



EVANGEL

St. John's Episcopal Church | Norman, OK

St. John's Episcopal Church

235 W. Duffy, Norman
405-321-3020

MAILING ADDRESS

235 W. Duffy
Norman, OK 73069

Services / Holy Eucharist

Rite I: 8:00 AM

Rite II: 10:30 AM

Youth program: 4:00pm

Tuesday:

10:00am (Chapel)

Wednesday:

6:00pm (Chapel)

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Greetings in Christ's friendship dear brothers and sisters in Christ at St. John's!

As we begin another calendar year, I thought I would share some of my thoughts about where we might be headed in 2024. The phrase liminal season comes to mind with regards to where we are as a parish. We are sort of betwixt and between time-- in which something has ended (the last rector's departure) and a new situation (a future new rector) has not begun.

And Noah.



Jonah did too.



I am reminded of Bible folks who experienced something of a liminal time. Job for example.



Jesus coming out of the baptismal waters was a liminal time too.



Paul on the road to Damascus was at a point of being betwixt and between. Full of possibility and potential. Pregnant with life, new life.



We too are on a threshold, in a liminal space. Discovering identity and purpose seems to be a vital part of this liminal time. Aside and apart from past rectors, what is St. John's unique identity in Christ and purpose in Christ? These are primary questions I am sitting with, and I invite you to sit with, pray about, dwell in, ponder about. And share with other brothers and sisters in Christ at St. John's about them too.

This seems to be an invitation into a season of **REDISCOVERING IDENTITY AND PURPOSE.**

One question that may help in this is to consider....what is the soul of St. John's? Where is that divine essence, the divine sparks of who Christ that relates for this community? It is time to shed that which doesn't work and step more fully into Christ's plan and purpose, Christ's will and ways.

As we pray our way into 2024, know that I will be standing with you in this--grounded in a sense of wonder and open to the leadings of Jesus Christ.

In Christ's friendship, with continued prayers for Christ's healing light, love, and mercy.

Mother Nancee+



Our Annual Meeting is set for January 28, 2024 at 11:30 in the Parish Hall. At this meeting we will be electing vestry members, lay delegates and alternates to Diocesan Convention as well as approving nominees for Senior Warden and Junior Warden. Reports will be offered by the Interim Rector, our Wardens, and the Treasurer. Stay tuned for more information.

Our bylaws state the voting membership is defined as adult members over the age of 16 who are in good standing—if she or he has received Holy Communion at St. John’s at least three times during the preceding year and has otherwise been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God. The parish office keeps a list of qualified voters (from I.C1 and 2 of the parish bylaws). Any questions concerning eligibility for voting must be raised with the Rector before voting begins.

Mark your calendars and plan on coming. We will have a chili luncheon following the Annual Meeting.

Vestry Nominees (5)

John Ritz	Senior Warden Nominee
Robert Findley	Junior Warden Nominee
James Beard	Vestry Nominee
Anne Boone	Vestry Nominee
Melissa Busby	Vestry Nominee
George Elassal	Vestry Nominee
Sarah Flanagan	Vestry Nominee
Craig Hall	Vestry Nominee
Susan Laird	Vestry Nominee
Andrea Marler	Vestry Nominee
Tracy Spurgeon	Vestry Nominee
Greg Taylor	Vestry Nominee
William A Wallace	Vestry Nominee

Convention Delegate Nominees (10)

James Beard
Merrie Beard
Roshini Robert
Julia Harris
John Harris
Susie Laird
Robert Finley
Pam Brown
Mellisa Busby
Anne Boone
Ayn Linneman
Stephanie Abl
Mike Abl
Ali Behrens

2024 Vestry Candidates

James Beard, Vestry Nominee



Greetings and Salutations my fellow Episcopalians.

I am James Beard but most people refer to me as the Cookie Guy or Ugly Hawaiian Shirt Guy.

I am originally from the Wichita, Kansas area. Prior to moving to Norman, I served 25 years in the military and retired from the Air Force in 2008. I accepted a civilian position at Tinker AFB in February 2008 and moved to Norman. (But I did stay a Jawhawk fan—ROCK CHALK! Sorry, Bob Lawrence!)

My wife Merrie and I were baptized at St. John's at the Easter Vigil in 2004 and we were also married at St. John's in September of the same year. We attended here prior to our Baptism and were confirmed in 2005. Since that Easter Vigil, we have parked our back sides in the pews regularly. My two daughters, Gabby and Izzy, were Baptized at St. John's and both have been regular members of Sunday school, youth programs, as well as serving in the acolyte program. Our older daughter Gabby was confirmed into the church in 2022.

I have served in many facets at the church; I served on vestry from 2016-2017 and I was asked to step down from my vestry position and assume the position of Junior Warden. In addition, I am on the hospitality committee, regularly volunteer in doing odd repair jobs around the church, serve as an usher, and for three years taught a Sunday School Class for middle schoolers.

In 2019, I stepped down from my position as Junior Warden after being diagnosed with lung cancer; by the Grace of God I am now in remission, feeling great and now ready to serve on the St. John's vestry.

Anne Boone, Vestry Nominee



Anne Boone moved to Norman from Oklahoma City to attend the University of Oklahoma when the Earth's Crust cooled. In 2004 the Boones joined St. John's. The four Boones immediately jumped into the church community's deep end with both feet and have served on numerous committees, taught Sunday school, been enthusiastic participants of church events, lent a helping hand even when it's only to get in the way, acolyted with vigor and fiercely loved their church family.

Anne currently lives in Norman with her husband, Brian and provides laundry service and occasional Airbnb accommodations for their two adult children, Katherine and Sarah. They also live with their ferocious Beagle-mix who protects them from alleged terrorist joggers.

Melissa Busby, Vestry Nominee

My name is Melissa Busby and I have attended St. John's since 2002. My husband Jeff and I have 3 grown children, son Ki, twin daughters Callie and Brenna and son-in-law and husband to Callie, Jonathan Christensen. We live in Washington on a small ranch with cattle, horses and donkey Myrtle.



For almost 20 years I worked in healthcare administration, primarily as director of a Federally Qualified Health Center and a Rural Health Clinic. When our nest became empty I decided to shift gears and have been a Realtor since 2018. Home is important to me and I thoroughly enjoy helping people find theirs.

In my years at St. John's I have tried to be available wherever I'm needed, but I've mostly been involved with the Worship Committee, serving as chairman, and organizing the lay readers and chalcers. I previously served on the vestry.

I have been serving in some capacity since we began attending St. John's and I have enjoyed every minute. I am grateful for the steadfast, dependable presence that the church and our St. John's family has been in my life and try to do my part to ensure that others feel the same!

Sarah Flanagan, Vestry Nominee



Hi, I'm Sarah Flanagan. I started attending St. John's with my parents, Martha and Perry White, in 2007, when my husband Les and I returned to Oklahoma with our baby son, Noah, after living in London for six years. St. John's has been the continuous church home for our family since that time — "baby" Noah is now a senior at Norman High, and was joined by little brother Liam, who is now an eighth grader at Alcott Middle School. You will often see Noah and Liam serving on the altar together on the "Revelation" acolyte team!

I have worked at the University of Oklahoma for nearly a decade as a first-year academic advisor in the OU Scholars program, where I work with first-year OU students throughout their first three to five semesters of study. My husband, Les, is Associate Professor of Voice in the School of Music at OU and hails from Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.

I love St. John's as a loving, welcoming, and accepting community and am happy to be nominated for this opportunity to serve my brothers and sisters in faith.

Craig Hall, Vestry Nominee



For the people that do not know me I will give you some background to introduce myself. I grew up in Duncan Oklahoma and moved to Norman to attend the University of Oklahoma in 1979. I graduated in 1983 with an engineering degree and have been a local home builder for the last 37 years in the surrounding area. Having built numerous homes for many people I have learned to work with about any type of person.

My wife Julie and I joined the church in the mid 1980's. She was a lifelong Episcopalian and I joined altar we were married in 1984. I was baptized and confirmed at St Johns as well as both of our children and 3 of our grandchildren. After Julie's passing in 2018 I have continued to attend the early morning Sunday service at St Johns. Having been an Episcopalian for more than 40 years I have grown to love the church and the traditions associated with it. From the Church building to the Prayer Book the Church service and what it represents.

I have just recently served on the Stewardship Committee and have enjoyed my working with the other members to help raise money and keep St Johns in good finances for the next year. Julie served on the Alter Guild for many years and she taught me the importance of serving the church in any way you could.

If elected to the vestry I will do my best to serve the church in my best capacity.

Andrea Marler, Vestry Nominee



Hello Fellow Parishioners! My name is Andrea Marler and I have been a member of St. John's since 2000. My grandparents were also members and my mother was actually baptized here!

I was born and raised in McAlester, Oklahoma and was a baptized member of All Saints Episcopal Church until I moved to Norman in 2000 and joined St. John's. My children and grandchildren have been baptized at St. Johns and my oldest daughter married here. I love this church very much and am excited to see it grow and flourish. Over the years I have been involved in the church by being a Eucharistic Minister, a Greeter, an Usher, a Vestry member, an active member of the Episcopal Church Women of St. John's and also served as president for one term. I am also a graduate of EFM. Many years ago, I helped implement several small groups called Saplings with the intent of helping members get better acquainted.

Also, I have served on the Outreach committee by preparing and serving meals at Food and Shelter for Friends for almost 20 years. I was very honored when the late Dick Marks asked me to take over that ministry for him over 10 years ago. I continue to lead this ministry by purchasing the groceries and coordinating volunteers.

Most recently, I am serving as a Sunday School teacher for the 2nd and 3rd grade classroom. I love bringing my grandsons to church on Sundays and seeing the next generation fall in love with St. John's as I have. I am excited to have the opportunity to serve on the vestry again and contribute to the future of our beloved church.

Greg Taylor, Vestry Nominee



St. John's is mine and my wife, Macalan's home. St. John's is our family. Macalan and I have been members of St. John's Episcopal Church since 2017. We were both initially attracted to St. Johns for the traditional feel of the church as well as the sense of family and acceptance whenever we walked through the doors. I was baptized on Easter of 2017 at St. John's. Macalan and I were both confirmed in November of 2018.

I currently serve on the Resource Development Committee, Communications Committee, Altar Guild, the "Interim Clerk of the Vestry" and serve in a role as Security Coordinator for the Church. I also manage the live streaming services each Sunday Morning and serve in a variety of volunteer positions in support of the mission and future success of St. John's.

I have over 30 years of law enforcement experience and retired as a lieutenant from the Oklahoma City Police Department in 2009. I "re-retired" from the Oklahoma City Police Department in August of 2023 after serving in a civilian capacity for 12 years in the Recruiting Unit.

I would be honored to serve as a member of the Vestry Committee.

Susan Laird, Vestry Nominee

Susan Laird came to St. John's a decade ago and retired from OU's Educational Leadership faculty in 2018. An "Empty Nester," Susie worships every Sunday at St. John's. This church makes Norman "home" for Susie—it's sacred beauty and loving, wondrous Holy Spirit so familiar from St. John's EC in Salem, NJ, where she was baptized (1952), schooled, and married, where her family's past generations were active lay ministers, now buried there—very much like many devoted families here! Her grateful admiration for that deep-rooted tradition moves her to hear and accept the call to keep it going, to serve this historic church.



Susie cherishes warm friends met at St. John's while pursuing Education for Ministry and serving as Lector, Eucharistic Visitor, Parish Office/Communications volunteer, Vestry member, and Holy-Spirited Yoga teacher (helping fund Outreach), and while also helping parish discussion groups, Inquirers, Santa Ministry, the annual march for Pride, and Norman Churches Caring for Creation. On Vestry (2018-2021), she proposed and worked with clergy and lay leaders to produce St. John's Lay Ministry Manual, which she recently updated with their help. Amid pandemic challenges, Susie reviewed books for EVANGEL and never stopped. Since she completed EFM in 2022, diocesan courses and spiritual direction have deepened her inner call to serve St. John's.

Susie agrees with Presiding Bishop Curry that "Love is the Way" to thrive in hard times. That is the Way that guides her sense of Vestry leadership. She aims to listen attentively. She's for transparent leadership with mutuality & authenticity between clergy and laity. She wants to help our Vestry and Rector nurture a hospitable, lively town-gown parish where compassionate, curious, creative, diversely gifted lay ministers of all ages welcome strangers & seekers as beloved neighbors (no exceptions!) and strive to make Beloved Community grow here.

George Ellassal, Vestry Nominee



Ruth and George Ellassal joined the Episcopal Church in 1984, not long after they moved to Oklahoma. They moved their membership to St. John's in 1988.

I have served the Church for many years; as a vestry member then senior warden at Holy Apostles, and as a vestry member and Reader at St. John's.

I would like to join the vestry again. My primary focus will be to help the Church grow. I would like to revitalize programs from the past that were successful and explore new ways with the vestry to achieve that goal.

I have always been dedicated to St. John's, have many friends within the congregation, and nothing would delight me more than seeing the Church remain strong, accepting of people and harmonious.'

Tracy Spurgeon, Vestry Nominee



After many years of searching for a church home, Tracy Spurgeon began attending St. John's in 2016 and became a member in 2017. She is a faithful "8 o'clocker" and is a devoted lay reader for these services. Tracy believes that the history and firm foundation of acceptance will guide the path of St. John's as we move forward into new ministries, technologies, and growth in the ever-evolving community of Norman. Her passion is for everyone to feel welcome, heard, and accepted, whether a member or visitor at St. John's. Tracy believes it is essential that all ideas and opinions are discussed and considered as we strive to further God's kingdom and true peace among us.

Outside of St. John's, Tracy is the CEO and founder of CommunityWorks, a Norman-based mental and behavioral health continuum of services. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Oklahoma. Her professional certifications include Licensed Professional Counselor, Trained Mediator, Certified Criminal Justice Specialist, and Master Addiction Counselor. Tracy has consulted and monitored several high-profile court cases in Oklahoma and Washington, DC.

Tracy has a nearly 35-year proven track record of expertise in developing and implementing innovative programs for very vulnerable and at-risk populations. Her professional dedication and loyalty personify the mission of the organization, "unconditional care." She has an intuitive ability to assess, design, and implement projects under the most challenging circumstances to achieve successful outcomes. She leads by example, relishes the role of mentor and teacher to young professionals joining the organization, and is a trusted colleague and advisor to many in the profession.

Tracy's mantra is always – "Make a difference".

William A Wallace, Vestry Nominee

I began attending St. John's when Joe Ted Miller was the head rector. As a member of St. John's for 35+ years and serving as greeter and an Usher/Usher coordinator for 15/10 years. Prayers of the people current rotation. In the past I have participated in the spring clean of the grounds, participated in parking on game day with the youth group, participated in the Easter Prayer Vigil, the now defunct old man breakfast, past blood drives, worked with annual meeting counting votes for Vestry positions. Bill and Teri have been married for 40+ years, they have three grown children (Bill, J.C., Andi) and four grandchildren.



I am a graduate of the University of Oklahoma in 1987 with a BBA, as a Finance major. I held a position / worked in nearly every function and or operation at UPS other than the Finance and Accounting department. I retired from UPS after 35 years, 25 in operations and the final 10 as a Labor Relations Manager. Currently I,

- Work as a volunteer for the state of Oklahoma Early Settlement Program as a Small Claims and Family and Divorce mediator (2019 to present).
- Am a member of the Norman Sooner Rotary from June 2019 to present. Board of Directors Programs chair 2020-2022, Membership chair 2022-2023, President elect 2024-2025.
- Volunteer Marshal at Westwood Golf Course – Norman.
- Represents TLU 577 for two-man committee with Tyson Foods in Amarillo, Tx. (in the role of Arbiter.)

I have been searching for a closer relationship with God, especially over the past ten years, and certainly believe that it is a lifelong journey. Most days I fail, other days I fail miserably, and most days I do better than the day before in pursuit of living my life with the characteristics of Christ, peace, joy, love, patience (long suffering), gentleness, goodness, and faith.

I would be honored to serve on the Vestry of St. John's and certainly appreciate your consideration.

Robert Finley, Junior Warden Nominee



I was born in North OKC and came to Norman in 1983 to go to OU and forgot to go home. I was married at St. John's in 1989 and attended sporadically thereafter.

I was raised Roman Catholic but transitioned to Episcopalian after my marriage. Both of my daughters were baptized and confirmed at St. John's. After my divorce I found my way back to St. John's and became more active in the Church.

I have previously served on the vestry and been to the local convention. I head up the men's group with help of James Beard. I head up the ushers and organize them for each Sunday 10:30 and special service.

It has been my pleasure to work with Greg and Pat around the church and the old rent houses the last several years. I worked with the youth group for many years and now with Robert Terry parking cars for the OU home games.

John Ritz, Senior Warden Nominee



John Ritz, a Norman native, lives in Norman with his wife, Lindy, of 52 years. John and Lindy together have been members of St. John's for over 40 years. John has served as an usher, a chalice, a vestry member and senior warden. He also served as chair of the Usher group and the Stewardship committee.

John is a retired Petroleum Engineer with a B.S. degree from the University of Oklahoma and a M.S. in Aviation and Space Science from Oklahoma State University. He has served on the Norman Public School Foundation, The Mewbourne College of Earth and Energy Board of Visitors, the OU School of Petroleum and Geological Industry Advisory Board and the executive committee, the OU Weitzenhoffer School of Fine Arts board of Visitors, the OU Tip-In Club President, and the OU Chip-In Club Executive Committee.

John was a cradle Norman McFarlin Methodist member and was confirmed in the Episcopal Church prior to his marriage to Lindy in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1971. John has found his spiritual home at St. John's and has been strengthened by serving and giving back to St. John's.

If elected, John would be privileged to serve as the Senior Warden of St. John's.

Ordination to the Sacred Order of Deacons

Announcing the ordination to the Transitional Diaconate of Mary Caitlin Frazier, former (and much beloved) parishioner and seminarian at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia.

Caitlin, daughter of Jim and Trish Frazier, late beloved St. John's parishioners, will be ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons. The event will be live streamed on the Washington National Cathedral's YouTube site at <https://www.youtube.com/@wncathedral>



*By the Grace of God and the people consenting
The Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde
Bishop of Washington
will ordain
to the Sacred Order of Deacons
in Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church
on Saturday, January 13, 2024
The Feast of Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop of Poitiers 350*

*Aaron Robert Dunn
&
Mary Caitlin Frazier*

*10:00 a.m.
at the
Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul
3101 Wisconsin Avenue, NW,
Washington, District of Columbia*



*Your prayers and presence are requested.
Clergy: Red Stoles
Clergy planning to process please [rsvp](#)
by January 6, 2024.*

*A link to watch the liturgy will be posted.
www.edow.org*

January Saints & Holy Days honored at our Wednesday night at 6 pm Eucharist

January 3
Holy Name

January 10
The Epiphany

January 17
Confession of St. Peter, Apostle

January 24
Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle

January 31
Presentation of Jesus in the Temple



January, A Time Line Conversation on Sunday Mornings

For Sundays in January, all are invited to come to the parish hall between the services and participate in parish storytelling in the creation of a time line. There will be a long stream of white paper attached to the wall beginning with 1892, the official starting year of the parish. Folks are encouraged to come and add a year and event that happened then. There will be plenty of markers and this will occur between about 9:15ish to 10:15ish. The hope in engaging this exercise is to share our faith stories, increase our community, and listen for how Christ has been a part of growing St. John's Episcopal Church.

-Mother Nancee



"Knit" Night

At their December meeting, the St. John's knitting/handwork group (including members not pictured) had fun preparing 50 baby Jesuses to accompany the Godly Play Nativity people for use at the 4PM Christmas Eve service. Each child at the service received a baby Jesus to take home, and the knitting group experienced lots of laughter and hijinks as we tried to swaddle each tiny peg doll! We'd love for you to join us, the group meets for knitting, handwork, and fellows the first and third Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:30 in the church library.

The group will meet 1st and 3rd Thursday evenings in January. All are welcome to join us between 6:30 and 8:30 pm, as we gather to work on individual projects. We use a flexible open house format, and encourage you to join us for as much time as your schedule permits within that time. All skill levels are welcome, including beginners we can help get started in fibery crafts. There are rumors of some first-time sock knitting projects in the new year.



-Melody Palm

Youth

God's gifts are so sweet!

St. John's participated in the Norman Annual Christmas Parade on December 2nd. Twelve Fledglings, 1 Youth member, and multiple parents paraded down Main Street with our Gingerbread House. A huge thanks to Zada Sery and her husband, Tucker, for their innovation and construction of the gingerbread house.

The Gingerbread House, a spectacle of sweets and lights, is currently on display in the entryway through the end of the year.

You can't miss it!



Wishing Many a Merry Christmas

A caravan of nine cars, led by the church van spread Christmas cheer around Norman. Fledglings, Youth, and families visited the homes of six parishioners and serenaded them with holiday favorites.

The night culminated in a Christmas party hosted by Ed and Kay Lynn Haddad-Liggins.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone that participated, all that allowed us to sing on your doorstep, and Ed and Kay Lynn for bringing us all in out of the cold for pizza, cookies, and hot chocolate.

O Holy Night!

The St. John's Christmas Pageant was performed on December 17th, as part of the service of Lessons and Carols. Thirty-four children dressed as angels, shepherds, sheep, wisemen, and the Holy Family retold the story of Jesus' birth.

Despite children dropping like flies from ear infections and stomach viruses minutes before the pageant started, the story was told beautifully. The angels were angelic. The sheep were unruly. It was perfect.



-Cathy Wilson

Santa Ministry Brings Christ's Love to Norman Community



Thank you for supporting our annual Santa Ministry Activities in December! You brightened Christmas and brought hope to 108 of our neighbors in need by generously sharing and delivering gifts to 35 children in 8 families and 73 senior citizens in two local nursing homes!!! They were so grateful to you! You also provided \$500 in food gift cards so students that a local school identified as needing assistance so they were able to enjoy a holiday meal with their families. Such a display of Christ's love!!!

We also had over a dozen parishioners prepare and serve meals to over 250 neighbors at Food and Shelter for Friends!!!

A special thanks to Mike and Stephanie Abl, Toni Allen, Barbara Anderson, Pam Brown, Mary Carter, Andrea Conway, Shannon Connelly, Clois Gordon, Susie Laird, Dolores Larison, Andread Marler, Ulli Nollert, Taylor Redden, Roshni Roberts, Lisa and Michael Schade, Jona Kay Steed, Robert and Carol Terry, Greg Taylor, Deacon James Tyree, Carol Upp, and Cathy and Matt Wilson for all of your support and generosity of this important ministry!

-Lisa Schade



St. Nick's Christmas Visit

St. Nicholas visited St. John's on December 3rd to help kick-off the Santa Ministry and visit with the children during the 10:30 service. St. Nick answered questions about his ministry, his special symbols, and passed out the very popular peppermint-flavored croziers.

We always love it when St. Nick visits!



Inquirers' Class Learns and Grows in Advent

During Advent, twenty or so of us gathered in the Commons to learn more about life in Christ through the lens of the Episcopal Church. We had young and old and in between, and the conversations seemed rich and interesting with much participation and engagement. The specific topics we covered were: church history, symbolism of episcopal shield, Book of Common Prayer, finding your way on Sunday, sacraments, Holy Bible, episcopal spirituality, prayer, theology and ethics, and ministries at St. John's. The series also included a tour of the St. John's campus.

Some came because they are interested in being confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church. Others are considering making a public renewal of their vows and laying on of hands by the bishop. Some had questions, others are seekers, and some wanted to continue their formation in Christ after the class earlier in the year was truncated.

Teachers (or catechists) for the series were Interim Rector Nancee, Deacon James, Susie Laird, Shannon Conley, Greg Taylor, and Cathy Wilson.



-Mother Nancee

Junior Daughters of the King



The Junior Daughters of the King is a prayer and service group for girls and young women. They meet every month for a meeting and an activity relating to prayer or service. For the month of December, they joined the Altar Guild with the Greening of the Sanctuary. The Junior Daughters helped fluff trees, hang garland, and put up aisle posts. They enjoyed being a part of this fun and exciting event leading up to the Christmas season.

In January, the Junior Daughters of the King will be making lap blankets for those in nursing homes or other assisted living. If you have any scrap fleece or flannel, please consider donating it to the Junior Daughters of the King!

-Pam Brown

Communion Kits

You know what this is don't you? It has several names; Travel Kit, Sick Kit, Mass Kit even just plain old Communion Kit. It's purpose is to take communion to shut-ins and parishioners who cannot come to church. We have dedicated people that take time out from their busy lives to do this and we thank them all.

St. John's has thirteen of these kits. However, we are missing several of them. Please take a few moments to look around in your home or car. They might be under the seat, in the trunk, behind the sofa or even in that closet that everyone is afraid to open for fear of things falling out of it.

The kits can be returned to the office or placed in the Priest Vesting room and they will be attended to.

-Chuck Palm



Music

It was wonderful to have so many here for the Lessons and Carols service.

Thank you to our dedicated choir members, and a few singing friends who joined in leading the music for this service: Chuck Bacon, Shannon Conley, Marie Del Vecchio, Ann McGehee, Kevin McGehee, Chuck Palm, Meg Sobel, Will Warner, Carmen Wilcox and our guest singers Melody Compton and Marilee Tussing.

-Melody Palm

PRAYING COLLECTS IN TROUBLING TIMES

Pádraig Ó Tuama, Daily Prayer with the Corrymeela Community.

Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2017.

Available in e-book, paperback, & audible formats, \$9-15.

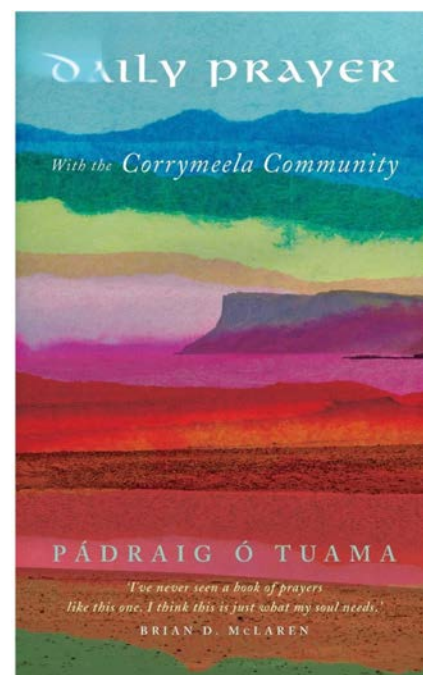
Pádraig Ó Tuama advises readers “to practice a kind of prayer that works and keep practicing,” and to “Seek the way that works.” The Book of Common Prayer teaches Episcopalians an ancient form of carefully composed short prayer called the “collect.” Also taught by Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Lutheran liturgies, this basic form of common prayer contrasts with many American Protestant traditions’ long rambling-talk prayers. Some Episcopal collects’ poetic language sticks to our spirits as a flash of wonder always there for us “until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed...” Anglicans worldwide know by heart the Collect for Purity beginning every Eucharist. EfM students often engage in creating collects while learning to practice theological reflection on life’s challenges and joys. In these troubling times, this slim book of beautiful collects, **Daily Prayer with the Corrymeela Community**, offers creative Christian spiritual wealth to deepen Episcopalians’ traditional common-prayer practices. Fine inspiration for any small group at St. John’s, this book encourages contemplative prayer and artistic play with the form of the collect. For, like a sonnet or haiku, the collect has its own distinctive form. A collect begins by addressing God and then, as Ó Tuama explains;

The person names part of the story of God; the person names their desire—only one desire; and then the person praying gives a reason why this is the one desire they name. This fourth fold echoes the first two: the name and the named story of God. And then the person finishes their prayer—with an Amen, or with a small bird of praise.”

Built around any clear intention, this form has its own heartbeat, its own rhythm, like breath, “the entrance to participating in a small mystery.” Ó Tuama invites us to use this book both meditatively and imaginatively, to mix up the prayers and make our own. The opening section offers morning, midday, and evening prayers and litanies that we might amend with help from our new weekly eMinistry bulletin’s prayer list. 31 day-by-day collects lead us through Jesus’s life, each one inspired by a Gospel verse, to form the book’s body. Daily Prayer... closes with Prayers for Times of Division and Stations of the Cross, with a collect at each station.

Corrymeela is Northern Ireland’s oldest organization devoted to peace and reconciliation, witnessing “from Christian hope and Christian harm”: “a place of friendship, soft place for hard conversations, a meeting place where hostilities could be explored within the context of hospitality.” Although Corrymeela’s leader, Irish poet, theologian, and conflict mediator . Tuama was raised Roman Catholic, this ecumenical community welcomes “people who bring their differences on pilgrimage with them” and makes needed space “shaped by the witness of Jesus” for “holding doubts and faiths together” and for exploring “the complication of civic, religious, and political life.” The Church of Scotland, the Iona Community, and other peace and faith organizations support Corrymeela’s own online lectionary, “Reading conflict through the lens of the gospels”: www.spiritualityofconflict.com

Reviewed by Susan Laird



Father Joe Ted Memorial

The beautiful new stained-glass window in the Parish Hall that was commissioned in memory of former St. John's rector Fr. Joe Ted Miller had its official dedication on December 28th, 2023.

About 50 people, including local and out-of-state members of Fr. Joe Ted's family, gathered in the Parish Hall to attend the celebratory event. The window features a single red rose, a fitting nod to his love of roses and gardening, along with the word "faith."

"He nurtured people and helped them grow, just as he did with his beloved roses," Deacon James Tyree said of Fr. Joe Ted during the dedication.

Two longtime parishioners and friends of Fr. Joe Ted – Jona Kay Steed and Pat Welch – also spoke at the dedication, which was weaved into an Evening Prayer service. Jona Kay offered reflections on Fr. Joe Ted's service as rector at St. John's and Pat, the parish's junior warden, explained how the window came to be.

The special event began with an hour-long reception that began at 4:30 p.m. Daughters of the King members did a tremendous job of supplying refreshments and hospitality for the family, friends and community members who filled the Parish Hall.

Fr. Joe Ted was born in Ponca City but was raised and attended seminary in Louisiana. He was the rector at St. John's from 1981 until his retirement in 2002, and he made and maintained numerous friendships and connections within the church and throughout the Norman community.

He died in May 2020 at age 79.



Our History



As many of you know, at the west end of the Parish Hall, very high up, a large stained glass window is embedded in the brick facade. If you ever are fortunate enough to find yourself in the Parish Hall on some late summer afternoon, you will notice the beams of sunlight passing through the stained glass and no doubt marvel at the light refracted and landing on the surfaces of the walls and ceilings. It is one of many stained glass treasures to be found at St. John's. All are priceless..but not all have the history and the miles traveled in their past.

The window design in a trefoil, generally shaped like a rose. In its center are a cross and crowns. The crown surrounding the vertical shaft of the cross, are symbols of Jesus as king. The original window was from Tiffany and said to be one of the earliest Tiffany windows in Norman.

If you can view the bottom of the glass, you will note a dedication to "Annie Isabel Heddens." If you do the math, you will also notice Annie was quite young when she lost her life, with many others in a tragic tornado.



Annie Heddens was a teacher as well as one of the first parishioners of the church. She was killed in a tornado in March of 1893, six weeks before her wedding. A series of tornados tore through Norman and other cities that sad day in Oklahoma. Many, including Annie, lost their lives.

SCORES PERISH A Death Dealing Cyclone in Oklahoma Territory SEVERAL TOWNS BLOWN TO PIECES

The Daily Democrat - Huntington, Indiana • Thursday, April 27, 1893 (excerpt)

Nathan Banks, wife and two children, Willam Broughton, Rev. John Cole, Smith Ellis, Miss Finney, **Annie Heddens**, Edward Johnson, Mrs. William Mahoney and four daughters, Miss Nunsinger, James O'Malley, John O'Conner, John O'Conner, Sr., wife and three children, John Peary, wife and seven children, Mr. Plemores, Mrs. John Rooney, Mr. Johnson and family of four persons.

Annie's family dedicated the window the following year to be installed in what came to be known as the "little church" which served Norman Episcopalians for many years. The small church grew in importance and the window was later installed over the altar as the building was enlarged and improved. Attendance grew (and shrank) and years later a new church and other buildings were put in place in what is part of the current St. John's Church. The desire to keep the "little church" on the property had little support as it detracted from the newer buildings. The building, with the window, was donated to the City of Norman for public use. The building moved to Andrews Park in 1956.

A month after locating it to the park, the building was a victim of arson and the Hedden's window was severely damaged in a fire allegedly set by "devil worshipers." Efforts to replace the glass by family and parishioners were said to involve sending remnants of the window to Tiffany's for reconstruction.

The success of remaking the window entirely out of the recovered glass is somewhat in question, but some believe parts of the existing glass window contain materials recovered from the previous window after the fire. The window was initially installed in an upper floor classroom, and later moved to the Parish Hall in 1988.

Regardless, the existing window is one of many beautiful stained glass works of art which make St. John's a beautiful and wondrous place to worship.

I urge all to view and take in the beautiful works of art in our stained glass windows throughout our church and appreciate those who have gone before us and gave so much to make St. John's what it is today.

The information used to produce this document was from two texts: "Beginnings, " by Lucille Belknap (Transcript Press) "Guide to St. John's," by Robert B. Smith and The Daily Democrat - Huntington, Indiana

-Greg Taylor

January ECW Meeting

The January ECW meeting will be held on Friday, January 26, 2024. We will be discussing where we want our group to go for 2024, electing officers and discussing ideas. Topics to think about are program ideas, local charity services, our 'new' presence at St. John's and finally, our quarterly, Chillers!

Please RSVP for childcare services to Becky Smith (@ bexsmith1971@gmail.com) Please be sure to include your child or children's ages so that we have appropriate accommodations for the kids.

-Becky Smith



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*. Children's Sunday School 9:30a-10:15a

Tuesdays

Holy Eucharist 10a (Chapel).
Followed by Bible Study.

Wednesdays

Holy Eucharist 6p (Chapel)

Thursdays

Bible Study 9:30-10:30 1st
Wed of Month Memorial
Service 12:10pm
(Columbarium)

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Nancee Martin
Interim Rector

The Rev. James Tyree
Deacon

Catherine Wilson
Christian Formation Director

Taylor Redden
Parish Administrator

Melody Palm
Interim Organist/Choir M.

Matthew Wilson
Youth Minister

Online Church Service Options

Sunday Mornings: Live stream is here! The videos are available on the St. John's website:

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

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OFFICE HOURS

Mon 10am-2pm

Tues, Wed, Thurs 10am-3pm

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

St John's Evangel

USPS 424550

Published Monthly by St. John's Episcopal Church
235 W. Duffy

Norman, OK 73069

Periodical class postage paid at Norman, OK