
2021 President-elect .... Mike Edwards  
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 and the Arts – Rob Durocher  
Discipleship – Pastor Laura Henrik  
Mercy and Justice – Pastor Rhodes Woolly  
Congregational Life – Diane Poole  
Stewarding God's Resources – Ruth Ann Diehl



Dear St. John's family,

Thank you so very much for sending cards and for the sweet calls when my father passed in May. He was sick for about 3 1/2 years and was suffering from effects of chemotherapy and whole brain radiation. While we are happy to have had him an additional 3 years, it has been hard to watch to say the least; but also to say 'goodbye.' Mark, my step mother Margie Keeling and I are forever grateful for your show of love and sentiment.

Peace and blessings to you all,

Kim Robinson

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In Christian gratitude,

My family and I thank friends and St. John's members for the gifts and healing. Your cards, emails, food, phone calls and offers of prayers and good wishes were welcomed.

Ott Pinkston

## Happy Birthday!

*Congratulations to our Octogenarians celebrating August birthdays:*

Becky Auten, Beth Boger, Charles Dabbs, Loyd Hill, Doris Hillegass, Harold Mowery, Ermine Peeler, Bob Rusher, Bill Safrit, Norman Sloop, Rich Soderberg, Mildred Warlick, and Carl Yost

## Consolation

Pastor Laura, Davin, Everett, Eliana Henrik, and family, on the death of Laura's mom, Sharon Stancher, 63, on Thursday, July 23. Sharon and her husband, John, lived in Knoxville. A family memorial service was held at St. John's Lutheran Church, Knoxville, on August 1.

Lydia Dayton, friends and family of Lorna Reasor, who passed on Saturday, July 11. Arrangements will be announced at a later date. Please feel free to send the family cards of condolences to Lydia Dayton (daughter), 2934 Grey Rd., Davidson, NC 28036.

## St. John's Ministry Staff

### Pastoral Ministry

Senior Pastor .....Rhodes 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  
Youth .....Laura Henrik  
Senior Adults .....Diane Poole  
St. John's Kindergarten (4 and 5 year olds) .....Teresa Stoner  
Child Development Center (infant –age 4 and after school).....

### Administrative Team

Business Manager .....Ruth Ann Diehl  
Office Manager.....Deborah Cross  
Accounting.....Mark Bias  
Communications Specialist ..... Angel Owens  
Writer .....Susan 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

### Worship During Covid-19 Restrictions

Online worship Sundays at 11 am  
Contemporary Worship Sundays at 9:27 am in the Faith Center  
Mid-week Communion Service, Wednesdays at 12:15 pm in the Chapel

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)

is published once a month by St. John's Lutheran Church  
200 West Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144  
Vol. 20, Issue 8  
Periodical postage paid at Salisbury, North Carolina

POSTMASTER: Send address change to  
EAGLE'S VIEW, 200 W. Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144

**Please deliver by July 31**

### Eagle's View Deadline

The September Eagle's View will be published in August.  
Please email stories and news to  
angel@stjohns-salisbury.org by **August 14!**

### 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.*