



# ST. JOHN'S JOURNEY

*LIVING IN HOPE † UNITED IN FAITH † LED BY LOVE*



May, 2023

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Vestry Notes	1
Upcoming Events	2
Notes for Pentecost	3
Farewell to Tom	3
Financial News	4
Diocesan News	5
Community Garage Sale	6
Easter Pics	7
Madi's Baptism	8
Jalapeno Popper-Spread	9
Ministry Schedule	6

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Dear Friends,

As you will see in this issue, April was a very busy month. Holy week, Easter, a lovely baptism, saying goodbye to Fr. Tom and other fun surprises. Our schedule for May looks just as full. We welcome Rev. Mary Jo Schuetz for what we hope is the first of many visits to St. John's to celebrate Eucharist with us. Bishop Singh will be with us on May 21<sup>st</sup>. We have a garage sale coming up and then there's Pentecost. And the work on the automatic ringer for our bell is getting started too. It's exciting to see so many good things in motion. It feels like we're doing our own spring dance along with all of nature.

The Vestry met with the Rev. Tracie Little from the Diocese of Eastern Michigan in mid-April to discuss our options for bringing new clergy to St. John's. She described the "call" process which requires a small committee to create a document that describes St. John's as a congregation as well as our future goals. When asked about availability of clergy for placement, she told us that there are no diocesan priests looking for a position nor are there any new graduates from the diocesan school expected for the next few years. It might be possible to attract someone from out of state – the Diocese and the National church share information on possible matches. However, the shortage of priests is nationwide.

The Vestry is considering how to proceed. For

the foreseeable future, we will work to schedule guest priests (they are called "Supply" priests but I don't care for that term) to lead Eucharist twice a month if they are available. These folks are almost always retired priests who have much yet to share. They also want to enjoy their retirement – which means that we need to be flexible with our scheduling. There may be some months when we only have one Eucharist. Or there may be a last minute change. We are blessed to have strong Worship Leaders who can bring us together for prayer and worship when eucharist is not available.



One thing we can all do is pray for St. John's and for all the parishes that are in our situation. You'll see an article in this issue that describes the various types and numbers of parishes in Eastern and Western Dioceses. St. John's is a "family sized" parish – as are two-thirds of all the parishes for both dioceses. And I'm willing to bet that many of them are just like us. We also need to pray for vocations and for new people coming to our church-



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**Editor: Becky Foster**

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

May 26th



**Happy Birthday!**

Richard Buszek  
Neil Hargrave  
Margaret Smith

**Happy Anniversary**

Kathleen & Richard  
Buszek  
John & Yvonne  
Malinich  
Mark & Sherry  
Wagner

es. It seems to me that the two are linked. It is easier to hear and respond to a "call" if you are part of a lovingly faithful community, right? And I think St. John's fills the bill perfectly.

The Diocese is encouraging parishes to participate in the College for Congregational Development as a way to help us thrive and grow. Neil Hargrave, Ina Dockham and myself will attend the first session this summer. We've been warned against expecting a magic wand solution. But I think we can expect to work

with other parish representatives to develop some ideas that would work to our benefit. Don't be surprised if we come back with some ideas that involve you too. It's always better when we all work together.

So, mark your calendars for May and watch for the many ways that spring announces new life for all of us.

Blessings & Peace,

*Becky*

**Dates to Remember:**

**May 7<sup>th</sup>** – Welcome to Rev. Mary Jo Schuetz as a Guest Preacher at St. John's. This is her first visit – let's show her a warm St. John's welcome.

**May 14<sup>th</sup>** – Mother's Day. Celebrating the many people who have nurtured us with love in our lives

**May 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>** – Church Garage Sale

**May 21<sup>st</sup>** – Bishop Singh celebrates eucharist at St. John's. Start warming up those crock-pots – I see a major pot-luck in our future.

**May 28<sup>th</sup>** – Pentecost Sunday. Wear your red!



**Remember St. John's in your will:**

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

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

## Some Pentecost Thoughts for Our Continuing Journey at St. John's

These quotes are from "The Water and the Blood"  
by Julian Waldner published in The Plough Quarterly, Spring 2023

As a chronic planner, I find it difficult to adjust when God decides that His plan is better and completely changes the direction of my path. These words helped shift my focus from what-might-have-been to what-yet-might-be. It reminded me to have faith, trust and watch for what He is creating. I felt the Spirit in my heart when I read them. Maybe these quotes will speak to you too. - Becky

*"To be baptized requires faith in the creative work of the Spirit to make us what we are not. It is a faith that hopes there is more to the body of Christ than meets the eye. That there is more to the people who make up this body than their political views and faltering virtues. That the church's movement through history is propelled by more than economics, force, and power, but is pushed onward by the breath of God."*

*"If there is anything (we) should know, it is that we follow a surprising God — surprising not only in what he has done in coming to us in this man Jesus, but also in what he continues to do to carry this story forward. To follow this surprising God requires an attentiveness to what God might be saying and doing in the stuff of ordinary life, the present moment, and the people, places, and creatures around us. Such a life will be characterized by freedom, strange friendships and an openness to surprising possibilities."*



**Pentecost – May the Spirit be with us all**



## *Palm Sunday – Saying Farewell to Rev. Tom*

A present to help him remember us all – Taste & See, a collection of pictures and newsletter recipes during his time with us at St. John's.

## Financial Updates

March is the most recent month reviewed by the Vestry. The basic figures (full numbers only, rounded up) are below:

March	Monthly	Monthly	Better or	YTD	YTD	Better or
<b>Income</b>	\$4,933	\$6,602	<b>\$1,669</b>	\$14,800	\$17,637	<b>\$2,837</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	\$4,848	\$5,283	<b>\$435</b>	\$14,543	\$12,146	<b>\$2,396</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	\$86	\$1,320	<b>\$1,234</b>	\$257	\$5,491	<b>\$5,233</b>

Pledge donations for bounced back from below budget levels in February. Many thanks to all who made this possible. Expenses were above budget – mainly due to heating costs. Overall, we’re in the black by a healthy amount.

The Restricted Funds -

Bell Project – 50% of the estimated total was sent to Verdin Company as a downpayment. We have received acknowledgement of the payment and expect scheduling options soon.

Current balance in Restricted is \$22,800 – most of which is from the remaining funds for the Bell Project and residual funds from the Curacy Program.

Vanguard Investment Account – total value \$80,884

ETF Investment – Original investment \$65,000. Current Value close to \$60,000. This is an increase of \$5,000 from the prior report. Let’s hope it continues to improve.

CD - \$21,000. This will remain stable until next year when interest is added to the amount..

## Financial Considerations related to clergy transition

We hope to have supply priests twice a month after April for the remainder of the year. Starting in May, that means 16 Sundays. We should also consider scheduling supply for Pentecost and for Christmas which brings the total to 18 services.

Given current compensation rates for supply priests and assuming a 100 mile round trip, we would pay \$4,800 for 16 Sundays (2 Sundays a month for remainder of 2023) plus two special holiday services. How to cover that?

Short Answer:

In P&L Statement		
Move 69600 Clergy Pension budget	74500 Supply Priest	\$1,650
	74550 Supply Priest Mileage	\$825
<b>Total in P&amp;L</b>		<b>\$2,475</b>
In Restricted Fund		
Add Curacy Funds (\$3,700) to	Salary Allocation	\$3,724
<b>Total available for Supply Clergy and</b>		<b>\$6,199</b>





Longer Answer:

The funds allocated for Clergy Pension could be reallocated to Supply Priest Compensation accounts after ensuring all payments on Tom's behalf are current. Assuming 1/3 of the annual allocation will have been used by end of April, we should have roughly \$2,500 left to work with.

We also have a little money left under Cumulative Salary Allocation (\$24) in the Restricted Accounts. Since the Diocese has agreed to leave the remaining Curacy Grant funds with us (roughly \$3,700 after March & April checks for Tom), we could consolidate those funds and use them to pay for supply priests and any costs related to the search process for a new priest.

I recommend leaving the Clergy Salary and Housing accounts as is. It will continue to accumulate up to \$9,300 by year's end. This will give us needed funding if we are able to locate an interim priest during our search process.

## News from the Diocese

Some new approaches to organizing support for congregations are in process. Bishop Singh described them this way in a recent message:



***We are organizing ourselves into three geographic “collaboratives.”***

*To nurture increased relationship (a rallying cry across nearly all listening sessions earlier this Spring!), starting in May, we will transition our current organizing structures to three geographic “collaboratives” that span across the two dioceses. This way of organizing ourselves will honor our existing relationships and nurture new ones.*

*Collaboratives will be areas, supported by a canon, where clergy and congregations can support each other. Our goal is that collaborative members can explore ways they might work together for the advancement of mission and ministry in the parish and in the diocese as a whole. Collaboratives will also allow us to experiment with ways that we might effectively structure ourselves in the future.*

*Due to canonical implications, we are intentionally using the language of “collaboratives” rather than “regions” to help facilitate this practice out of a place of flexibility and curiosity about what we learn.*

And he also shared some interesting data regarding the make-up of congregations across both Eastern and Western Dioceses. St. John's is an example of the most numerous type of congregation in either diocese.

*Here's a snapshot of who we are in terms of current benchmarks of congregational size in our two dioceses. We are:*

- *Four “Program Size” congregations with an ASA (average service attendance) of over 150 and a baptized membership of approximately 400*
- *28 “Pastoral Size” congregations: 18 Western + 10 Eastern, with an ASA of over 75 people and a baptized membership of about 150*
- *65 “Family Size” congregations: 32 Western + 33 Eastern; with an ASA of less than 75 people a baptized membership of about 100. Most of our family-size congregation have an ASA fewer than 30.*
- *Four seasonal chapels, all in Western Michigan.*

*And we have several communities who gather beyond congregation — Plainsong Farm and Ministry, the Order of Naucratus, Camp Chickagami, Episcopal Youth Camp, and Holy Hikes Great Lakes — all are reaching new populations and leading us further beyond our walls. That's over 100 worshiping mission stations within our part of the lower peninsula shore to shore.*

*We are working to build Leadership Teams for each Collaborative to accompany and support congregations that need help visioning and making progress with their vision to thrive in ministry. More on this at this year's Convention.*

***Numerical growth follows clear and consistent practices of hope.***

*We are moving in our discernment to optimize our capacity for growth in<sup>5</sup> mission and ministry. To do this with some clarity, we need to have a*





# Holy Week 2023



On the stripped altar



The shadow of the cross



The Paschal candle  
has a new  
look – love the colors!

**He is Risen!**  
**He is Risen, indeed!**





# An Easter Baptism



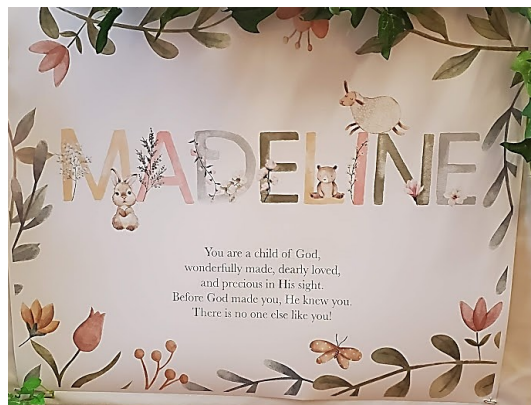
She didn't cry and he didn't drop her – a good sign



The happy family in front of the Easter cross



Everyone loves to see a baby – and little Madi is a charmer Rev. Tom with Mom, Dad and Madi – she looks pretty serious, don't you think?



A Welcome Sign for little Madi



# Jalapeno Popper Spread

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

## Ingredients

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/4 cup canned chopped green chiles
- 1/4 cup canned diced jalapeno peppers
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- Sweet red and yellow pepper pieces and corn chips



## Directions

In a large bowl, beat the first 5 ingredients until blended; spread into an ungreased 9-in. pie plate. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese; top with bread crumbs. Bake at 400° until lightly browned, 25-30 minutes. Serve with peppers and chips.

## Test Kitchen Tips

- Regular dry bread crumbs stand in just fine for panko.
- Monterey Jack is a phenomenal melting cheese. If you want a little extra spice, use pepper jack instead.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Video</u>	<u>Counting Member 1</u>	<u>Counting Member 2</u>
May 7	Beckett	Jack	John	Rev Schuetz	Ina Dockham	Russ	Becky
May 14	Jack			Becky	Ida Lynn Dodd	Neil	Jack
May 21	Mary	Beckett	Neil	Bishop Singh	Sherry Wagner	Jack	Connie
May 28	Tammy			Neil	Wes Wagester	Ina	Wes
June 4	Wes	Kay	Neil	Rev Schuetz	Ina Dockham	Connie	Ina
June 11	Neil			Kitty	Ida Lynn Dodd	Wes	Russ
June 18	Margaret	Neil	Jack	Rev Voelker	Sherry Wagner	Russ	Becky
June 25	Tammy			Neil	Wes Wagester	Becky	Jack

## Ministry Schedule

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