



# EVANGEL

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - NORMAN

## *Rejoice in the Promise*

Holy Eucharist

SUNDAY

Suspended until  
further notice

TUESDAY

Suspended until  
further notice

Evening Prayer

Suspended until  
further notice

Inside

Bible Study

Sunday School

Book Review

Knit Night

Dear Parish Family,

I write this on February 24, looking out on a gentle spring morning of bright blue skies and a mild breeze. One week ago today, snow and subzero temperatures stormed through Oklahoma. We are used to these abrupt changes in weather. March may yet bring us more days of winter.

In ancient times during the month of March, priests and astronomers watched the skies carefully. The length of day and night was measured to determine the time of the spring equinox. The cycle of the moon's phases was observed, and the date of the first full moon was noted. This time of lunar fullness set the date of Passover and Easter.

This sensitivity to the seasons perhaps had its origin in the beginning of human civilization itself. When people began settling from a hunter-gatherer existence into towns and cities, they planted crops and bred herds of animals. It became important to know the times of planting and harvest, of the breeding and birthing of the flocks.

The cycle of the year became sacred in itself. Thus did Judaism and Christianity adopt these determinations into the timing of their most holy festivals of liberation and resurrection. The time of planting and the early ripening of the grain, the time of lambing and calving, signaled the renewal of hope. "Next year in Jerusalem!" "He is risen!"

There are signs that the winter of COVID-19 is loosening its grip on us, even as bitter cold weather begins to subside. More vaccines are becoming available. The numbers of new infections and deaths are beginning to slacken.

Passover and Easter are celebrated even as we make our way through the changes of lives we live in this world. Is there universal peace? No. Is the world freed from poverty, hunger, disease, bigotry, oppression? No. Yet we reach for hope, and we dare to rejoice in the promise of the full reign of our God.

After March 21, the day begins slowly to lengthen, and the night recedes. We can take this movement of the great wheel of the universe as a yearly sign of hope and promise.

*Rev. John Borrego  
Priest at St. John's*

**THE LESSONS**

Lectionary Year B

MARCH 7

*Third Sunday in Lent*

Exodus 20:1-17

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Psalm 19

MARCH 14

*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

Numbers 21:4-9

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

MARCH 21

*Fifth Sunday in Lent*

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

Psalm 51:1-13

or Psalm 119:9-16

MARCH 28

*Palm Sunday*

*The Liturgy of the Palms*

Mark 11:1-11

or John 12:12-16

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

*The Liturgy of the Word*

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47

or Mark 15:1-39,  
[40-47]

Psalm 31:9-16

Hello St. John's family. This is Steve Warren. I would like to make you aware of the project/ministry I have been working on for the last few years. DOING WHAT I CAN started in my kitchen making 25 lunches every other week. Over the last three years we have out grown my kitchen and have been provided a space at Morning Star Storage to work out of. We currently are making around 125 lunches every Sunday, consisting of 2 hot dogs (cooked on the grill), a 8 Oz. can of pork n beans, chips, granola bar, fruit cup, pudding, apple or banana, a new pair of socks and toiletries bags. This winter we have given away about 50 - 60 tents and at least 100 sleeping bags.



Steve Warren delivers meals in the snow.

## St. John's Knit Night

The St. John's "Knit" Night fellowship continues to meet virtually until we can safely gather in person. As we chat, it's a time to work on any type of needlework or craft project of your choice. It's also fine to join us just for conversation and comradery, no stitching or crafting required. If you're interested in learning new skills, we have members happy to help.

Virtual meetings will be 1st and 3rd Thursdays, March 4 and 18, 8:00 - 8:40 p.m. The link is the same for Morning and Evening Prayer, as shown below. Please contact Melody Palm at (309) 825-6963 or mapalm@ilstu.edu if you have any questions.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73026652111?  
pwd=WEhxVUNKc2dUWHJXaGRWNIRGdHRLUT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73026652111?pwd=WEhxVUNKc2dUWHJXaGRWNIRGdHRLUT09)

Meeting ID: 730 2665 2111

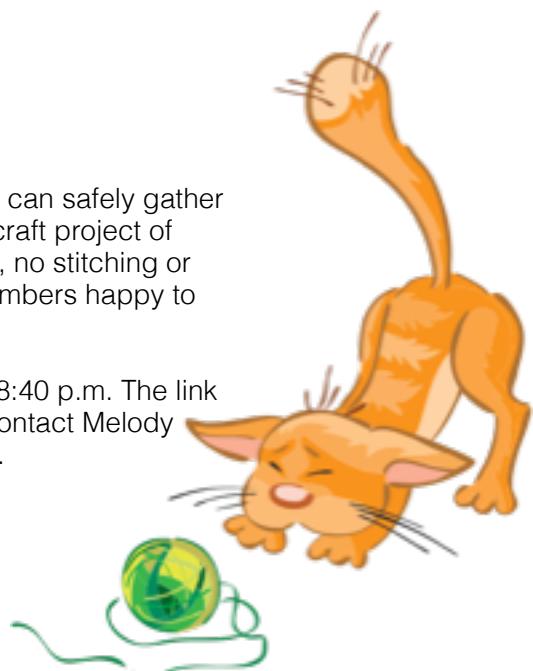
Password: 003527



A volunteer stocks shelves for DWIC.

Please take a look at our website : [www.doingwhaticanok.org](http://www.doingwhaticanok.org) for more information on how you can donate to DWIC, or volunteer some time.\*

\**Doing What I Can is not an official St. John's ministry, and is not affiliated with or sponsored by St. John's.*



# Online Church Service Options



**Sunday Mornings:** Fr. Borrego and Dr. Olivia Burke offer music, prayer, and a homily every Sunday morning. Volunteers join in to read the lectionary readings, along with the prayers of the people. The videos are available on the St. John's website, <https://episcopalnorman.org/videos.aspx>.

**Wednesday Services:** The Rev. James Tyree, our deacon, is offering a midweek prayer service and a homily reflecting on the life and ministry of Episcopal saints. The videos are available on the St. John's website, <https://episcopalnorman.org/videos.aspx>.

**Adult Sunday School:** Owen Mills and Anne Hutchison lead a Sunday School class for adults via Zoom from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. In 2021, they plan to start bringing in speakers from time to time. Speakers will be focused on understanding diversity in other faiths, on human rights, on anti-bullying, and more. Join the class at the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6070200696> Meeting ID: 607 020 0696.

**St. John's Morning and Evening Prayer:** While the church remains closed, Shannon Conley continues to offer both Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. Please join us via Zoom Sundays at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. This lay led service takes about 20-30 minutes and is a great opportunity for group prayer, practice of our liturgies, and meditation on the lectionary readings. To join the meeting, just click the link below from your computer, smartphone, or tablet. If you are using a smartphone or tablet, download the free Zoom app from your device's app store. If you have questions about this service or about how to use Zoom, please contact Shannon Conley at [la.emperatriz@gmail.com](mailto:la.emperatriz@gmail.com).

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73026652111?pwd=WEhxVUNKc2dUWHJXaGRWNIRGdHRLUT09>

Meeting ID: 730 2665 2111

Password: 003527

## A Note from the Evangel Editor

It is March once again, and Lent once again. In discussing upcoming Lenten plans with Fr. Borrego, he joked, "Is it Lent again?" Our answer is, "It is Lent STILL!" It has been a year this month since our lives and routines came to a sudden halt due to the pandemic, in the middle of the Lenten season. While we have stayed connected in many ways (and I am so thankful for those ways!), I do miss attending and participating in the physical church service. The long year of Lenten self-denial continues. We have suffered losses in our parish family this year that we have not been able to mourn together. We missed birthdays, anniversaries, major church holidays, fellowship opportunities, and mostly, we missed each other.

The promise of spring, no matter how hard the past year, always renews my hope and faith. Now I have faith that better times are coming—we will gather again, we will see how much the children have grown in the past year, we will welcome new members to our parish family, we will celebrate Eucharist together again! In my daydreams, I see us entering the Nave at the back, looking forwards toward the altar, listening to a hymn of thanksgiving, greeting each other with joy and love and gratitude.

Those days, they are a-comin'.

Until then, we are sheltered in the love and care of Christ.

# *Children's Christian Education*

I can't believe it is Lent again! I feel as though I achieved a monumentous personoal goal mailing Sunday School lessons for Lent in time for Ash Wednesday!

The lessons for Lent include a child-friendly version of the gospel, some "wonder" questions to discuss, a family prayer, activities to celebrate Lent, coloring sheets, and a song to learn - for Lent it is my favorite, "Create in Me a Clean Heart."

Even though my family missed the service and the imposition of ashes with our church family, we really enjoyed creating our own Ash Wednesday service following the outline of an "Ash Wednesday Bonfire" highlighted in the Fledgling Flyer! We even sang a few camp songs, including "Create in Me A Clean Heart" (of course). We outlined our disciplines for Lent. One of my boys decided to give up screen time for one day each week. The other boy suggested giving up playing in the snow, if there is snow. We're still working on his!

This season's activites include a recipe for making pretzels (I didn't know that was a Lenten tradition!), and instructions for making prayer beads, God's Eyes, and a tissue paper stained glass craft.

Plans are under way for celebrating Holy Week and Easter at home with with kids. Holy Week in a Box will be delivered to families receiving Sunday School by mail the week before Palm Sunday. And if we are still worshipping at a distance by Easter, I'm working on bringing the Easter Egg Hunt to you!

If you have kids and aren't receiving Sunday School packages, but would like to, please email me at [csonleitner@yahoo.com](mailto:csonleitner@yahoo.com). Please include your children's name(s) and home address.

I miss moving through the year with all of you and look forward to the time when we can celebrate together again.

-Catherine Wilson  
*Christian Education Director*

## *What Are Vergers and Thurifers?*

The ministry of the Verger is to serve at the pleasure of the Priest. The Verger leads the altar party in at the processional and out at the recessional of the service. Here at St. John's, the Verger helps set the table and clears after the Eucharist. The Verger may also be called upon to read a lesson, be the intercessor or serve the chalice. Currently the Verger group is small, with Chuck Palm leading it. The group includes Melissa Busby, Will Davis, and Tom Gibson. If anyone has an interest in this ministry please contact one of the Vergers or conact the church office.

The ministry of Thurifer also serves at the pleasure of the Priest. The Thurifer uses a thurible or censer filled with charcoal and incense to cense the church during services. Historically, in recent years this has only been done twice a year at St. John's, the Easter Vigil and the late service on Christmas Eve. The current Thurifer is Chuck Palm, if anyone has an interest in this ministry please contact either the church office or Chuck Palm.

Both being a Verger and being a Thurifer are meaningful and rewarding ministries .



# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Adult Sunday Zoom class for March 21 & 28 will be a conversation on The Challenges of Being a Police Officer with our very own lieutenant Greg Taylor, retired. After 30 years on the OKC Police Department, Greg will share with us some insights and experiences from the several positions he held during that time and give us a chance to have thoughtful discussion on some of the current challenges with policing across the nation. And then in April...

## **CRISPR – Endowed with God-like Powers, How will Mankind Respond –**

Beginning on April 11 and continuing for four successive Sundays, our Adult Sunday School will view the PBS special “Human Nature - A Provocative Exploration of CRISPR's Far-Reaching Implications,” online. Via video conferencing (Zoom), we will examine how God's laws can guide us in this new unknown, and how organize religion can serve as a forum to discuss these types of topics and provide us a place of comfort.

If you are interested in joining our Zoom class send a request to [owen.mills@att.net](mailto:owen.mills@att.net) to get your Zoom link.

## *Bible Study for Lent*

The Wednesday evening Bible discussions on Zoom in March will feature Lectio Divina readings of selected Psalms that are especially timely during Lent. The series began on February 24 and will last through March 31, the Wednesday of Holy Week.

You are warmly invited to join us whenever your schedule allows. The Wednesday Zoom Bible discussions are led by Deacon James Tyree, but everyone shares in conversation as much or as little as they like. But every week, discussions are fun, engaging, and informative as we learn and discern a little more about what is in our Bibles. If you have questions, call or text Deacon James any time at 405-820-1851.

James Tyree is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Wednesday Zoom Bible Discussions

Every week on Wed, until Apr 7, 2021, 7 occurrence(s)

Feb 24, 2021 07:00 PM

Mar 3, 2021 07:00 PM

Mar 10, 2021 07:00 PM

Mar 17, 2021 07:00 PM

Mar 24, 2021 07:00 PM

Mar 31, 2021 07:00 PM

Apr 7, 2021 07:00 PM



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84913702908?pwd=bXFqemtFbTY1end4eDQ1eVhRaU5SQT09>

Meeting ID: 849 1370 2908

Passcode: 040014

## SPIRITUAL WISDOM FROM THE PLAGUE

**Matthew Fox, Julian of Norwich: Wisdom in a Time of Pandemic—And Beyond,** with foreword by Mirabai Starr.

Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2020. Under \$6 in e-book format, under \$15 in new paperback.

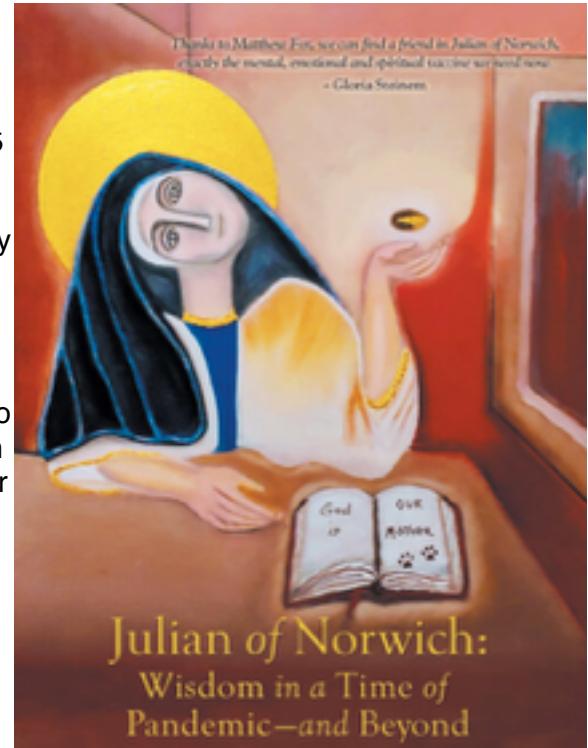
Bubonic plague struck Norwich, then England's second largest city in 1349. Halving its population by the 1370s, the Black Death raged into the fifteenth century, killing nearly half of Europe. That pandemic's recurring waves shaped Julian's life, 1342-ca. 1429. Secluded as an anchoress in a church's sealed room, she met people at her window—perhaps as we, now sheltering-in-place, do on Zoom. A religious classic, the earliest known book by a woman in English, Julian's *Revelations of Divine Love* (1393) recounts her visions of Christ during severe illness in 1373, following last rites, only to rise miraculously from her deathbed! She spent years afterwards meditating upon and writing about those "showings." Popular theologian Matthew Fox, a Dominican exiled to the Episcopal priesthood, proposes, "maybe *she* is the vaccine that is truly needed today"(p. 137).

As if delivering lively lectures, Fox quotes Julian extensively, with unpolished directness, and brings history into the present to convey simply and clearly her "lessons for *enduring, undergoing, and learning from the coronavirus*"(p. 18). His last summary chapter lists those helpful lessons explicitly—1, 2, 3.... Fox also makes vivid the Black Death whose contagion surrounded Julian, akin to our own pandemic, except without modern medical science or anything like CDC or WHO. Both medieval plague and present pandemic envelop spirits in darkness: not knowing when it will end or who may transmit it while knowing little can be done about suffering all around us beyond isolating, distancing, wearing masks, and supporting front-line workers. Bubonic plague transformed medieval theology, opposing its earlier love for nature and for life *before* death to inspire fear of nature and obsessive preoccupations with life *after* death, sinfulness, and redemption.

Moved by her visions of Christ while rooted with Jesus in the Bible's wisdom tradition, Julian guided spirits through the plague in a more radically optimistic theological direction: to love and be grateful for life, all earthly creation, and embodied humanity, also to trust the "motherhood of God"(p. 14), who "is Justice" and "creates Justice"(p. 76), and in whom we find our highest gift, Reason. Fox quotes her vision of Christ as "our Mother of Mercy" (p. 77) along with her good-news witness to "no kind of vengeance in God... In God is endless friendship, space, life, and being"(p. 81). Thus our worst sicknesses are boredom and despair—to be countered with what she called "oneing"(p. 83)—putting no space between our own soul and God—to open ourselves to awe, wonder, goodness, and joy without denying real woes or honest grief.

Sometimes judged a heretic, Julian has influenced many greats in confrontations with suffering, including Florence Nightingale, T.S. Eliot, and Thomas Merton. Comparing her often with mystics like Hildegard von Bingen, Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Mechtild of Magdeburg, and Meister Eckhardt, Fox shows her debts and contributions to the "creation spirituality tradition" about which he has written volumes. Also linking coronavirus to climate crisis, racism, and misogyny, he suggests that reclaiming Julian as our spiritual ancestor and teacher may help us make a religious paradigm shift needed for healing now.

--Reviewed by Susan Laird



### FROM ST. JOHN'S LIBRARY

This monthly column in *Evangel* features short reviews of books from the parish library as well as Episcopal Church Publishing and cathedral stores, and the Education for Ministry program at Sewanee, or books recommended by our rector. Books reviewed need not be brand-new, but should serve the purpose of expanding our learning resources for spiritual growth—perhaps also introducing texts for study by parish groups and Sunday School classes. To participate in this educational lay ministry, contact parish librarian Anne Harris [anneharris636@gmail.com](mailto:anneharris636@gmail.com) or Susan Laird [susielaird@icloud.com](mailto:susielaird@icloud.com), or *Evangel* editor Merrie Beard [merrie@episcopalnorman.org](mailto:merrie@episcopalnorman.org). Submission deadline: third Sunday of each month, about 200-500 words.

# St. John's at a Glance



ADDRESS: 235 W. Duffy, Norman, OK 73069  
 MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 2088 Norman, OK 73070  
 PHONE: 405-321-3020  
 WEBSITE: [www.episcopahnorman.org](http://www.episcopahnorman.org)  
 EMAIL: [staff@episcopahnorman.org](mailto:staff@episcopahnorman.org)  
 OFFICE HOURS: Sunday-Thursday by appointment

## STAFF

The Congregation  
*Ministers of the church*

The Rev. John Borrego  
*Interim Priest: 321-3020*

The Rev. James Tyree  
*Deacon*

Catherine Wilson  
*Christian Formation Director*

Merrie Beard  
*Parish Administrator*

Dr. Olivia Burke  
*Organist/choirmaster*

Emma Brown  
*Youth Minister*

## FURTHER RESOURCES

- > Keep up with the news of the diocese at:  
[www.epiok.org](http://www.epiok.org)
- > Connect with the wider Episcopal Church:  
[www.episcopalchurch.org](http://www.episcopalchurch.org)
- >Find the Liturgical Readings:  
[www.lectionarypage.net](http://www.lectionarypage.net)

## ONLINE GIVING

Many of you have recently taken advantage of the ease of making pledge payments online. If you are interested in doing so as well, go to [episcopahnorman.org](http://episcopahnorman.org) and click on the DONATE button in the upper left corner. There is a simple form to complete; be sure to also complete the memo with what the donation is for. You can use this to pay for altar flowers, make memorial donations, etc. We use a secure program facilitated by our bank. Questions? Contact the office at 321-3020.

## PRAAYER REQUESTS

Prayer requests may be submitted to the church by calling the office, sending an email to [staff@episcopahnorman.org](mailto:staff@episcopahnorman.org), or online at [www.episcopahnorman.org/prayer-request](http://www.episcopahnorman.org/prayer-request). Requests will be added to the Prayers of the People. Please indicate if you would like your request kept private.

## PASTORAL CARE

The church is committed to the well being of its members through caring relationships and kind actions. The Pastoral Care committee and St. John's staff are placing calls to check on our parishioners during COVID-19. Fr. Borrego is also available for pastoral care via phone or email. If you or someone you know needs care from the Pastoral Care committee, please contact the church office at 321-3020, or [staff@episcopahnorman.org](mailto:staff@episcopahnorman.org).

## VESTRY

Holly Cole	SENIOR WARDEN
Pat Welch	JUNIOR WARDEN
Martha White	
Chuck Palm	
Greg Taylor	
Ulli Nollert	
Owen Mills	
Roshni Robert	
Susie Laird	
Jona Kay Steed	
George Elassal	

# ST. JOHN'S

Episcopal Church

235 W. Duffy, Norman  
405-321-3020

MAILING ADDRESS  
P.O. Box 2088  
Norman, OK 73070

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

OFFICE HOURS  
by appointment  
Sunday-Thursday

---

## STAFF

### **The Congregation**

Ministers of the church

[staff@episcopalnorman.org](mailto:staff@episcopalnorman.org) • [www.episcopalnorman.org](http://www.episcopalnorman.org)

---

### **The Rev. John Borrego**

Interim Priest: 321-3020

### **The Rev. James Tyree**

Deacon

### **Catherine Wilson**

Christian Formation  
Director

### **Merrie Beard**

Parish Administrator

---

### **Dr. Olivia Burke**

Organist/choirmaster

### **Emma Brown**

Youth Minister

---

### **Sundays**

Suspended until further notice

## COMING UP AT ST. JOHN'S

### **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*

### **EVANGEL DEADLINE**

March 15 for the April issue

**Postmaster:** Send change  
of address to

St. John's / P.O. Box 2088 /  
Norman, OK 73070

MARCH 2021:8