



St. John's Prologue

“In the beginning was the Word...”

St. John's Episcopal Church
Williamstown, Massachusetts

August 2017

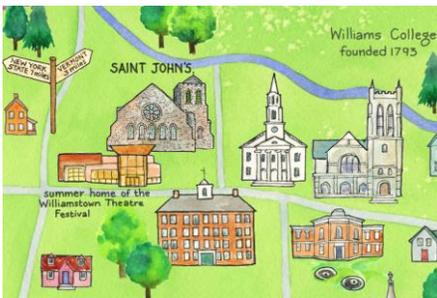
FROM THE CO-WARDENS

Dear St. John's Parish Family,

Thank you for your commitment and engagement during the last five months as we assessed, through the RenewalWorks and Holy Cow evaluation processes, who we are and where we want to go from here. We learned our strengths and weaknesses as a parish and examined our future goals and dreams. You have received detailed reports from both the RenewalWorks Team and the Profile Team. A report from a Holy Cow consultant was offered to the parish on June 12. The RenewalWorks Team reported to the vestry in June and held a forum for the parish on July 24th. Copies of the RenewalWorks final report are available on the table in the church foyer. As of this writing, we are right on schedule with the recommended transition timeline suggested by the diocese, which will disseminate the Profile report. The Diocese will then be the filter for the candidates to be presented to the Search Committee in the fall. The search will begin in earnest as soon as the Team receives a list of recommended candidates. Tremendous thanks to the RenewalWorks Team, Profile Team, and all of you. --Claudia Ellet and Margot Sanger, Co-Wardens

PROFILE TEAM IS FINALIZING ITS WORK

The Profile Team is making final edits and design decisions on the two documents that the Search Committee will use to attract rector candidates. One is called the Community Ministry Portfolio, which includes factual data about the position and 12 short essays about the parish and what we'll be looking for in candidates. The other is a flyer that is being designed as an electronic document, since that's primarily how it will be used. In August and early September, the team will review the drafts with Vestry. The pieces will then be distributed by Rich Simpson, our diocesan transition minister, before the semi-annual meeting in late September, at which he and his colleagues from other dioceses swap information on openings and candidates. Applications should then begin to arrive, and the Search Committee will begin identifying a small number of finalists to present to the Vestry, which is responsible for discerning which finalist to call as our rector and for settling on a contract. When the portfolio and flyer are in their final forms, they will be shared with the parish. -- Jim Kolesar, Profile Team Chair



PRAYER FOR ST. JOHN'S SEARCH PROCESS

(written by the vestry assisted by Sloane Torres, Chaplain to the Profile & Search Teams)

God of abundance and grace, you have blessed the members of St. John's church with love for one another and with joy in our community. Help us to discern your will and be open to your guidance as we seek a new rector for our parish. Grant us the ability to hear your voice as we listen to one another. Give us wisdom and patience, courage and calm, mutual respect, and clarity of vision that we may receive a priest who serves with warmth and humor, enthusiasm and faithfulness, and who challenges us with the demands of love. In Jesus's name we pray. AMEN.

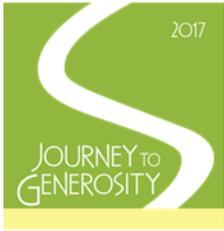
THINKING ABOUT MISSION / OUTREACH

Service to others has been a strong tradition at St. John's! Through Raile's Bowl, The Friendship Food Pantry, Episcopal Relief and Development, Mampong Babies Home, the Sunday meals program, and over 40 other projects or organizations, the parish has spread its financial resources, as well as time and talent, to help those in need. As documented in the recent assessments by parishioners, we see our outreach as very important to us. Therefore, as we move through this period of transition, there is a new effort underway to evaluate our current approach to Mission and Outreach activities—to make sure it is the best way to both meet the needs of others and engage the talents of parishioners. You will be hearing more about Mission/Outreach events in the coming weeks and months, including a number of opportunities for dialogue and input. Anyone with an interest in these issues who would like to share your thoughts at any time may contact Van Ellet (vellet1@roadrunner.com or 413-884-6158).

-- Van Ellet, Mission/Outreach Chair

JOURNEY TO GENEROSITY: AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAY “YES”

Life is an opportunity. Life is a journey. A journey to saying “yes” to God who calls us the Beloved. Life is a journey to love; a journey to welcome; a journey to invite; a journey to peace; a journey to generosity.



From the moment we draw our first breath to the moment we breathe our last, we are both receivers and givers. How we move from takers of everything given to us to sharing everything we have is one measure of how we live into saying “Yes.” On our journey to generosity, we learn from our parents and other family members. We learn from friends and church members. We learn through our own actions and from hearing the stories of other generous people. The gospel stories of Jesus inform, challenge, and inspire us. Whether it’s the story of the Good Samaritan, the rich young ruler, or Zacchaeus, Jesus invites us into the journey to generosity.

The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) and our St. John’s Stewardship Ministry Team have chosen “Journey to Generosity” as the theme for 2017 to invite everyone into that journey. It is not simply about how much we give to support the mission and ministry of our parish. The journey is about how we live our lives as the Beloved. Are we generous in our dealings with others? Are we generous when we welcome the stranger and the strange to church on Sunday mornings? Are we generous in our forgiveness and in our acceptance of forgiveness?

“Put simply, life is a God-given opportunity to become who we are, to affirm our own true spiritual nature, claim our truth, appropriate and integrate the reality of our being, but most of all, to say ‘Yes’ to the One who calls us the Beloved.” -- Henri J.M. Nouwen

2017/18 Stewardship Team: Mary Lovvorn (Chair), Carl and Jane Jenkins, Paul Heggeseth, the Rev. Libby Wade

CONGRATULATIONS TO NORTHERN BERKSHIRE HEROES – JIM MAHON & PAULA CONSOLINI

At its 31st annual meeting on June 23rd, the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition presented Paula Consolini and Jim Mahon (both St. John’s members) with the Northern Berkshire Hero Award. Paula and Jim were honored for their outstanding dedication and service to the North Berkshire area.

FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK KIDS

Stick this list on your refrigerator or wherever you will see it often – and see if you can get into the habit of asking your kids at least one of these questions each day. Perhaps they will help foster awareness of God in your midst and enrich connections between you and the children in your care as you savor the last weeks of summer vacation!

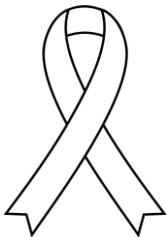
- What made you laugh today?
- When did you help someone recently?
- What are you feeling grateful for this week?
- What’s been a challenging part of your day?
- How have you experienced God this week?



Come to think of it, these questions could be asked of anyone in your household – child or adult!

--from *Illustrated Children’s Ministry*

FACING FORWARD, LIFE AFTER CANCER



On July 20th, a group of ten persons gathered in the Upper Room to welcome Elizabeth Fredland, a social worker affiliated with the Southwestern Vermont Regional Cancer Center in Bennington. One of her first statements to us was “We may be cancer free, but we are never free from cancer,” and she used the inclusive word “survivor” to describe all who have encountered cancer, whether they have just been diagnosed, declared cancer-free after treatment, or are still dealing with an active prognosis. She agreed that the greatest stress occurs between first diagnosis and the follow-up appointment with a physician, and that emotional and physical pain are considerably reduced when there are available support systems, such as a loving church community. Inevitably, spiritual questions arise such as “Do I live in a fair world?” and “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Nonjudgmental responses encourage trust and honest sharing. Noting the New England tendency of reluctance to admit need or ask for help, she suggested starting with the approach “I’ve been there; we’re here for you!” Elizabeth modeled sensitive listening skills and left us with the NIH manual “Facing Forward, Life After Cancer Treatment.” Additional resources can be found in our church library. Our Cancer Support Group meets in the Upper Room at St. John’s on the first and third Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. and is open to all.

-- Gary F. Dickson, Cancer Support Group Member

PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT

The mission of the Parish Life Committee is to plan, promote, and facilitate ways to engage parishioners and visitors of St. John's Church in various activities that support community and ensure that all are supported in their spiritual journey and feel welcomed and sustained as part of the parish community.

The committee is very excited to present upcoming events and an outreach project that will begin on August 6th:

Parish School Backpack and Supplies Outreach Project – August 6th to August 27th

St. John's Church and All Saints Church are joining together to ask our parish communities to donate new backpacks and school supplies for the Student and Parent Resource Center for the Elementary Public Schools of North Adams. The center is located at Brayton Elementary School. Teachers and guidance counselors will work together to identify children in need of a backpack or school supplies. A display of backpacks and suggested school supplies is in the back of the church. Two marked receptacles are provided in which to leave your donations, one at the display table and another in the hallway outside the parish offices. If you are unable to shop and would like to make a financial donation, Raile's Bowl (the bowl hanging from the pulpit) is open for this project throughout August. The backpacks and supplies will be blessed on Sunday, August 27th, when All Saints parishioners will worship with us. A representative from the North Adams Schools will be present that Sunday to receive the donations just in time for the beginning of school the last week of August. Thank you so much for supporting this project!

Here is the suggested list:

Back packs for students in Pre-K – 6th Grade
Ticonderoga #2 pencils
Erasers
Glue Sticks
Rulers

Folders
Highlighters
Crayons
Colored Pencils
Magic Markers



Annual Potluck Parish Picnic – Sunday, September 17th

The Parish Picnic will be held at St. John's after the 10:00 service on Sunday, September 17th. Weather permitting, tables and grills will be on the front lawn. If it is rainy, we will enjoy an indoor picnic in the Lower Room. Grillmasters will cook hamburgers and hot dogs. We ask that parishioners donate chips, sides, drinks, and desserts. Announcements and sign-up sheet will begin on Sunday, August 27th.

And stay tuned for details and dates for the following fall events:

- History of St. John's Church Parish Supper
(members of St. John's will share their memories of our parish over the years, even decades)
- Blessing of the Animals – Wednesday, October 4 (St. Francis Day)
- Newcomer Reception
- Parish Retreat in October
- Carpool to Evening with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in Springfield – October 15

With gratitude, the Parish Life Committee: Jane Jenkins, Claudia Ellet, Robin Lenz, Drew Gibson, Lisa Bernard, Josephine Nicholson, Pete Morin, Grace Breckenridge, Margot Sanger, Ildi Bodor, Jim Wade

BARBECUE TO WELCOME STUDENTS



Our annual barbecue to welcome Williams College students will be held on the front lawn on **Thursday, September 7th, 5:30-7:00 p.m.** Come to help greet students, and bring a side dish or dessert to share. In the event of rain, we'll use the sun room and lower room. Watch for the sign-up sheet at the back of the church. It will help us with planning if you'll let us know that you are coming, and what you'll bring.

Our trusty grillers Dan, Phil & Dave are getting their spatulas warmed up for this always interesting event.

INTRODUCING THE ST. JOHN'S CHORISTER PROGRAM

Each year, our diocese sends out a call for proposals for Ministry Development Grants. These grants provide funding to jump-start new ministries. This year, the diocese experienced a shortage of applications and extended the deadline, asking parishes to think creatively about new ways we might advance our mission. After mulling it over and listening in on some of the insights coming out of the process of developing a parish profile for our Rector search process, I decided to bring up the idea of a chorister program for children. Libby was encouraging and offered some key insights, and off I went. I began doing some research into similar programs in the region and at another church where I previously served, and then I sent the proposal to the Vestry, who enthusiastically approved it. On Friday, July 21st, we learned that the diocese approved funding for the project! The program will have a **first rehearsal on September 7th**. Children will learn about worship by singing hymns and anthems. We envision the children's choir initially singing in worship services once per month, eventually increasing in frequency as the group grows in ability.

Using the Royal School of Church Music's Voice for Life materials, we plan to deliver high-quality music education at no cost to families. The RSCM's Voice for Life program provides a robust (but not rigid) structure for developing musicians in a choral setting, with measurable targets and a wealth of tools to accomplish this development. While it is designed for all ages, it is most used by children's choirs. As choristers grow in ability, they progress through various workbooks and learning goals, with targets at five ability levels in the categories of vocal production, musical skills and understanding, knowledge of historical and musical contexts, belonging to the choir, and the choir's role in the church and wider community. It is designed to be adaptable, and it was developed with the understanding that choristers will be of different ages and abilities. We are hopeful that a children's choir with an emphasis on education and a high standard for musical growth will work well in Williamstown.



To mitigate the substantial administrative responsibilities involved in launching this program, we will recruit a Music Scholar from the Williams College community, funded this year by the grant from the diocese. We hope to find a student with an interest in church music and a passion for working with children. Such a student would work approximately 5 hours per week, organizing music and materials, tracking the children's progress, managing attendance, assisting with rehearsals and services, and facilitating communication with families. Depending on the student's interest, the Music Scholar may also occasionally conduct or lead portions of rehearsals. The age group targeted for this initial year is Grades 3-7. We're hoping to find 12 choristers for this first year. Though there is no audition, there will be certain attendance and behavior expectations. Help spread the word, and stay tuned for updates as they unfold! If you have kids in Grades 3-7 or if you know any families with kids in that age group that might be interested in this program, have them contact me at rhansler@gmail.com.

-- Bob Hansler

FROM THE ORGANIST / CHOIR DIRECTOR

Our **adult choir** will return on September 10th with their first rehearsal on September 7th. The adult choir rehearses from 7:30-9:00 p.m. on Thursdays from September through June. We welcome new members; if you are interested in learning more about the choir, I would love to hear from you!

You will hear small ensembles from the choir singing in a few services between now and September.

Our next **Vespers Service** is **Thursday, August 31st at 5:00 p.m.** Vespers is a short prayer service with music and readings – a quiet way to end the work day. This month's focus is John Bunyan. Did you know one of our stained glass windows depicts Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*?

-- Bob Hansler

ANGELS WALKING THIS EARTH

Thanks go this month to all those who delivered meals and groceries to parishioners; Charles Bonenti and Robin Lenz for tending the garden and delivering food to the Friendship Food Pantry in North Adams; Jeanne and Richard Blake and Kathy and Phil McKnight for tending the pots of flowers; all those who replenish St. John's Food Pantry; Michele Ridgeway for her beautiful art; those who deliver flowers to parishioners from our altar; Coffee Hour hosts Cynthia Tykot, Claudia Ellet, Margot Sanger, Madeline Burdick, Grace Breckenridge, Drew Gibson, Kathy and Phil McKnight.

GO GREEN!

If you would like to receive the Prologue by email each month and are happy to dispense with the “hard copy,” please let Madeline know at saintjohns@roadrunner.com. So far, 21 people have joined the Go Green group. We will of course continue to send the printed Prologue to those who prefer to receive it by “snail mail.”

FROM THE YOUTH MINISTERS

Lift Every Voice!

Starting in September there will be a weekly musical event in the Lower Room each Sunday for 20 or 30 minutes before the 10am service. Called “Lift Every Voice,” and led by Jimmy Bergin and Mary Pierson, this event will be an intergenerational hymn-sing of sorts that will familiarize those attending with service music and with the prayers, hymns, and songs that are important in Christian tradition and/or will be a part of upcoming services. This will help everyone attending, but especially non-readers and children, to be able to participate confidently in full community worship and will further our exposure as a congregation to the language and song of Christian tradition. Any and all are invited to attend. Please watch for more information via email and the church bulletin, and get ready to come a bit early to church and lift *your* voice in song!



Godly Play and Full-Community Worship

St. John’s received a taste of Godly Play on a July Sunday when Libby told the parable of the sower, that Sunday’s Gospel reading, in Godly Play style and enabled the congregation to wonder about its meaning. Godly Play is a Montessori-based Christian formation program that follows a liturgical rhythm and enables participants to encounter scriptural story, become familiar with the language of Christian tradition, and enhance their spiritual experience through wonder and play. We’re thrilled to be able to offer Godly Play as our church school program beginning in the fall. Godly Play doesn’t tell children what to believe or what stories mean. Rather, it creates a prayerful environment where the Holy Spirit can work through the community to help children discern meaning. The program uses tactile materials in storytelling and time for free play and/or artistic response. Godly Play will be the children’s liturgy of the word and prayers of the people, but the children will join the rest of the congregation for communion in the church. So that the children can connect with the lectionary readings the adults hear, a take-home bulletin, the *Sunday Paper Junior*, will continue to be available in the children’s tote bags in church, though they may be distributed rather than staying in the tote bags. One Sunday each month, the intergenerational community will worship together for the entire service, and there will be no church school. We hope parish families will come to the Lower Room to participate in Lift Every Voice together, then, on church school Sundays, parents can bring children to the Sun Room for Godly Play in time to get to church by 10 o’clock, and on full-community worship Sundays, families can go up to church together.

-- Sloane Torres & Erin Keiser-Clark

FROM THE COORDINATOR OF SPECIAL EVENTS

Our 14th annual Summer Noontime concert series continues each Monday through August 21st. This year we welcome some returning artists and some newcomers as well, and we look forward to hearing our new grand piano on several of the concerts.



August 14: Andrew D’Antonio, piano, performing Charles Ives’s monumental “Concord Sonata”

August 21: Ensemble Chamarré from West Stockbridge performs Messiaen: Quartet for the End of Time

The concerts begin at noon and last for approximately one hour. Admission is free; donations to offset expenses are welcome. Detailed concert information is updated weekly on the St. John’s website (www.saintjohnswilliamstown.org), on our Facebook page (“St. John’s Episcopal Church, Williamstown”), and at www.destinationwilliamstown.org. The series is supported in part by a grant from the Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

-- Jimmy Bergin

SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING MUSICAL EVENTS

Sunday, August 27th at 3:00 p.m.: TRIO CAFÉ BUDAPEST

Bill Wootters, piano; Jimmy Bergin, violin/viola; Ted Gilley, bass.

A program of mostly jazz standards and some folk tunes.

Sunday, November 5th, at 3 p.m.: Piano Dedication Concert on All Saints Sunday

Guest Artist: Igor Lovchinsky, a Russian-American classical pianist

Returning to Williamstown for this not-to-be-missed concert!

Annual Messiah Sing, Sunday, November 19th, at 1 p.m. (note time change!)

Christmas section and Hallelujah Chorus : the choruses will be sung by the audience, divided into sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses—bring your vocal score if you have one, and the church will have some on hand if you don't.

Come help fill the church with the glorious sounds of Handel's masterpiece!

And if you'd like to come and just listen, that's fine too.

The program should last about an hour. Admission is free; donations are welcome

WE EXTEND CONDOLENCE

Sylvia Shugg, former member of St. John's, who died in Orono, ME on June 30th.

Ruben Shay, friend of St. John's, who died at home on July 16th.

Dick Daniels, who died on July 19th and whose funeral was held here on July 25th. We hold in our prayers his wife, Marge and her children and grandchildren.

SAINT JOHN'S COLUMBARIUM

Construction of the columbarium will be completed by the end of August! Applications for a columbarium niche are available in the church office. If you have any questions, please contact one of the committee members: Mary King, Mary Lovvorn, Charles Bonenti, Charles O'Brien, Jane Jenkins, Claudia Ellet, or Libby Wade.

CALL FOR GARDENERS

As the growing season progresses, St. John's Garden could use extra hands to weed, water and/or harvest. Help is also needed to deliver produce from the garden to the Friendship Center Food Pantry in North Adams. If your own home garden is producing more than you can use, consider donating fruits and vegetables to a contribution box that will be set up Sundays in the church vestibule. For more information, see Charles Bonenti at the 8 a.m. service or Robin Lenz at the 10 a.m. service.



THANK YOU

- From Friendship Center Food Pantry for 12 pounds of produce donated from St. John's Garden in July.
- From Episcopal Relief & Development for a generous contribution of \$1,309 demonstrating our ongoing commitment to healing a hurting world. ERD wrote: "Because of your generosity, ERD is at the forefront of efforts to fight poverty and hunger by promoting climate-smart agriculture, empowering women through savings groups and vocational training, and mobilizing faith-based networks to prevent malaria. You enable us to invest in resilience, working with local leaders in the U.S. and internationally...to strengthen communities to survive and recover from disasters. In all, your support reaches more than 3 million people in nearly 40 countries worldwide, and we are grateful for your partnership!"
- From HospiceCare in The Berkshires, Inc. for a \$100 donation in memory of Madeline Burdick's mother, Theresa Dube.
- From Williams Chaplain Rick Spalding, who is recovering from heart valve repair: "Just wanted to thank you, from the heart of my newly-retuned heart, for the prayers of the people of St. John's this summer! I can't begin to tell you how deeply it has affected me to feel the prayerful support by which I have been surrounded. I'm taking it slow and steady - vital signs are good, and I'm very much enjoying a slower and somewhat more contemplative pace of the journey through these summer days. I'm so grateful for your kindness and care - and I hope that you are reveling in all the pleasures of summer in the Berkshires."

SAFE CHURCH TRAINING

Safe Church Training for volunteers (anyone who works with children or teens, vestry members, lay eucharistic visitors, and anyone who is interested) will be offered on **Saturday, September 23rd** from 9:00 to Noon at Grace Church Office, 67 State Road, Great Barrington. The Rev. Janet Zimmerman will lead this training workshop. You may register by calling 413-644-0022 or emailing jjzimmerman@graceberkshires.org. It would also be helpful to let Madeline Burdick in the St. John's office know for our records and so that carpooling might be arranged, if desired. (See the Diocesan website—www.diocesewma.org—for other Safe Church Workshops this fall.)

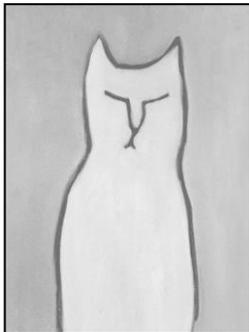
NEW BOOKS ORDERED FOR THE PARISH LIBRARY

Thanks to a generous donation from a parishioner (who wishes to remain anonymous), the titles below will soon be gracing the shelves of our parish library:

The Path	St. Augustine's Prayer Book
Inwardly Digest by Derek Olsen	Crazy Christians by Michael Curry
Slaying Your Goliaths by John Ohmer	Songs by Grandma Sang by Michael Curry
A Journey with John	Praying Shapes Believing by Leonel Mitchell
A Journey with Mark	Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson
A Journey with Luke	

WELCOME TO THEIR NEW POSITIONS

Rabbi Seth Wax, Jewish Chaplain, Williams College and Pastor Erik Karas, Rector, Christ Episcopal/Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheffield!



A SHOW OF THE "CATS" AND OTHER WORKS, painted by Michele Ridgeway, is being featured in the gallery in the Lower Room until August 16. Come view the display!

Please join Berkshire Interfaith Organizing for A JAZZ CABARET

to Kick-off BIO's Fall Fundraising Campaign
Sunday, August 20th, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Congregation Kneset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield
(Please let Jim Kolesar, St. John's BIO Representative, know if you plan to attend.)

Artist Michele Ridgeway began her series of cat paintings in the fall of 2016. She says they were initially inspired by the cats she had adopted, but became a way to express her own feelings “out loud” during a time of political change and fear and hope. These bold stylized portraits express a range of emotions from bold calmness to aggressive straightforwardness. The smaller grouping of angels, energetic and colorful and yet mostly faceless, are an attempt to elevate the common: clothesline, oak leaves, buttons, to a place of honor and thoughtfulness. Visitors to the exhibit have commented “Great fun having a whole wall of cats,” “INCREDIBLE,” “Such beautiful paintings!” If you are an artist who would like to display your work or if you would like to recommend someone, please contact St. John's Special Events Coordinator, Jimmy Bergin.

NOTES FROM JUNE AND JULY VESTRY MEETINGS

At its June meeting, St. John's vestry accepted the Audit Report for 2016, heard a final RenewalWorks report with recommendations presented by Sam Coughlin, reaffirmed a vestry job description and rule of life with minor adaptations, heard that Van Ellet will chair a new Mission/Outreach Team, and appointed Lisa Bernard to take Alison Kolesar's place on the Vestry Steering Committee for a six-month term beginning in September.

At its July meeting, your vestry approved a request for normal repair funds for the Rectory and made plans to welcome the new student tenants, heard a report of initial planning for this fall's stewardship process (“Journey to Generosity”) that will include Sunday speakers in October and an ingathering of pledges on Sunday, November 5th, heard that both attendance and giving are higher than the same period last year, and learned that the columbarium will be installed in August. The Parish Life Team reported on upcoming events and projects (see their article in this Prologue), Jim Kolesar gave a brief Profile Team report, and received a youth ministry report. Treasurer Tom Nicholson noted that 2018 budget planning will begin in September.

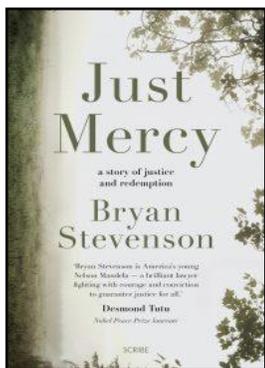
CENTERING PRAYER – FINDING A STILL POINT IN THE TURNING WORLD

On a recent Sunday, we heard these words from Romans 8:26: “The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.” Perhaps we don’t all know how to pray as we ought, but we do know how to sigh, to yearn for a deeper relationship with the Divine. Centering Prayer is one way to bring our sighing hearts to God. Perhaps you are curious about how. Perhaps you already use Centering Prayer and want to reinforce that practice. Mary Pierson and the Rev. Libby Wade invite you to join them on **Thursday, September 21st, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the church** for an introductory Centering Prayer Session. This new Centering Prayer Group will continue at the same time one Thursday a month **on October 12th, November 16th, and December 21st**. Come join us for an hour of quiet and reflection, as we support each other in prayer.

--Mary Pierson and the Rev. Libby Wade

WILLIAMS READS *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*

Developed by the Committee on Diversity and Community (CDC), Williams Reads offers an opportunity for students, staff, faculty, and community members to explore a book together that will help us to celebrate and deepen our appreciation of diversity. This year’s book, *Just Mercy*, offers a challenging look at the inequities of our criminal justice system. Author Bryan Stevenson has been described by Archbishop Desmond Tutu as “America’s young Nelson Mandela, a brilliant lawyer fighting with courage and conviction to guarantee justice for all.” This book was also chosen last year for special emphasis by the Social Justice Commission of our diocese. On **Thursday, September 14th**, Bryan Stevenson will present a talk in Chapin Hall (time TBA) to which the community is invited. Later this fall we hope to offer a discussion of this book at St. John’s. You may get a copy of the book at either Sawyer Library or the Schow library (downstairs from the Eco Café in the Chemistry building on campus). There is also a copy of the book in the church library.



VISITORS NEAR AND FAR

Over a period of eight weeks this summer, many people signed our Guest Book in the church foyer. They came from Glossop and Yorkshire, England and Hamilton, Canada, as well as Florida, South Carolina, Virginia, Ohio, Connecticut, Vermont, New York, New Jersey, and several cities in Massachusetts. Some joined in Sunday morning worship, others attended the Monday noon concert, and still others simply dropped in to explore our lovely building, to pray, or just to sit and rest a bit during the week. We welcomed Williams students, Theatre Festival staff and ticket holders, tourists in town to visit The Clark or MassMoCA, and perhaps some who are spiritual seekers. Only a fraction of our visitors ever take time to sign the Guest Book, but those recorded names and places hint at the potential reach of this congregation. Every visitor who leaves enough contact info receives a letter or e-mail within a week or two. As part of an effort to intensify our welcome for visitors, whether one-time tourists or spiritual seekers who return over time, you may begin to see some changes this fall, such as a new welcoming area in the church, a reduction of “stuff” in the foyer, and new improved visitor cards and brochures. You can do your part by noticing newcomers and reaching out to them. This is just the beginning of an ongoing attempt to more fully be an open and welcoming congregation.

--Libby Wade, Interim Rector

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3rd -- BLESSINGS ON VOCATION IN DAILY WORK



For students returning to school, daily work is study and learning. For those in the work force, daily work looks a bit different. For those who are retired, daily work may be an avocation such as knitting or writing or gardening. For all of us, the vocation of daily work is bound up in relationships. As a prayer for Labor Day in the Book of Common Prayer (p. 261) puts it: "Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good...." Everyone is invited to bring a symbol of their daily work (backpack, briefcase, tote bag, etc.) to church on Sunday, September 3. At both services, we will offer blessings for these items and the people who carry them. "Blessed to be a blessing" is the phrase on the tags that will be distributed as part of that service. May your daily vocation be blessed and may you bless others through your study, work, or avocation.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Trista (Moore) Ginsberg, Anita Barker
- 2 Becky Birrell
- 3 Susan Hart Smith, Michael Sprague
- 6 Barry Walraven
- 7 Rita Brown, Katie White
- 9 Dorothy Hopton
- 10 Ned and Sandy Smith
- 11 Betsy Atkins
- 13 Michael Noyes
- 16 Matthew Jacobsohn, Ryan Wilson,
Ethan Edward Wobus, Jane Jenkins
- 18 Virginia Fletcher
- 19 Phoebe Dennett
- 20 Claudia Ellet
- 21 Mary Kelley
- 22 Charles Toomajian, III
- 23 Lucy White, Tom Mahar, Kevin Gillis
- 24 James Kocsis
- 27 Melissa Mendes
- 28 David Macpherson, Denise Kober
- 29 John Driver, Gay Klaus Scarborough,
Alexandra Peacock-Villada,
Katherine Toomajian
- 31 Morissa Daniels, Cathy Kocsis

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Anderson Paes and Maki Matsui
- 5 Tim & Amy McKenna
Toby & Sheila Mason
Richard & Bonnie (Macpherson) Ricci
- 14 Paul & Brianna Heggeseth
- 15 Lawrence & Elaine Leonard
Jarrett & Jennifer Bayliss
John & Kathy Pritchard
- 16 Dick & Jeanne Blake
- 18 Laura Kolesar and Dan Gura
- 22 Arthur & Wendy Campbell
- 28 Dave & Polly Macpherson
- 30 Steve & Melanie Murphy
- 31 Kyle & Lili (Peacock-Villada) Chambers

FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH

- 6 Richard Dowling, Susan Akers's husband
- 15 Gillian Adams

FROM THE PARISH CALENDAR

This month:

- Cancer Support Group, see p. 2
- Backpack project, see p. 3
- Parish Picnic, see p. 3
- Student BBQ, see p. 3
- Chorister Program, see p. 4
- VESPERS, see p. 4
- Summer concert series, see p. 5
- Upcoming musical events, see p. 6
- Ongoing Art Show, see p. 7
- BIO: Jazz Cabaret, see p. 7
- Blessings on Vocation in Daily Work, see p. 8

ONGOING:

Tuesdays

- 9:30 a.m., Holy Eucharist, church
- 3:45 p.m., Evening Prayer, Sweetbrook
(third Tuesday only)
- 7:00 p.m., ACOA, upper room
- 7:30 p.m., AA, library

Wednesdays

- 10:00 a.m., AA, upper room

Thursdays

- 1:00 p.m., Affin-KNIT-ty Group, library
- 7:00 p.m., AA, library
- 7:30 p.m., Choir rehearsal

Fridays

- Noon, AA, upper room
- 12:00 p.m., Bible Study, room 3

Sundays

- 7:30 p.m., AA, library

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Wednesday, August 9th

- 7:00 p.m., VESTRY, library

Thursday, August 3rd & 17th

- 9:00 a.m., Cancer Support group, upper room

Sunday, August 20th

- 11:30 a.m., Home Delivered Meals

Monday, August 28th

- 4:30 p.m., Stewardship Ministry team, library

*****Sunday, August 20, 11:30 a.m.*****

After enjoying fellowship and refreshments on the lawn, you are invited to join Bob Hansler and the Rev. Libby Wade in the church for a half hour of reflection on several changes we have experienced in worship this summer.

Worship Schedule

Sunday Holy Eucharist: 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, Holy Eucharist: 9:30 a.m., Upper Room

Bible Study, Fridays, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m., Room 3 (Church School wing)

St. John's Parish, Williamstown

Members of the Vestry

Jane Jenkins	Scott Park	Janice Cook
Sarah Nix	Dan Campbell	Drew Gibson
Amanda Wilcox	David Coughlin	Mary Lovvorn

Tom Nicholson, Treasurer

Robin Lenz, Clerk

Claudia Ellet and Margot Sanger

Co-Wardens

The Rev. Libby Wade, Interim Rector

+The mission of the people of St. John's Parish, Williamstown, is to know God and make God known through worship, love, and service, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the strength of the Holy Spirit.+