



EVANGEL

St. John's Episcopal Church | Norman, OK

St. John's Episcopal Church

235 W. Duffy St.
Norman, OK. 73069
405-321-3020

Sunday Services Holy Eucharist

Rite I: 8:00 AM

Rite II: 10:30 AM
(Live Stream/ In Person)
Sooner Station Livestream

Youth program: 4:00pm

Wednesday:

10:00am (Chapel)
10:30am Bible Study
6:00pm (Chapel)

Thursday:

9:30am Bible Study

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From the Pile on Fr. Kirk's Desk...

Oblations. What are they and why the way we present them matters.

An oblation is something we offer to God.

During the Offertory portion of our Sunday services, we each make our offering to God. The Choir offers to God their gifts of voice and song with the oblations of beautiful anthems as the notes and words fill the church.

When there is no Choir, we either offer up a communal hymn or become witness to the notes lifting up from our organ as if watching smoke rise to the heavens from the burnt offerings of old. When there is no music our offering becomes that of holy silence, and intentional oblation of open ears to the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The offering plates get passed and as they do, each hand in the room should touch them, bearing their weight, as they represent the monetary gifts we have been given, becoming outward and visible signs of our joy, offering a portion back to God through the ministries of our church home.

The music changes and we stand with humble and grateful hearts. Passing by us through the center of the church, our oblations of bread and wine are presented to the altar equally alongside our financial contributions, the earthy gifts of grain and grape to become for us the real presence of Jesus.

Currently these oblations are presented separately and in doing so, without intention, we find ourselves only standing for the money...which is not the best outward and visible sign of oblation. Beginning in the middle of September, all three symbols of our offerings to God will be presented together. Though there will be a small change for the Acolytes, Lay Ministers, and Clergy, it will be a huge change symbolically for the congregation as we make an offering from the gifts we have been given and a deeper connection as we make an offering of ourselves to God.

Oblation Bearers

(If you have not yet read “From the Pile of Fr. Kirk’s Desk, read that first)

Beginning September 14th, people can volunteer to carry the oblations of bread and wine up to the altar alongside the ushers as they present our monetary gifts. The volunteers, called Oblation Bearers, become symbols that represent the whole congregation in the same way the bread, wine, and money become outward and visible signs representing all that God has given us.

You can sign up for a particular Sunday, maybe for a special occasion, or just because.

There will be two slots each Sunday beginning September 14th, which you can sign up for as a single, a couple, or even as a whole family.

There will be a sign-up sheet located in the Narthex (back of the church/entrance).

Quarterly Check-In Date Change

Due to Fr. Kirk’s vacation, our next Quarterly Check-in will be Sunday, September 14th!

This time we will hold two sessions in the parish hall, one beginning at 9:15 and the other at 11:45ish.

We hope everyone can make one of these sessions which allows the congregation an opportunity to share the things they **LIKE** at St. John’s, the things where they have **CONCERNS**, and the things they **WISH** might happen in the future.

Christmas In July

The list of items below represents not just mere requests, but heartfelt desires for growth and enhancement within our beloved St. John's Episcopal Church. We hope the areas identified for support and/or improvement resonates deeply with each parishioner as important areas needed to support our mission at St. John's. We invite you to reflect on how these initiatives can enrich your spiritual journey and strengthen the bonds among us. Together, we can elevate the spirit of St. John's, ensuring it remains a sanctuary of love, hope, and connection.

To contribute to any of these projects, scan or click on the QR code to the right and chose the appropriate fund in the drop down memo field.



1. St. John's Choral Scholarship Program

To maintain the vibrancy and excitement of our music program at St. John's Episcopal Church, we are seeking to secure the continued support of four scholarship singers, each requiring a commitment of \$4,000 per year.

These very talented individuals play a crucial role in enhancing our worship experience and fostering community engagement through their musical talents. By investing in these scholarships, we not only enrich our liturgical celebrations but also create opportunities for spiritual connection and growth within our congregation.

Last year's program was very successful and added made our Sunday's and seasonal events a wonderful experience.

2. New Robes for Our Acolytes

We are reaching out to our cherished St. John's community to address an important need within our acolyte program: the acquisition of twenty new acolyte robes, each priced at \$150.00

We invite you to consider contributing to this necessary expense, as every donation, regardless of size, will make a meaningful impact on those who serve in this time-honored tradition. The existing robes have been in use for many years but are showing signs of wear and tear.

The total amount needed for this initiative is \$3,000 which will add twenty new robes to our inventory. We warmly encourage you to reach out for more information on how you can participate in supporting our acolyte program.

Christmas In July

3. New Robes and Cinctures for the Lectors and Chalice

As we continue to enhance our worship services at St. John's Episcopal Church with other improvements, we recognize the significant role that our lectors and chalice bear in enriching the liturgical experience for our congregation.

To maintain the dignity and reverence of our practices, we are seeking to acquire new robes and cinctures for these important roles. Specifically, we need twenty (20) sets, with each set costing \$220.

We invite our St. John's community to consider supporting this initiative, as these items will not only contribute to the overall aesthetic of our services but also foster an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

4. New round table and chairs for Fr. Kirk's Office

We are requesting the addition of a new round conference-style table and four chairs to the rector's office at St. John's Episcopal Church.

This addition will provide functionality and comfort for Fr. Kirk and will allow for a more welcoming atmosphere for collaborative discussions and meetings for both staff and parish members to engage in meaningful dialogue and support one another.

5. New Furniture for the Commons

At St. John's Episcopal Church, we are excited to announce plans for new furniture in the "commons" area, a space that holds great significance for our community.

We believe that comfortable and inviting furniture will greatly enhance the shared experiences during our gatherings, allowing for deeper connections and spiritual growth among congregants.

To ensure that this initiative reflects the needs and desires of our community, we invite all members to participate in discussions regarding the selection of the new furniture.

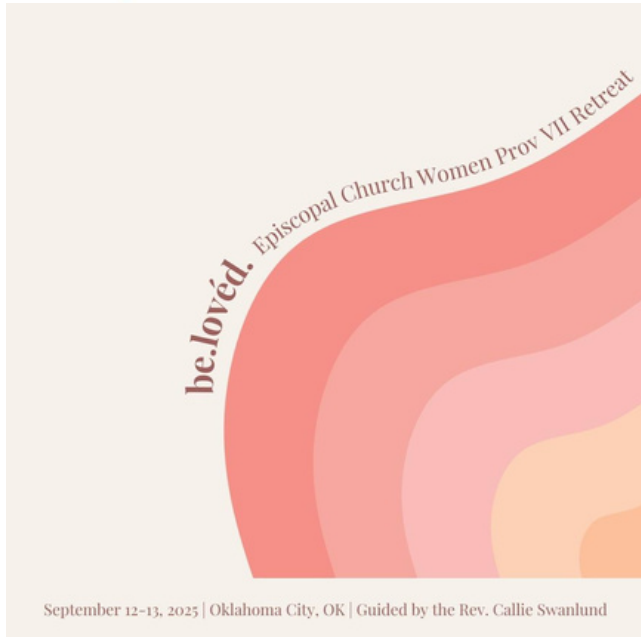
6. New chairs for the library

At St. John's Episcopal Church, we recognize the importance of creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for all our members, which is why we have identified the need to replace the ten chairs currently located in our library. The existing chairs have seen a great deal of wear and tear over the years and although they have served us well, their current appearance is less than desirable. These chairs are some of the most utilized furniture pieces in our building.

These chairs play a crucial role in providing a supportive space for reading, reflection, and community gatherings, and it is essential that they meet the comfort and accessibility needs of our congregation.

Neat Stuff Coming Up!

Province 7 ECW Gathering



You're invited to the Province VII ECW Fall Gathering, on Sept. 12–13 at St. Paul's Cathedral in OKC. Guided by the Rev. Callie Swanlund and featuring Lisa Bortner, National ECW President, they will explore the theme, Be.Loved, through a day of reflection, renewal, and connection. Register by Aug. 5 for the Early Bird rate and registration will close September 5th.

Scan or click the QR code to register and learn more!



Episcopal Baseball Night

Join Episcopal churches from across the Diocese for a fun-filled evening at the ballpark on Friday, Sept. 27 at 7:00 p.m. at Bricktown Ballpark in OKC! Tickets are \$27 and include: a terrace seat to the game and all-you-can-eat food and soft drinks. Register by Sept. 10 to reserve your spot! Click the graphic to sign up and get more details.



Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation Class Including Baptismal Instruction

**Sundays July 13th - August 24th
9:15 to 10:15 in the Commons**

Who should attend the class?

- **Are you ready to make a mature commitment to the Episcopal Church?**
- **Are you an adult who would like to be baptized or are already baptized and want to officially join the Episcopal Church?**
- **Are you already a confirmed/received member of the Episcopal Church, but want to reaffirm your commitment?**
- **Are you new to St. John's, or seasoned member, and are simply curious and want to learn more about who Episcopalians are and how we are called to live as the Body of Christ?**

This class is for you!

For more information or to join the class, RSVP to

Fr. Kirk 405-321-3020 or kirk@episcopalnorman.org

This Bishop is Coming September 28th!

For All the Saints

Chiara Offreduccio (Clare of Assisi) born in Assisi, Italy, on July 16, 1194 and died on August 11, 1253. Clare was born into a prominent family of Favorino Scuff, the Count of Sasso-Rosso. Her mother Ortolana was a devout woman and took pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Lands. Clare's younger sisters Beatrix and Catarina followed her into the religious life.

At the age of 12, her parents wanted her to marry. She refused to marry until the age of 18. As a teenager she listened to a sermon by Saint Francis during a Lent service. This put into motion Clare's devotion to the Gospel through the teaching of Francis. On the evening of Palm Sunday, March 20, 1212, with the consent of Bishop Guido II, Clare left her family residence accompanied by her aunt and walked to the chapel of the Porziuncula to meet Saint Francis.



Saint Clare of Assisi, panel painting in the church of "Santa Chiara", Assisi, Italy

At the chapel, Clare's hair was cut. Her rich gown was changed to a plain robe and veil. The fully cutting of the hair was a symbolic act showing that she was no longer bound by the laws of men nor society but only to God. The family of Clare tried to get her to leave the convent of the Benedictine Nuns, but she refused and showed her family that her hair was completely cut. Her sister Catarina joined Clare 16 days later and took the name Agnes, who was also declared a saint. With other women, Clare and Agnes formed "Poor Ladies of San Damiano."

In 1263, ten years after Saint Clare's death, the name of the order was changed to the Order of Saint Clare. The order was monastic where the nun's life consisted of manual labor and prayer. Saint Clare wrote the rules of the Order. On August 9, 1253 Pope Innocent IV confirmed her rules for the "Poor Ladies of San Damiano."

-by Rob Phillips

St. John's VBS 2025

Fruits of the Spirit

St. John's hosted 29 kids for Vacation Bible School in July!

They spent the week exploring and practicing the Fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Kindness, Gentleness, Goodness, Patience, Peace, Self Control, and Faithfulness.

Each day the kids made crafts, played games, and celebrated Eucharist with Father Kirk. You can check out additional pictures of our week on the St. John's Facebook page.

We would like to extend an enthusiastic "Thank You!!" To our many volunteers that led small group activities, supervised kids in large group activities, and helped make lunch/snack for so many hungry people!

Darlene Allen
Pam Brown
Emma Brown
Marla Colijn
Andrea Conway
Jimmy Conway
Mary Carter
Shirley Crosby
Jo Ann Dysart
Rhonda Elliott
Amanda Hicks
William Hicks
Delores Larison
Dena Peck



Patrick Folmar
Mollie Rieger
Melody Rowlett
DJ Rowlett
Ann Seely
Nancy Sonleitner
Tiffany Spencer
Jona Kay Steed
Ben Upp
William Warner
Rowdy Washburn
Ayn Wilson
James Wilson
Russell Wilson

St. John's VBS 2025





Food and Shelter



You are invited to participate in a long-running Christian tradition of St. John's that happens neither in church nor on Sunday.

That rich tradition is cooking and serving a spaghetti lunch at Food and Shelter, which St. John's leads in doing on the third Tuesday of February, April, June, August, October and December.

Parishioner Andrea Marler said about 200 people are served the lunch that includes spaghetti, salad, bread and ice cream. She invites and welcomes St. John's members to share in the feeding any time their schedule allows.

"Nothing can replace that face-to-face, eye-to-eye contact, and that there is spreading the light of Christ through an authentic connection you have with someone," Marler said of the experience. "You never know how that can impact someone's life; you just never know."

There are two ways to volunteer: meal preparation that begins at 9:30 a.m., and serving the meal, which starts at 11 a.m. Volunteers can choose to do one or both tasks.

"For meal prep," Marler said, "we have people who chop tomatoes and bell peppers, slice and butter bread, make the spaghetti, cook the meat and steam the veggies."

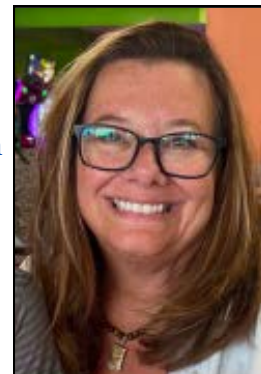
St. John's next spaghetti lunch day at Food and Shelter is:

Tuesday, August 19th.

To pitch in and join the fun, contact Marler at aamarler@me.com or just show up at 201 Reed Avenue.

Contact:

Andrea Marler
aamarler@me.com
405-808-4435





"Knit" Night

The "Knit" Night gatherings for August are back to our usual schedule of the 1st and 3rd Thursday evenings.

"Knit" Night in August will be Thursday, August 7th and August 21st. These gatherings for creative fellowship continue on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays. We meet 6:30-8:30 pm in the Library at St. John's. Drop in and leave as your schedule fits.

All are welcome! Bring along any portable needlework or craft project you want to work on while we enjoy sharing conversation. If you'd like to be added to the list for a reminder email a day or two before each meeting, please contact Melody Palm, mpalm@episcopalnorman.org.



Can-A-Sunday

We are excited to share that "CAN-A-SUNDAY" has made a wonderful return at St. John's, providing us with a meaningful opportunity to support our local community. By donating canned goods and shelf-stable items that you bring, we are able to assist the Food and Shelter organization right here in Norman.

While they have a variety of needs, our primary focus is on ensuring that those in need have access to nutritious food. Your contributions make a significant difference, and together we can help brighten the lives of our neighbors facing food insecurity. Thank you for your generosity and support!

For more information, contact Jona Kay Steed!



Creation Care Lay Ministries @ St. John's

GODLY GARDEN GUILD

At the corner of Santa Fe and Linn Ave., Ulli Nollert is once again gardening, to produce fresh organic vegetables for Food and Shelter. He welcomes parishioners who want to help him water the garden in the very-early morning or very-late daytime. Contact Ulli: nollert@ou.edu.

On the church's southeastern side, Roshni Robert is continuing to lead the parish project of tending the Biblical Garden and developing it with ecologically sustainable beds of pollinators. She welcomes parishioners who want to help her weed! Contact Roshni: wovenfingers@gmail.com.

CHURCHES CARING FOR CREATION (CC4C)

On Earth Day 2019, Fr. Helt introduced Susie Laird as a representative from St. John's to Cathy Bowden at University Lutheran Church & Student Center. Cathy is an energetic and visionary lay leader who has gathered representatives from Norman and other metro-area Churches to form this growing local coalition, CC4C: St. Michael's Episcopal Church, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Parish & Student Center, McFarlin Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church, First Congregational Church, First Christian Church, and the Morningstar and Unitarian Universalist faith communities, as well as ULC and St. John's. The CC4C aims to encourage our local churches to adopt sustainable congregational practices, educate congregations about environmental issues and practices, and share in community lay ministries devoted to Creation Care here in Norman.

Just as St. John's used to host a spaghetti supper series on Creation Care (which featured Cathy Bowden herself in summer 2022), ULC has hosted a quarterly "GREENSpeak" lecture for CC4C over the past several years, featuring local environmental experts, lawyers, lay ministers, and other informative green-community leaders. June's GREENSpeak program featured a Mennonite lay leader informing us about a USDA-funded program for collecting and composting food waste locally for watershed protection. FERTILE GROUND, a worker-owned cooperative in OKC has three drop-off sites for food waste in Norman: (1) Behind Gray Owl Coffee, (2) Behind the eastern branch of Norman's public library off Alameda, (3) North toward Moore, by Minick Materials. See <https://www.fertilegroundok.coop>. Local churches are encouraged to consider using such sites to dispose of their hospitality food waste.

With ULC's lay leadership, CC4C have a major long-term collaborative multi-church community project to recycle toxic Styrofoam rather than send it to the landfill: they collect it from the public, wash it, and work with the Pioneer Library System, OU's Styro-Home Club, and many other local volunteers and students to densify it for transport and sale to a plastics broker in Texas. St. John's parishioners are invited to participate in this amazing, much-needed project of the CC4C. Contact Cathy: cate46@yahoo.com or text 405-831-2025.

Welcome To God Talk Hour

BELOVED READERS WELCOME YOU TO GOD-TALK HOUR

Noon, Wednesdays, in the Commons, led by Chris Carter.

Diana Butler Bass, GROUNDED: Finding God in the World—A Spiritual Revolution

(HarperOne, 2015). Available in audible (read by the author), e-book, paperback, & hardcover, new @ \$3-16, 341 pages, 11 hr 46 min.

July 30, we begin discussing the introduction.

You may know Diana Butler Bass's Substack, "The Cottage"? Like that, this profoundly practical theology is beautifully written and easy to read: Bass writes and reads aloud as if she's walking and talking with us on the Legacy Trail. She converted in youth from Methodism to Evangelical Protestantism and then in the early 1990s to become Episcopalian. Now this prolific lay theologian confesses a third profound conversion at the millennium, "to the world, the dwelling place of the divine." At once literal and metaphoric, at once physical and spiritual, Grounded names that conversion. Where is God? Bass responds to that big question with stories of encounters with God in nature and in community. Church is not the only sacred space we inhabit: our planet is itself sacred ground.

Bass has not abandoned Bible, faith, or church for secularism. Instead, her Christian faith has moved beyond the distant holy majesty of "the vertical God and elevator church," toward horizontally seeking a quotidian "God with(in) the world," toward love of God and neighbor that "enlivens the earth and the mystery that hovers just beyond sight." Where is God? Bass concludes "God is with us. Here"—grounded in dirt, water, and sky; in roots, home, neighborhood, and commons: at the beach, in air we breathe, at Sandy Hook and on 9/11, at Farmers' Market and local Art Walk, in backyard gardens, around tables, at front doors, in learning from sciences, in our own cultural histories and meetings with strangers. In Biblical narrative Bass reads testimony of "a God who comes close, compelled by a burning desire to make heaven on earth and occupy human hearts."

Naming this down-to-earth theology "sacred cosmopolitanism," she describes its revolutionary appeal to people of diverse world faith traditions and none, including not only Episcopalians and other church-going Christians, but also those now-unchurched somehow faithful among whom we live, who call themselves "spiritual but not religious." As in her past research on church history and on contemporary neighborhood church life, she expresses skepticism about both the false choice between a deceased God and fundamentalism and the presumed modern decline in faith and spirituality. She acknowledges that many folks avoid church because they expect conventional dogmatic scorn for their honest perceptions and intelligent thoughts; yet her memoirs show how they do seek experiences of wisdom, meaning, and awe in the world that we call God. Grounded calls us to greet such folks with friendly curiosity rather than scorn. That loving welcome-to-all is what Beloved Readers are all about!

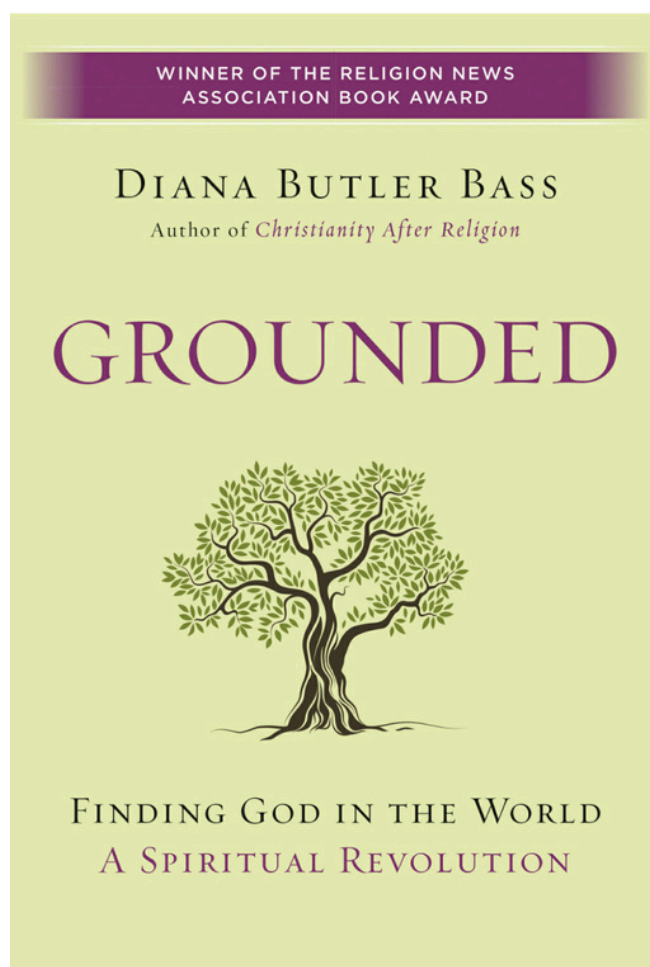
Welcome To God Talk Hour (cont)

This magnificent book ends with Bass's witness to an Episcopal church whose "living expression of Jesus in the world" kept its Eucharistic tradition in a Celtic evening service, but reoriented its worship and contemplation from a "mountain of privilege" focus on heaven and a distant patriarchal God to a profoundly hospitable community encounter with the beloved world—with "the sacred unity at the heart of all things, enlarging our field of vision to experience ourselves, our neighbors, and God as an inter-related ecology of faith."

---Susan Laird



Diana Butler Bass



Farewell from Chris Pharo

Dear loved ones,

Our time together was short but it meant the world to me. I found St. John's at a time when I had hit a pretty low place. With you, I found a home that gave me the opportunity to thrive, to be the musician I know I am, a place where I felt safe to be myself. You immediately embraced me and made me feel so welcome. I could tell that friendships sown at St. John's would be for a lifetime.

I felt this whenever I doubted myself at my schoolwork (which the choir never let me get down in the dumps on) and when I said goodbye to my best friend, Duke, who quickly became the choir dog! And you turned out in droves to cheer me on for my graduate recital. Dr. Spritzer said it was the first recital since covid that so many chairs had to be used - YOU did that for me.

I wish I could be in two places at once. Though this golden opportunity to return home to San Francisco is so wonderful, in some ways I'm not ready to leave Norman; I made a little home for myself here, too. I like to think I know how to nest somewhere. What I mean is the ability to easily build a life somewhere. That's only possible when you're surrounded by people who love you, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Please continue to support the music ministry of St. John's! Because of your help, the choir and handbells hit the ground running with great vigor last fall. We hired four choral scholars who brought a life and professionalism which benefited all of us, and the handbells enjoyed weekly rehearsals so that we could bring those instruments back to life. We introduced new service music; we had a smashing success with Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter; Lessons and Carols was, frankly, to die for!

To my choir and handbell ringers, continue to pursue beautiful music. You are talented and full of spirit. You are an incredible team and you will keep growing. I could not have done anything without your willingness to try new things. That is not a luxury most parishes music directors get to experience; really, you spoiled me a little!!

Thank you for such a beautiful reception! I could not have asked for a better send off. Your generosity was so thoughtful and bountiful in every way. The food was soooooooo good. It took me all week to eat all the fried chicken I was sent home with...

I will miss you so very much. Thank you for everything.

All my love,
Christopher John Pharo





St. John's Episcopal Church | Norman, OK

Restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Address Service Requested

Weekly Schedule

Sundays

Holy Eucharist 8a & 10:30a

[Livestream: 10:30]

www.episcopalnorman.org

Join us for *fellowship following both services.*

Wednesdays

Holy Eucharist 10a (Chapel).

Followed by Bible Study.

Holy Eucharist 6p (Chapel)

Thursdays

Bible Study 9:30-10:30

1st Wednesday of Month
Memorial Service 12:10pm
(Columbarium)

ONLINE CHURCH SERVICE OPTIONS

Sunday Mornings Live Stream

<http://episcopalnorman.org/livestream.aspx>

Address:

235 W. Duffy,
Norman, OK 73069

Phone:

(405)-321-3020

Website:

www.episcopalnorman.org

Email:

staff@episcopalnorman.org

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday 10am-3pm

Staff

The Rev. Kirk Woodliff
Rector

The Rev. James Tyree
Deacon

Catherine Wilson
Christian Formation Director

Matthew Wilson
Youth Minister

Amy Kidd
Parish Administrator

Greg Taylor
Communications

EVANGEL SUBMISSIONS

Please feel free to submit articles for new and upcoming Evangels. If you would like to submit something to be included in the future, please send a copy of your article to: evangel@episcopalnorman.org

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