

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

An Inspired Garden

A New Outdoor Learning Environment opens



Colleen McDaniel, owner of The Inspired Garden of Badin, is installing the Outdoor Learning Environment.

By Susan Shinn Turner

It's hard to tell who's more excited about this month's opening of the Outdoor Learning Center at the Child Development Center — the children or Colleen McDaniel.

McDaniel, owner of The Inspired Garden is based in Badin. She holds contractor and landscape contractor's licenses. She has been tasked with installing the OLE based on a design by the Natural Learning Initiative, part of the School of Design at N.C. State University.

"We're building the outdoor mud kitchen as we speak," McDaniel says one recent sunny morning. "The intent is to let them get their hands all dirty and make a mess."

Getting outside and exploring is the whole point behind the Outdoor Learning Environment. But it's like no playground you've ever seen. Instead it's full of natural landscaping and materials, and is separated into areas by age. In addition to the mud kitchen, you'll find a water play area, a sand play box, logs cut crosswise into individual seats and situated in a circle for an outdoor classroom, a teepee village, a log living room, and more. Short bamboo poles with ropes attached will help with traffic flow along the sidewalks.

This is the third design McDaniel has implemented, having also worked at the Charlotte Nature

Museum and Wing Haven. The OLE is typical in size for other daycares, according to Mary Archer, a landscape architect and design associate with NLI.

"There's a huge movement in North Carolina to create outdoor learning environments," she says. "There are a lot in Raleigh. St. John's will become a great model for the region and across North Carolina. We were so excited to see members of the congregation embrace this project and support it."

Archer and her team thought through every detail of the OLE — from the different play areas to the diverse planting. They chose perennial flowers, shade trees, and sensory plants such as rosemary and other herbs. The children will also be planting a vegetable garden and eventually harvest fruit from trees planted in the area.

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Pastor's Letter



Dear friends,

The Economist recently wrote of a quiet pandemic that's been developing while most people's attention has been on Covid-19: loneliness.

It's a problem that's been around for a while, but the pandemic has made it much more noticeable. The elderly have been particularly vulnerable, especially if they live alone or in a nursing home environment. Others have struggled, too, from those who live alone to those who have been working from home since Covid began.

And loneliness doesn't discriminate, of course, especially as schools remain closed, sports severely restricted, and kids' surging use of technology in isolated settings.

The lack of social engagement has taken a toll. Loneliness is said to be as bad for a person's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and twice as deadly as obesity.

"Where there is severe loneliness, there is likely also to be dementia, high blood pressure, anxiety, depression," and can have a "devastating effect on mental health."

Researchers tell us that the trend has been noticeable for decades.

The relatively recent trend towards mass urbanization has been a major culprit, as has the rise of technology, the growth of Gig-economy jobs, open office plans (most retreat with noise-cancelling headphones), the relative decline in communal activities (churches, civic clubs, bowling and softball leagues, etc), and the rapid growth of social media.

It's worrisome, no doubt. So what do we do about it?

I don't have the answer, of course. I'm not sure anyone does at this point, except pharmaceutical companies who will be more than pleased to sell you one of their products.

Two things are worth mentioning:

1. In Rowan County, between 300-500 people will be receiving their *second* vaccinations *every week* for at least the next month. What that means is that people — especially the elderly — will be more and more likely to emerge from their 11-month hibernation. There won't be a magical "on" switch, but folks will be increasingly eager to reengage with activities they loved prior to Covid, including the church. Will we return to pre-Covid numbers? Who knows, but I'm certain those who *do* return will have a much better appreciation for the pure joy of community — which is at the heart of who we are.
2. If you are struggling with loneliness and/or isolation, you may find that our new counseling ministry provides great, safe space to talk through your concerns. Lauren Stevenson is a member of St. John's and a professional counselor at Catawba College. We have contracted with her to provide counseling ministry during these most challenging times. Individual counseling is available on Mondays. She will host a grief group in the summer. Check out our website for more information.

The bottom line is that you don't have to walk this journey alone. We're eager to walk right alongside you.

Our very best to you this month. It's sooo cold out ... but by the next time I write this pastor's letter, spring will be at our doorstep. I can hardly wait!

With great anticipation and thanksgiving,

+Pastor Rhodes

Our Vision for Racial Healing

Town Hall Meeting - Feb. 22

By Susan Shinn Turner

At its January meeting, St. John's Congregation Council unanimously approved the Vision for Racial Healing.

"It is everything you would expect it to be," Pastor Rhodes says. "It lays out how we will deal with handling racial healing, how we engage with the community, how we prioritize things in our own ministries. It states very clearly that racism is a sin — so what are we going to do about it?"

At the heart of the Vision is "Our Hope." It reads:

"Our Vision for Racial Healing is to be highly deliberate in building and fostering a beloved community. This commitment to community is summarized by one of the simplest verses in the Bible, "love your neighbor" (Mark 23:31). As a beloved community, we will walk alongside our neighbors in Christ to strive for peace, justice, and equality for all, especially those harmed by racism. We pray that our commitments, rooted in love, will assist in the dismantling of discrimination and racism while promoting unity within our communities and beyond."

The statement is rooted in part in the events of spring 2020 — the death of George Floyd, along with protests and riots that took place throughout the summer.

"It was a challenging summer, no doubt," Pastor Rhodes says. "We realized we needed to think more deeply about what was going on. How are we going to be a player/agent in dismantling racism?"

During the summer and fall, a committee began to draft such a vision, "a vision for a church that happens to be in Downtown Salisbury, North Carolina."

Some 130 members completed a survey, with 80 participating in a town hall meeting "to dive deeper into what our vision should be," Pastor Rhodes says.

But, he adds, "We still needed a response from our younger audience, so we convened a group of 20- to 30-year-olds and a group of 30- to 40-year-olds. We also pulled a writing team together to write the vision. I had no preconceived notions or statements about what it should look like. I was really confident the Holy Spirit would lead us in the right direction, and that's what happened."



Along with Pastor Rhodes, members of the team were Ted Goins, Marian Hough, Evelyn Medina, Caroline Parrott, and Mark Ritchie.

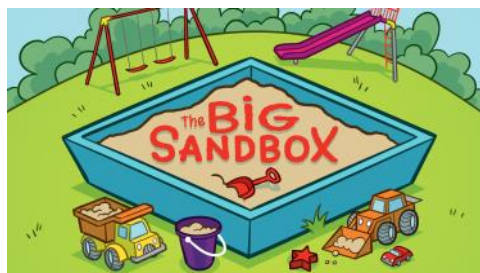
"Every generation seems to complain about their youth," Goins says. "But our future is secure. It was a pleasure to work with Caroline and Marian. They led. They are not only tech savvy, but they jumped right in to lead the effort, and with passion."

"It has been a wonderful opportunity to work with these great minds drafting a vision for St. John's," Hough says. "Our group had a wide range of ages, which brought many perspectives and different life experiences into the discussion. As a young adult, I hope to see St. John's being part of the community for many years to come. I view this Vision for Racial Healing as a hope for our future and recognizing the need for racial healing, justice, and equity in our community."

"I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to be engaged in this way at such an important time in our country," Parrott says. "I am happy and proud to have this church family to lean on in times of unrest and uncertainty. I am also thankful for my peers and fellow congregation members who have worked tirelessly to encourage this integral work in our church and community. They all helped me find my voice (and

Continued on page 9.

FIRST LOOK

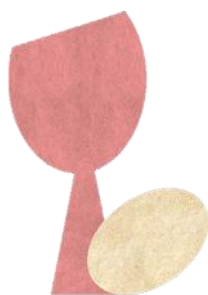


February

This month in First Look (birth to 4 years old) we will answer the question: Who loves you? Jesus loves me.

Our Bible verse of the month:

"A FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES." Proverbs 17:17, NIRV



First Communion Milestone 3rd-5th Graders

Parents of 3rd– 5th graders interested in participating in our First Communion milestone are invited to join us for a Parent Meeting Wednesday, Feb.3.

Students will meet with our pastors during the four Sundays of February from 9:45-10:30 am. During the following week, students and their parents will watch a brief video together and participate in a hands-on activity.

On Feb. 20, we will meet Saturday, Feb. 20 at 9:45 am, in the sanctuary for our Pottery 101 day!

All of that so that we can get ready for the big day: Your First Communion! March 7 at the 11 am service. Hope to see you!

For more information and to RSVP, contact Stacey Shafer, Stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org.

252 Kids

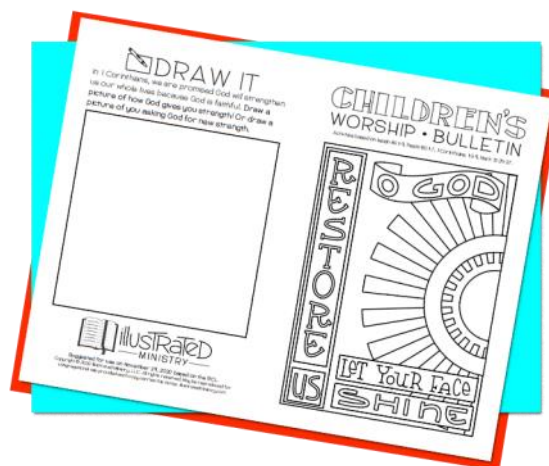


February

In February, our 252 Kids (K-5th graders) will learn that every day, you can show others they are valuable by how you treat them. You can be a kindness "super fan" by encouraging others and cheering them on.

Our Bible verse of the month:

"YOU ARE GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE. YOU ARE HOLY AND DEARLY LOVED. SO PUT ON TENDER MERCY AND KINDNESS AS IF THEY WERE YOUR CLOTHES. DON'T BE PROUD. BE GENTLE AND PATIENT." Colossians 3:12, NIRV



Children's Bulletins

Children's Bulletins are available during worship each Sunday. At 9:27 they can be found near the offering plates, and at 11 am, pick one up with your Sunday bulletin.



The Well Middle School

In February, our middle schoolers will continue a series called, “It’s Personal.” We don’t want fake relationships; they want personal ones. The same thing can even apply to our faith. In this series, we’ll look at five ways Jesus made it personal and what that means for our lives.

“FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THOSE WHO ARE LOST.” (Luke 19:10 NLT)

Wed., Feb. 3, 6:30-7:15 pm — Unit 3 Confirmation (Zoom)
 Sun. Feb. 7, 4-5:15pm — Youth Group
 Wed., Feb. 10, 6-7:15 pm — Unit 3 Confirmation (In-Person)
 Wed. Feb. 17, 6:30 pm — Ash Wednesday
 Sun. Feb. 21, 4-5:15pm — Youth Group
 Wed. Feb. 24, 6:30 pm — Midweek Lent Service
 Sun., Feb. 28, 4-5:15 om — Youth Group

*No Youth Group Feb. 14



FUEL High School

In February, our high school students will conclude a series called, “It’s Personal.” We don’t want fake relationships; they want personal ones. The same thing can even apply to our faith. In this series, we’ll look at five ways Jesus made it personal and what that means for our lives.

“FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST.” (Luke 19:10 NIV)

Sun. Feb. 7, 9:27 am and 11 am — Youth Sunday
 Sun. Feb. 7, 6-7:15pm — Youth Group
 Sun. Feb. 21, 6-7:15pm — Youth Group
 Sun., Feb. 28, 6-7:15 om — Youth Group

*No Youth Group Feb. 14

Senior Seasons

February Events

Since we have continued to quarantine until everyone who would like the Covid vaccine is able to get it, we are only planning virtual events for the month of February. We will have two “events” this month.

Valentine’s Day Trivia Contest. The Trivia questionnaire will go out in the Senior Seasons Friday email blast on Feb. 5. Entries will be accepted through Thursday, Feb. 11. The first entry with all the correct answers will win the prize, which will be a dinner for two, delivered to your door, plus a few other goodies.

Lunch n Learn on February 17, 11:30 am

Mary Arey of Aery Realty and Move Manager Jo Kearns will speak on all aspects of Seniors’ transition to smaller & safer homes. Jo specializes in decluttering and downsizing. Even if you are not downsizing but just want to declutter, you can get some good tips. Invite your friends!

Please sign up in advance preferably online or by emailing diane@stjohns-salisbury.org. The zoom link will be provided in the email blast the Friday before.

Winter Academy

Winter Academy is a 4-week program held during the month of February 2021. For those of you who choose to join in-person, cost of a box lunch each week is \$10 or continue to bring your own lunch at no cost. There is no cost for attendance, either onsite or via zoom.

There will be workbooks in large print for the bible study, entitled *The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life*. The cost of these is \$15.

Gary Freeze will teach all 4 of the afternoon sessions of the Seminar **“Been There (Kinda), Done That (Sorta): The Way American History Repeats itself,”** based on the historical precedents for the times in which we live. He will draw upon his thirty years of teaching American political culture to argue for a largely bipartisan, multicultural, regionalistic, perennialist understanding of how we got into our present predicament. The individual sessions are as follows:

- | | |
|------|--------------------|
| 2/2 | The Founders |
| 2/9 | The Agrarians |
| 2/16 | The Industrialists |
| 2/23 | The Corporatists |

Register online.

Seasons Gifts



Watch for future **Seasons Gifts** sales via Facebook Live or personal shopper. We are delighted to open the shop for anyone who wants to browse for that special gift. If you would like to do so, contact Sherry or Diane.

Sherry Mason Brown
Phone 704-754-0331

Diane Poole
Phone 704-223-5589

Join a Small Group this Winter

Looking for a new small group study?

If you are still looking to join one of our new small group bible studies, please see below for 2 new studies that are starting in February. If you are interested in one of these small group studies, email Danny Hines at danny@stjohns-salisbury.org or sign up on the St. John's website in the small group ministry section. These 3-4-week studies provide you with the opportunity to engage in Bible study that is practical, thought provoking and applies to your everyday life. We will provide descriptions of these studies in *FaithLife* as well. We will begin this in a Zoom format but can easily transition to meeting in person when possible.

How do I sign up?

Sign-up on the St. John's website or contact danny@stjohns-salisbury.org for more information and/or if you are interested in leading one of these small groups.



The Making of a King

Thursdays, Feb. 4-25, 7- 8:15 pm via Zoom

Almost all of our favorite stories have one thing in common: a hero. And not just any hero, but a larger-than-life superhero— someone who, against all odds, still manages to come out on top. Part of the reason why so many stories involve such a character is because everyone loves a good superhero. Why? Because heroes are epic and they do amazing things. In some sense, we love heroes because they can do things ordinary people like us could never do. In this series, we're going to look at one of the Bible's greatest heroes: a guy named David. At first glance, David doesn't seem like much of a hero. He was a younger brother, a shepherd, a poet, a warrior, a musician, and eventually, a king. As we'll see, no one else (David included) would've guessed he would one day be a king, but God saw something no one else did. God saw a hero in the making. As we follow David through his fair share of difficulties and downfalls, we'll see that amidst everchanging circumstances, one thing stayed the same—through the making of this king, God was always there.



Judgment Call

Feb. 11-25, 6:30-7:45pm via zoom

We all tend to make judgments about things. What's right and what's wrong, what's good and what's bad, what's healthy and what's unhealthy, what Christians should do and what Christians shouldn't do. The reality is that there are some things that are right and some things that are wrong. God is crystal clear about those things in His Word. But, as we'll see in this series, there is a distinct difference between judging someone in a condemning way and judging someone in a discerning way. In this series, we're diving into some of the reasons we're all tempted to make condemning judgment calls, and how those judgments impact the people in our lives (including us!). As we do, we'll see that when we lay down our condemnation we're carrying and adopt God's perspective, we'll be able to step back from condemnation and lead with love instead.

The Walk Bible Study

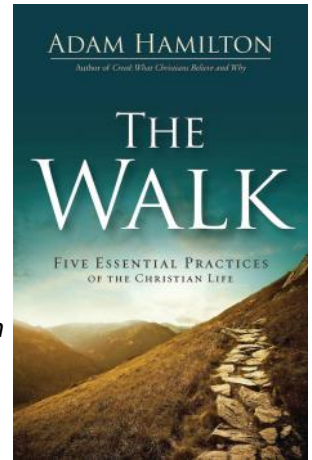
Tuesdays, Feb. 2-23, 7-8pm via zoom

In conjunction with Senior Academy, we will offer *The Walk – Five Essential Practices of Christian Life* by Adam Hamilton. While Senior Seasons will be meeting during the day, we will offer this bible study at night on the same dates. This bible study asks “How do we walk with Christ--daily follow him, grow in him, and faithfully serve him?” In the Gospels, Jesus modeled for us the Christian spiritual life. The apostles taught it in their writings. And the Church has, through the last 2,000 years, sought to pursue this Christian spiritual life.

In *The Walk*, Adam Hamilton focuses on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God and

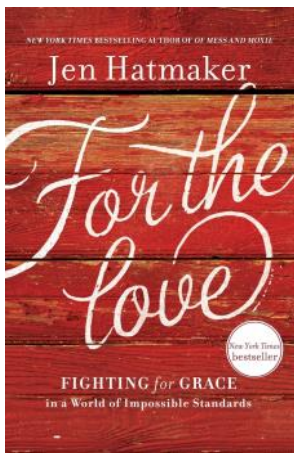
taught throughout the New Testament. Each of these practices is intended as part of our daily walk with Christ while also being an essential part of growing together in the church.

Contact danny@stjohns-salisbury.org for more information or to sign-up for this night time class.



Mom's Group Book Study: *For the Love*

Thursdays, Feb. 4– March 25 at 7pm via Zoom



Want to connect with other mom's and enjoy some laughter? This book will bring you just that!

We will be reading *For The Love: Fighting for Grace in a World of Impossible Standards*, by Jen Hatmaker.

Join us for Mom's Group Bible Study, Thursdays, Feb. 4-March 25 at 7 pm on zoom.

From the author's website: “The

majority of our joys, struggles, thrills, and heartbreaks relate to people, beginning first with ourselves and then the people we came from, married, birthed, live by, live for, go to church with, don't like, don't understand, fear, struggle with,

compare ourselves to, and judge. People are the best and worst thing about the human life.

“Jen Hatmaker knows this all too well, and so she reveals how to practice kindness, grace, truthfulness, vision, and love to ourselves and those around us. By doing this, *For the Love* leads our generation to reimagine Jesus' grace as a way of life, and it does it in a funny yet profound manner that Christian readers will love. Along the way, Hatmaker shows readers how to reclaim their prophetic voices and become Good News again to a hurting, polarized world.

“In this raucous ride to freedom for modern women, Jen Hatmaker bares the refreshing wisdom, wry humor, no-nonsense faith, liberating insight, and fearless honesty that have made her beloved by women worldwide.”

For more information email stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org

Ongoing Opportunities

Contact Deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org to sign up

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

With Pastor Laura, 8-9 am via zoom

Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study

With Pastor Rhodes, 8-9 am via zoom

Mercy and Justice

Our Vision, continued from page 3.

showed me how to use it productively!) in the midst of these unsettling times.”

Town Hall Meeting

Join us for a town hall meeting, Feb. 22 at 7 pm. The writing committee will present the Vision for Racial Healing.

Look for the Vision for Racial Healing document in the March Eagle’s View.

Covid-19 Vaccination Distribution

In January, Rowan County entered into the Phase 1b/Mass Vaccination phase for those 65 years of age and older, regardless of health status or living situation, and for Phase 1A eligible individuals.

Vaccinations are currently available by appointment only.

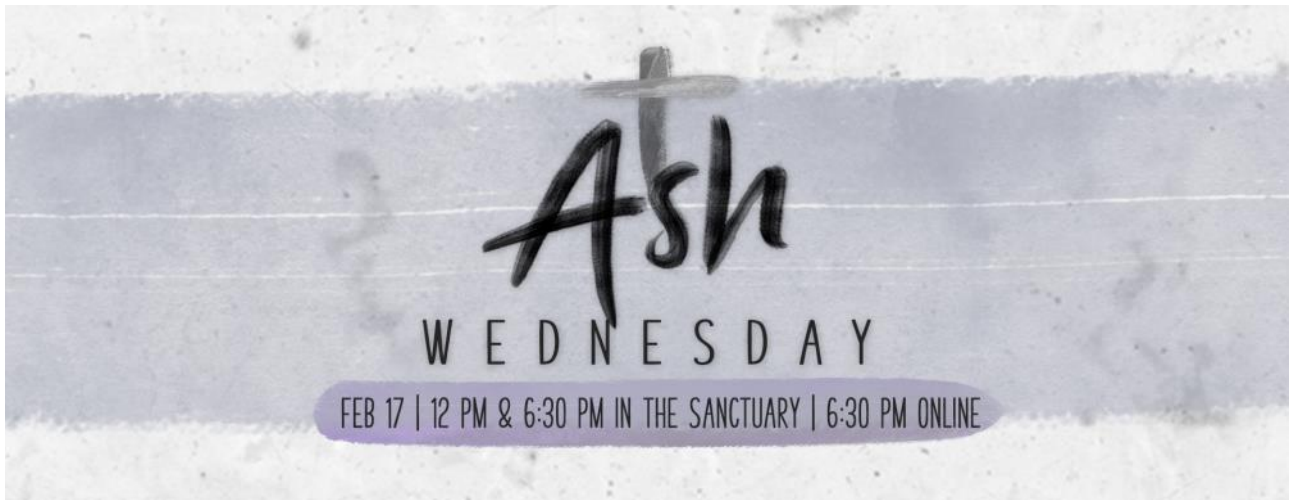
Updates regarding vaccination phases and availability can be found here: <https://www.rowancountync.gov/1656/Vaccine-Information>.



Emily Stirewalt receives shot #1 at the

health

The Season of Lent



By Rob Durocher

On Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2021, we will offer two Ash Wednesday services with the imposition of ashes. Each service will take place in the St. John's Sanctuary at 12 pm and 6:30 pm. The 6:30 pm service will be live streamed.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. In 2021, Ash Wednesday falls on Feb. 17 and is always 46 days before Easter (not counting Sundays) and calls our hearts to repentance, prayer and reflection as we focus on the life of Christ, his ministry, sacrifice and resurrection. Traditionally the 40-day period represents the time of Christ's temptation in the wilderness where he fasted, prayed and endured Satan's temptation for '40 days and 40 nights'. (Matthew 4:1-11)

During our worship you will be invited to receive ashes on your forehead as our pastors dip their fingers into the ashes and spread them

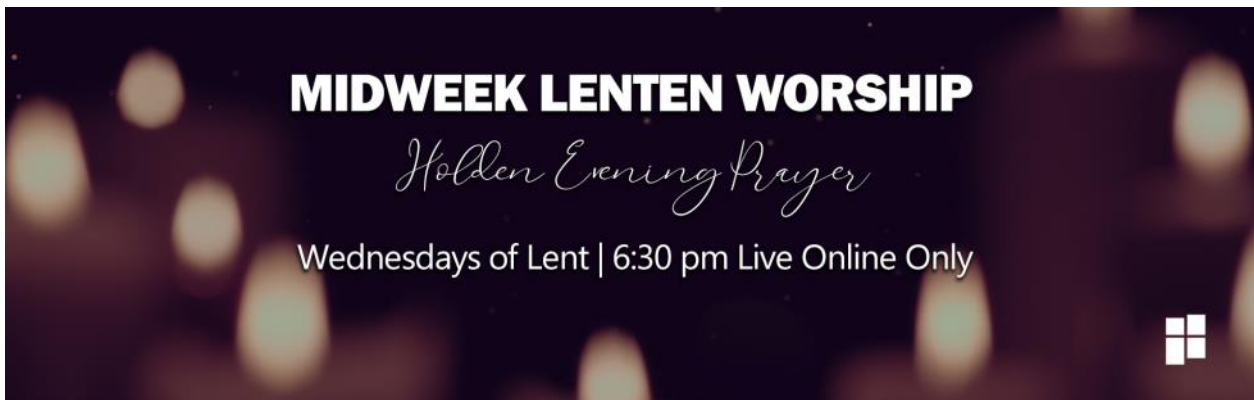
in a cross pattern on the forehead saying *"from dust you came and from dust you will return."* The ashes are equivalent to dust reminding us that our flesh is composed of dust or clay (Genesis 2:7) and that at our death the body returns to dust or ash.



Our Kindergarteners receiving the ashes on Ash Wednesday 2020

The ashes that are used have been prepared by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday when worshippers were given palms to wave as they shouted, *Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!* reminding us of Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem as palm branches were laid in his path.

Our response in coming forward to receive ashes is one of confession and one of recognition that our faults are in need of correction and forgiveness and that if we remain faithful this season of Lent will help us to grow in holiness so that we will be ready to celebrate the Easter joy to come!



The Season of Lent

Congregation-wide Lenten Project

Personal Care Kits

As we approach Lent, so many of our neighbors around the world are longing to experience — to truly touch, hear, see, smell and taste — the hope that only Jesus can bring. Meanwhile, congregations are restless and eager to be Christ's hands and feet in a world reeling from hardship.

During Lent, our Kingdom Kids, youth, adult small groups, and Senior Seasons will be participating in a Lenten Service Project, gathering items and building Personal Care Kits with Lutheran World Relief.

Each kit will include ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended (no logos, religious symbols, or camo); TWO or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original

wrapping; ONE adult-size toothbrush in it's original packaging*; ONE sturdy comb, remove packaging; ONE metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging *

Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap .



Visit our website or watch the FaithLife for more information on item specifications and how to get involved.



Midweek Lenten Service of Holy Communion

Wednesdays, 12:15 - 12:45 pm
in the St. John's Chapel

Limited Seating | Social Distancing | Masks Required



Music & Meditation

Mondays of Lent
12 pm - Online Only

A Love Song for the Ages

*Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down;
fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.*
(ELW #631)

Of the many beautiful hymns of our faith, ‘*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*’ has become one of our faith’s most beloved ‘love songs’ consistently sung for nearly 250 years.

Love Divine was first published in 1747, (ironically around the same time that St. John’s Lutheran Church, Salisbury, NC was thought to have been established!) The words were written by the prolific hymn writer Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788) born in Lincolnshire England. He was the eighteenth child of noted Anglican (Church of England) priest, Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna, Charles was called the “sweet bard of Methodism” and is said to have written more than 6500 hymns solidly based on passages of scripture and appealing to many faithful crossing denominational lines. This hymn appears for the first time in Wesley’s Hymns for those that Seek, and those that Have Redemption.

Charles, like his famous brothers John and the younger Samuel Wesley, was ordained into the Anglican priesthood. His brother John was an evangelist and leader of a revival movement with the Church of England that became known as Methodism, a religious movement of ‘historically related denominations of Protestant Christianity which derive their doctrine of practice and belief from the life and teachings of John Wesley. The whole spiritual environment of England was changed because of the spiritual conviction and leadership of John and Charles Wesley along with George Whitefield. Their unwavering devotion to society’s spiritual need for Christ was expressed through hymns and sermons with great impact across denominational divides. (In 1737, the Wesley brothers were sent to Georgia to preach and evangelize where their encounter with the Moravians who were traveling with them by ship led them to a deeper intimacy with Christ.)

In Charles Wesley’s hymn, *Love Divine*, various elements of Christian doctrine are touched upon. This hymn speaks loudly of the love of God as expressed in the incarnation of Christ - that he is *pure unbounded love* bringing to mind 1 John 4:9 which says, “*This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.*”

In the second verse Wesley writes:

*Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into ev’ry troubled breast.
Let us all in thee inherit, let us find the promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning, Alpha and Omega be.
End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts in liberty.*

His use of the words *Alpha and Omega* (the first and the last) reflect that the spiritual life we experience beginning with our baptism and for others at the time of ‘conversion and sanctification’ are thought of as the “beginning of faith” and the “end or object of faith” and that by that grace through faith we inherit everlasting life because of that precious *love divine*.

In verse 3, Wesley reminds us that in Christ we have the liberty to live, to worship without ceasing, and to glory in Christ’s love. We are reminded in this verse what Jesus said in John 10:10 that ‘*the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*’ We are also reminded of what Apostle Paul writes in I Thessalonians 5:16-18: “*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*”

*Come, Almighty, to deliver, let us all thy life receive.
Suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts
above,
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect
love.*

Finally, in the fourth verse we joyfully and expectantly await the mysterious culmination of our faith and joy. In this final verse, Wesley reminds us of this passage of scripture from 2 Corinthians 3:18, “*And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*” And from Revelation 4:10 “*the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and*

Continued...

worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne."

*Finish, then, thy new creation; true and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our
place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise.*

In Wesley's beautiful hymn, his 'biblical train of thought in writing this hymn is strengthened by the appearance of many of passages of scripture tied together speaking truth and authority with each verse. The hymn is a love song, but it is also a prayer to Jesus, our "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

'We pray to invite our *love divine* to make his dwelling in us — to visit us with his salvation — to enter our hearts. It invites him to take away our love of sinning — to set our hearts at liberty. It concludes by asking Jesus to finish his new creation (we are his new creation) so that we might be pure and spotless — perfectly restored — ready for heaven' (From *Sermon Writer*, by Richard Niell Donovan, 2006)

There are some hymn scholars who claim that Wesley wrote the words to this hymn based on a popular song with words by 17th century English poet and playwright John Dryden from his semi-opera, *King Arthur* written with English composer Henry Purcell. Dryden's song, *Fair Isle* began with the words: "*Fairest isle, all isles excelling, seat of pleasure and of loves.*" While this may or may not be true — it is no surprise that many hymns were written in words and tune to have an immediate appeal to those who were hearing them!

Over the last two plus centuries the text of *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* has been altered by different church denominations and has been sung to several different tunes. The hymn tune *HYFRYDOL* (Welsh for delightful, pleasant, melodious) was written by Rowland Prichard (1811-1887), a Welsh musician and is the tune that we have used for many years and the one that is most familiar to us.

Wesley's timeless hymn gives us courage to lift our eyes to the heavens and to let God's perfect love in Jesus Christ, a love that is divine, holy and that excels all else to be the theme which carries us through our life's journey creating new hearts that change from glory into glory and crowns us with his loving kindness leading us to God's wonder, love and praise!

Worship at St. John's

Online and In-person (subject to change)

Sundays at 11am Broadcast online from the Sanctuary. Join us by visiting our website or YouTube channel. Search "SJLC." Our in-person worship is limited to 100 participants and follows strict health protocols.

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.

DURING THE SEASON OF LENT

Wednesdays at 6:30 *Online only* Our on-line Lenten worship gathering, using the beautiful liturgy of Holden Evening Prayer.

Wednesdays 12:15-12:45 Our mid-week Lenten service of holy communion service in the Chapel. Strict health protocols are followed.

Please watch for updates regarding in-person worship in FaithLife, social media, and website as we monitor recommendations and guidelines for in-person indoor gatherings.

G2G Update

By Mark Lewis
G2G Steering Committee

We are beginning a new year and the G2G Steering Committee is presenting to you the status of our G2G Phase 2 project. We have been in challenging times during the coronavirus pandemic particularly with the loss of fellowship with each other and the extraordinary job done by the staff. We pray that God will hold each of you in his hands, protecting and nurturing you through the coming months when we will hopefully be able to gather together again as a Fellowship of Believers.

Our status update will begin with a report from our construction team led by Mike Agee:



What does it take to renovate a 1928 building, the Sanctuary, and an old building that had been a pizza restaurant then an insurance office before becoming the CDC?

A vision from the people who use the facilities and a lotta of work from the architects and engineers to turn the vision into actional plans. Diane Gibbs and Bill Burgin, RBS Architects, have been working diligently to put the visions into plans.

To be exact, it required sixty-two pages of plans including design layouts, construction details, electrical details, mechanical details and a book of specifications almost two inches thick. The initial plans were completed and submitted to the Rowan County Inspection Department in late November. Diane, the lead architect, has been in conversations with the Inspection Department throughout December. After some modifications, the plans have been approved by the Inspection Department in early January. We also recently received approval from the Historic Preservation Committee for modifications that will impact the outside appearance of the building.

The plans, specifications, and information have been revised and were submitted on Jan. 12 to the three general contractors who will bid on the project. In the past, this

process included a large roll of plans and a very thick specification book. In today's world it is a link to a site and a shared computer file folder.

Bids are requested to be submitted to the church by Feb. 11. Based on the returned bids, a general contractor will be selected, and we will work with them to bring the project scope into budget. Once a project scope is clearly defined and a final cost estimate established, the decision to sign the contract will be made by a congregational vote.

Informational meetings will be held prior to the vote to answer any questions about the project. We look forward to the project moving to the next phase.

As you can see from Mike's construction team update, we are getting closer to quantifying what is needed to move forward on renovations to the fellowship hall, main floor and Child Development Center. One of our guiding principles is that we will not begin any construction until we have enough funds on hand and pledged to complete that phase of our G2G plan without incurring any long-term debt. So the question is: "Where are we with the Capital Campaign?"

As you may recall, we began our Capital Campaign last

January culminating in Commitment Sunday. 179 pledges were received supporting our G2G effort. First and foremost, we want to thank each of you who stepped forward with gifts and pledges at that time. Unfortunately, the COVID lockdown began just as we were ready to reach out to the other 307 families from which we did not receive a pledge. We felt that it would be inappropriate for the church to begin that effort in such uncertain times, so we placed the capital campaign on pause.

Nearly a year later, here is where we stand financially with our Capital Campaign:

At this time, we have \$2,841,288 available to choose which portions of the Phase 2 renovation projects that we can begin. Keep in mind that we have potential gifts from 307 families that may have been uncertain about pledging at that time. Over the next 60 days, we will renew our G2G Capital Campaign reaching out to those families who have not yet pledged to seek their participation in this transformative project. As additional pledges are received, we will be able to add those to our totals to give the steering committee the information needed to make a recommendation to the church regarding the scope of the projects that we can undertake at this time. We are hopeful that many of you who have not pledged will join the 179 families that have done so thus far joining together to make our full G2G project a reality!

While the campaign re-engages, the construction team will follow the process outlined by Mike above. Keep an ear out for the information sessions that will be available for your participation and for the new pledge opportunities that will be available to you. Once we are firm in our recommendation, the church will be asked to vote on moving forward with construction. What a triumphant day that will be.

Stay safe and pray for our church's success in this endeavor. To God be the Glory!

A Look at the Numbers

As of December 31, 2020

The Pledge Campaign (ended March 1, 2020)

Potential Pledge units	486
Number of Pledges received	179
Value of Pledges Received	\$2,440,107

Fund Balance, as of 12.31.2020

Cash Received from Pledges	\$1,335,399
Cash-on-Hand at start of campaign	\$ 612,455
Misc. Income (memorial gifts)	\$ <u>5,955</u>
TOTAL BEFORE EXPENSES	\$1,953,809
G2G expenses thus far	\$ 217,229
CASH BALANCE AFTER EXPENSES	\$1,736,579
Value of Pledges to-be-received	\$1,104,708
TOTAL OF CASH BALANCE + PLEDGES TO-BE-RECEIVED:	\$2,841,288

The Power of Words

Jeanie Moore publishes memoirs during quarantine

By Susan Shinn Turner

During the great pandemic of 2020, Jeanie Moore realized she needed to do something both for her mental health and her spiritual health.

So she wrote a book.

"When I was recovering from knee surgery in mid-February, I realized I wasn't going to get out," Jeanie says, "and I decided to keep burning my Christmas lights. The lights change colors, so I'd do a Facebook post on different days to commemorate local groups."

Blue for law enforcement, red for firefighters, pink for nurses, and so on.

"It evolved into my stories and memories, and people liked it," says Jeanie, 68. "It resonated with people. It just opened the doors for connections in ways that made me feel good."

She decided to publish a book for her children and grandchildren. I had the honor of serving as her editor — nudging her along when necessary — so that she could have the project, which she entitled "Quarantine Diaries — My memories and musings," completed by Christmas 2020, her original goal.

"I'm glad I did it," she says. "I have a foundation of stories for my family."

But the posts haven't stopped.

"I'm already writing again," Jeanie says. "I can't help it!"

When random thoughts popped into her head, she wrote them down.

"It was being driven by a force greater than me," she says. "It just flowed. Because of the way the stories evolved, I felt like I was directed by a higher power. I felt like I was connected



to God and being led by him in the path he wanted to take me."

Not every post went smoothly, however.

"There were about four times when I went to post something and it completely disappeared and I had to start over," Jeanie says. "But actually, it ended up better."

She adds, "The emotional connection was really important to my mental health and my spiritual health. It showed me how you could be connected without physically being together."

That's helped her in her new position as interim vice president for student services

at Mitchell Community College, a six-month term she started Jan. 1.

Cheering her on from the start has been her husband, Jack, also 68. Retired from Southern Bell, Jack is the owner of Blowin' Smoke. He sells barbecue sauce, dry rubs and other products. Jeanie retired as vice president for advancement and continuing education after 36 years with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College.

"I'm physically present on campus, but most of my interaction are by phone or Zoom," she says. "But it works. I couldn't have seen it working without my writing project."

Jack and Jeanie's sons, Sandy and Daniel, have also been supportive of their mom's project. Sandy and his wife, Kyndall, live in Charlotte and are the parents of Blair, who turns 4 this month. Daniel and his wife, Sara, live in Raleigh, and have three children, Reeves, 9, Tyler, 7, and Grey, 4.

Daniel's older daughter is already a solid reader.

"What I've seen is really good," Reeves says. "I found all the pictures of me. I liked them all. They're all my favorites. It was really cool to find out what Jack and Gigi had been when they were younger. I didn't know any of it."



Jeanie and her family

Sandy read the book cover-to-cover when he and his family were at the beach with Jack and Jeanie at Thanksgiving. Daniel has flipped through it whenever he's had time in between working at home and caring for three children, two of whom are doing remote learning.

Sandy hopes that Blair will someday appreciate her grandmother's efforts.

"If I had something to that detail from my grandparents, it would be something I would treasure," he says.

So far, Jeanie has sold about 40 copies, and given another 20 as gifts to family and close friends. She's learned that the book has been a nice diversion from the pandemic, and has brought up memories of better days.

While they were at the beach, Sandy and Jeanie were talking about a title for a possible sequel. Jeanie said, "What about More Moore Stories?"

Sandy laughed.

"I like that," he said. "That's good."

Jeanie says she can't wait to get back to church.

"I want to listen more intently to the sermons because I now understand better the power of words," she says.

Along with being available on Jack's website, "Quarantine Diaries" can be purchased at the Meals on Wheels office, 1307 Salisbury Ave., Spencer; Fuller's Market, 112 S. Main St., Salisbury; and directly from Jeanie. Jack's website is www.blowinsmokebbqsauce.com. Find Jeanie's book under the "all products" tab. Price is \$16, with an additional \$4 if you need it shipped.

Our Schools

CDC OLE, continued from page 1.

“We had a very participatory design process,” Archer says. “We got wonderful feedback from the St. John’s community.”

That included a parent-teacher survey, and in-person workshops with pastors and teachers.

“We’ve been so excited with what we’ve seen,” she says.

“As a pastor at St. John’s, it is incredible to see our dreams realized in the building of the OLE,” Pastor Laura says. “It is a state-of-the-art OLE. As a mom, I am thrilled that my children will be able to have space that encourages them to explore and play in the dirt. My kids love exploring in our backyard and ‘forest’ of trees. Now, they will have the same thing plus more at the OLE.”

“Research tells us that children do not get enough imaginative play outdoors,” she adds. “This allows us to fill in that gap.”

Michael and Danielle DeNise have two children, Moses and Olive, who attend the CDC.

“We are so excited about the new OLE,” she says. “We are thrilled that their imaginations will be at work with water features, outdoor kitchens and more. And Moses is dying to run on the sidewalks. He keeps saying, “I’m gonna run as fast as a race car on that!”

“Every aspect of this plan has been thought out and researched,” McDaniel says.

While she’s worked, she’s noticed lots of little faces peering out the windows onto the OLE.

“The kids just cannot wait to get out here,” she says.

McDaniel has a fine arts degree from UNCC, and is a self-taught horticulturalist.

“This is just the most wonderful project I’ve ever done,” she says. “Everything I’ve done in my life has led me to this moment.”

Colleen McDaniel’s team: Kenny Phillips (full-time) and Tito Perez (part-time)

R.L. Glover Construction (Bob Glover): Large wooden structures and deck

Mike Shuler: fencing

Mike Shelton: concrete

Helms Masonry (Mark Helms): brick columns

Kesco Irrigation (Steve Kester)

Plant material: Godley’s Nursery

Steve Jarrett: donation of rocks, boulders, logs; onsite as needed



Colleen McDaniel, center, works with her crew in setting up a part of the Outdoor Learning Center.



Kenny Phillips assembles a table for one of the mud sink play areas.



These logs were assembled in a circle to create an outdoor learning circle (left). Sidewalks run throughout (right).



This willow tunnel will eventually be green in the springtime (left photos). Poplar covers the columns in one of the covered play areas. The Outdoor Learning Center also has a teepee village, seen in background (right photo).

How Can I Get Involved?

Tours

We'll be offering tours to the congregation because you are going to want to see all of the features! What an exciting time for us all, but especially for those adorable children who will enjoy this amazing space every day!

Watch for more info to come.

Plant Some Joy

The Plant Some Joy campaign continues! You can help purchase shrubs and trees to be planted in the OLE on the

behalf of a friend or family member and we will send them a card to celebrate. Recognize your Valentine in a unique way, or pay it forward in honor of an upcoming birthday or anniversary. You can even bless someone "just because."

It's easy.

Visit stjohns-salisbury.org/plantjoy

Follow all of the prompts, leave a short message, and we will take it from there.

Our Latest “Conversations that Matter” Podcast

Pastor Rhodes Interviews Teresa Moore-Mitchell

Have you subscribed to the St. John’s “Conversations that Matter” podcast ?

In February, Pastor Rhodes interviews Teresa Moore-Mitchell.

Teresa is a local treasure with a global reach. A gifted musician and a spirited Christian, she sees music as a tool to sharing the Gospel. In this month’s conversation, Teresa shares details of her journey, the highs and lows, including the challenges she’s faced as an African-American artist.

Listen to the full 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!

Guatemala: Updates from Escuela Integrada



Year End Matching Campaign: Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Year End Matching campaign! We were able to raise a total of \$50,432.89! These funds are going towards helping students like Lucia.

Over eight years ago Lucia was the smallest student in her class and her family faced many hardships. Her father abandoned the family and her mother had to fend for nine children on her own. Her mother spoke of the difficulties she encountered— working long hours and not even making enough money to feed her children, compounded by the danger of walking home late at night, with the very real risk of sexual violence or extortion. Now, Lucia, who was once the smallest girl in her kindergarten class, is today, is a strong and capable teenager set to graduate from Escuela Integrada in a few years. Her future holds the possibilities of further

education, obtaining a well-paying job, and starting a family when she is ready. In just **one generation** the cycle of poverty crumbles. This is why GRACES believes in education. Not only are the students growing in academic knowledge, but they are also receiving physical, emotional and spiritual support. This holistic method is what helps the children succeed. We are in it for the long haul to see the children prosper because we know that Jesus can transform and redeem any life, family, community and country. We want to thank each and every one of you for your faithful donations, which make this work possible.

New School Year:

Escuela Integrada is kicking off their new school year. This year, classes will continue to be held virtually until at least June. The school will continue to provide food bags every month for the families as well as school supplies and data packages so that the



students can communicate with their teachers virtually. If you would like to contribute to any of these campaigns, you can do so at www.wearegraces.org/mealsupport and www.wearegraces.org/schoolsupplies.



Congratulations

Called by God and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Julie Tonnesen was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on Saturday, Dec. 12. Pastor Tonnesen, who grew up at St. John's, has been called as the Associate Pastor of Macedonia Lutheran Church in Burlington. She will also work with Lutheran students at Elon University.

St. John's Leadership

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2021 President Mike Edwards
Vice President Carole Parrott
Secretary Mary Wymbs
Treasurer Tommy Page
Financial Secretary...Cory Gebhardt
Personnel Secretary ... Jeanie Moore

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

Term Expires 2023

Dr. Larry Cartner
Elaine Holden
Brenda Munday
Carole Parrott
Colleen Young

Youth Members

Sacha Medina and Ryan Brady

Benevolent Foundation Trustees

Chip Bridges, Chair
Chris Agner
Margaret Kluttz
John Denker
Lori Yang

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

Calendar Updates

You may have noticed the monthly calendar has not been included in the Eagle's View for several months. Due to the necessity for schedule flexibility because of Covid safety precautions, please continue to check the Wednesday FaithLife, social media, and our website for the latest calendar updates.

You may also sign up for more detailed information from Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, and Senior Seasons via email.

Thank you for your continued patience regarding scheduling and promotion.

Happy Birthday!

*Congratulations to our Octogenarians
celebrating February birthdays:*

Sonny Allen, Willi Beilfuss, Marty Blackburn, Paul Carter,
Ken Fink, Anita Gandy, The Rev. Dr. David Nelson, The Rev.
David Willingham

Hope for Today
A Counseling Ministry of St. John's
Lauren Stephenson, M.S., LMHCA, NCC

Finding Hope: Coping with COVID-19 and Our New Normal

Individual Counseling

With Lauren Stephenson, M.S., LMHCA, NCC. Free and available to the community. Contact the Church Office (704-636-3431) or sign up online at stjohns-counseling.youcanbook.me

Consolation

Jessica Eaton Goodman's Uncle, Tommy Eaton, passed away at the Veteran's Hospital in Salisbury on December 29.

Family and friends of Larry Corl, who passed away on Dec. 30.

Melissa, Wesley, Mallory, and Emily, on the passing of Melissa's father, Marc Clark on Jan. 7.

The family of Matt Beaver, a teacher from Knox Middle School, and friend of many, passed away on Jan.19 from Covid 19.

Mike and Karen Jones, on the passing of Mike's sister, Sandy Jones on Jan. 20.

Tabitha Myers and family on the passing of her father, Thomas Llewellyn on Jan. 21.

Kim, Molly, Miles Robinson, and family, on the passing of Scott Robinson on Jan. 22.

Ann, Eric, Kristen and Ryan Brady, on the passing of Ann's father, John Eagle, on Jan. 22.

Jessica Goodman, whose mother passed away on January 31.

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
CDC Interim Directors Lonna Richardson and Kristy King

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

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.

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Eagle's View Deadline

The March Eagle's View will be published in February.
Please email stories and news to
angel@stjohns-salisbury.org by Feb. 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.*