

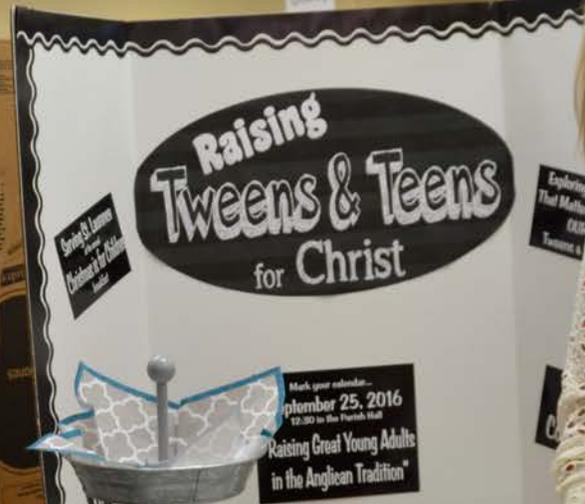
CHIMES

A Quarterly Magazine for St. Laurence Church

August 2017

Connection Sunday

Gainesville
State School
Ministry



FALL
KICK OFF

Faith | Family | Tradition

Worshipping God in the Anglican Tradition since 1951

A LETTER FROM FR. JORDAN, RECTOR

Dear Parish Family,

I hope you have had a great summer! It's been a wonderful one for the Jordan family with some really fun family trips and a much slower pace. I'm ready to gear back up to the school-year pace and it's a good thing because there is so much just around the corner for the family and for the Parish!

Big Changes to the Parish Staff Over the Summer

Earlier this summer, our new Curate Deacon Cooper Morelock joined our staff. He's fit in very well and already feels like part of the family. His ordination to the Diaconate at the end of July was one of the highlights of the summer. It was a beautiful service and a great accomplishment to celebrate and give thanks for. In addition to Deacon Morelock joining the staff, I hope you saw the news that we have a new Children's Minister, Megan Mecca. Our ministry to kids is a huge priority in the Parish and it will be in very good hands with Megan leading the way. Lastly, I hope you saw that Cherie Bennett has agreed to join the staff in a two-fold capacity, helping in the Parish Office and putting together a plan for a potential Parent's Day Out program at St. Laurence.

Thanks be to God for these amazing people and for all that they contribute to the life of our Church.

Parent's Day Out

While no decisions have been made quite yet, the idea of some type of educational offering at St. Laurence has come up numerous times over the last 5 years or so. When we met together with all of you before we proceeded with the expansion, we asked you all where you saw the Parish going.

As you know, the most common answer we heard was that we needed to expand the physical plant. But maybe you don't know that the second most common thing we heard was that we ought to really look into some some type of school or preschool.

In early 2015, the Parish leadership gathered to consider this potential direction and we discerned that a full-fledged school would be too large of an effort. However, the idea for a Parent's Day Out program did gain a lot of ground. We quickly

determined that we needed to carefully study this type of ministry offering to little ones and then we put it on the shelf. With so much energy for the ministry we have to kids in our Parish, I have discerned that now is the right time to re-open this discussion and I am so excited to see where God leads us. Please pray for the Lord's guidance as we discern this possibility in the months ahead.

The Expansion

As you know, the addition of a new Parish Hall along with youth and children's ministry spaces continues to be a critical piece of our vision forward for the Parish. The Expansion committee met several times over the summer with our architect Andrew Oxley to put the final touches on the detailed level design. The complete design will be fully ready to go in short order and we will await the green light from the Diocese and our legal team before commencing with construction. While we are frustrated with the delay, the Vestry and Parish leadership are still 100% committed to beginning our expansion at the soonest possible date. Many of you have donated faithfully to these efforts and we want you to know that we absolutely believe God is calling us to expand the buildings here at St. Laurence so that we can expand the ministry and formation that happens here.



The Legal Delays

As you know, our expansion continues to be delayed due to circumstances that are out of our hands. As a reminder, The Episcopal Church brought a lawsuit against our Diocese about 8 years ago. The lawsuit has been up and down the court system and currently resides before the 2nd Court of Appeals in Fort Worth. The Appeals Court has yet to release their opinion in our case, an opinion we have been told to expect for several months now. Sadly, the delay to our expansion is directly related to the Court's delay. We are hopeful to hear something from the Court soon and of course will communicate it to you as soon as we know something more. We remain very confident that our property rights will be upheld by the State of Texas. Many of you were part of the previous campaigns to build up St. Laurence as it now is. I have

Fr. Jordan's Letter con't.

spoken with a number of you that donated to no less than 5 campaigns that have brought us this far. In a real way, through God's inspiration, you built this Church. I remain very hopeful that the Appeals Court will recognize this fact and will do so in the near future.

God continues to bless our efforts as a parish family. See all of the exciting information about the ministry we have to Gainesville, the upcoming Connections Sunday, and the life changing trip that was taken to Malawi earlier this summer. God has been very good to us and we rejoice and give thanks.

Fr. John

Sr. Warden's Report

A Letter from Jeff Bennett

St. Laurence is growing every week and with all of the new additions to our Parish family the question always comes, "How can I help?" or "How can I get involved?" Well, glad you asked. Our annual "Rally Day" is changing its name to "Connection Sunday." It is a great way to get involved in the Parish family. There are absolutely no private groups within our Church. Anyone can join any group.

Here is how I recommend that you start. Pick up a copy of the St. Laurence Life booklet. It is an up to date list of every group. Find some common interests and come to the Parish Hall for Connection Sunday. You can find the groups you're interested in, meet the leaders, ask your questions and sign up to be included in their next meeting.

These groups are a great way to meet new people and to get involved. We value everyone's talents in this family and know that everyone has something to offer.



God led each and every one of us here to St. Laurence and He has a plan for each of us.

Look for the group leader or a Vestry member to help. There are so many interesting groups, from Altar Guild to Choir, Dinners for 8 to Greeters, Gainesville State School to Men's Friday Morning Bible Study and Sometimes Breakfast. They are so much fun and all offer terrific fellowship.

On the topic of visitors to the Church, I ask you to please watch for people that you don't recognize. Say "Hi" and introduce yourself. See if they might need help figuring out what page we are on or might need to know where the nursery is. We were all new once and someone helped each of us and welcomed us into this great Parish family we call St. Laurence. Walk them over to coffee and introduce them to your friends.

No one welcomes new family members better than St. Laurence. Thank you for all you do every day for our family. Continue to be a bright light in a weary world. You are each loved and prayed for every day.
Jeff Bennett, Sr. Warden

CONNECTION SUNDAY

August 27, 9:50am

Are you looking for ways to get involved at St. Laurence and connect with others here? Connection Sunday is just the thing for you. Come to the Parish Hall on Sun, Aug. 27 between the services and you'll find the leaders from our many groups spread around the room. Walk around, find the groups you are interested in and talk with the leaders about all that they do. If you choose to, you can sign up to be in that group and be included in all future communications and activities that they do. It's a great way to meet others, have fun and contribute to the life of the Church.



Our St. Laurence Life Booklet will be handed out this day too. It lists all the groups and ministries we have available for you to participate in. The leaders' names and contact info are included as well. So if you can't make it to Connection Sunday or you don't make it around to all the groups you wanted to, feel free to contact the leaders directly.

GAINESVILLE STATE SCHOOL MINISTRY

Taking the Word of God to Imprisoned Youth

By Carl Lapiska

Members of St. Laurence, as well as other gracious souls have been traveling to Gainesville, Texas since 2009 to meet with, encourage, and even mentor boys who are 14 to 18 years old at the Gainesville State School (GSS). The GSS is a maximum security facility operated by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department for boys who have committed felonies against the people of Texas. The GSS is a lovely campus sitting on 160 acres of rolling and wooded land just east of the city of Gainesville. It is comprised of administrative offices, security buildings, a visitor center, a schoolhouse, a recreational facility, a dining facility, a beautiful chapel in the center of the campus, and about ten individual dorm buildings that house the roughly 300 boys incarcerated there. It was originally opened in 1916.

Our team sponsors one of the dorms which houses about 35 boys. Once a month, we host a birthday party and take the good news of the Gospel to these boys who are so desperate for hope. Additionally, we have team members who maintain individual mentoring relationships with boys both at GSS and in "the free" as well. We have also recently launched a faith based, life skills workshop for the boys that will be departing GSS in the next six to twelve months. The boys are always so very grateful for the love and attention that is shown to

them, and I am humbly thankful for the many volunteers who have participated over the past eight years we have ministered at GSS.

Nearly 85% of the boys come from a seriously dysfunctional family, primarily one without a father in the home. Consequently, guidance, development and a solid foundation have been severely lacking in the years they most needed them. As we know from scripture, following the creation of the universe and man and woman, the very next creation by our God was marriage and the family (Genesis 2:24).



Although we all understand that poor decisions have been made by these boys in the past, the people who care for them through the volunteer programs at GSS believe they can be given another opportunity for success and a good life in our communities. Indeed, most of the boys are young, sweet children who are always anxious to see us as we work with them through what will

hopefully be a new transformation in their lives.

Carl Interviews 3 Boys

Recently, I was given approval to meet with some of the boys we minister to, interview them, and even gather some photos which are usually protected since they are still juveniles in the State of Texas. Their names are Luke, Tyler, and Trevon. Here are some excerpts from this interview...

Tell me about yourself.

Tyler: *At home I have my Mom, my dad, my little brother (9). I like to go drag racing. I have two cars (mud diggin', truck sweatin'). You get in a big mud hole about 4-5 foot deep and see how far you can go into the hole with your truck....see who can go the farthest. It's a neighborhood competition. I like to work on trucks.*

Trevon: *What's important to me is my family, my mom, my granny, 3 younger brothers and my son that lives at my house. Things I like to do is to go to the YMCA and play basketball, go to the park and hang with a few of my buddies and I like to go shopping. My son is two years old. I like to watch him play basketball with a little basketball goal. I wouldn't consider myself a basketball player, but I like to play. I like football more.*

Luke: *I have a mom and grandma. There aren't any brothers or sisters at home. I stay at home.*

What about Gainesville has been good for you?

Tyler: *The mentors, the admin and family resource staff help a lot. I'm*



a part of the PAWS program. We get dogs that have been abused and

beaten from Noah's Ark. We take them in and try to get them used to people again. We train them to be able to go to good homes for adoption. Our dorm gets the dogs fit for adoption. We are taking care of seven dogs right now. It has helped me not be alone and lets me feel like I am helping somebody out.

Trevon: *I like the fact that they've got a lot of activities and programs to help us... welding, auto*



mechanics, horticulture, fork lifting. Things that can benefit you when you go home. I've been

involved in all of these programs. Right now I currently go to welding and automotive. The other ones I have already been in. Horticulture is about planting vegetables. Any of these skills could be useful, but welding is what I really wanted to do and now I have my certificate.

Luke: *Going to school and getting high school credit through credit recovery. I don't have a favorite subject, except for gym. I don't*



play sports, I just like going to the gym. We can do weights, play basketball, flag football, soccer.

Can you tell me about your faith, in God, in Christ?

Luke: *How God made the world in seven days. I do believe that God made the world. I believe that he sent His son Jesus to die on a cross for us... for our sins.*

Tyler: *We were a Christian family before I turned 8, but we never went to church. My mom met my step dad at church when I was 8. We were at the church since the beginning of when that church started. We were there every Sunday and Wednesday. The church was our second home. I believe in Christ and I have Him in my heart. And I will go to Him when I am done.*

Trevon: *No, Sir. I don't consider myself a Christian. The volunteers have exposed me to Jesus, and my family believes in God, but I never considered myself a believer. Not to say that he's not real, just saying that I don't believe. I would consider it over time. I feel like it will come one way or another. I may decide to believe in him or make myself believe in him, but until then, I've never really pushed myself towards believing in God.*

Tell me what the volunteers and mentors have meant to you.

Luke: *Get the word of God from the birthday parties... first God thing I got. I like that you guys come down and preach us the Word of God... helping us. People talk with us about how they would like us to be.*

Tyler: *I've had one mentor. He talked about how he has anger issues and it helps him to talk about it and work it out with the person who inflicted the anger. I have practiced that.*

Trevon: *Mr. Smith (not real name) is my mentor. For the past 1-1/2 years he's been coming twice a week. He's there when I need someone to talk to. One thing that I like the most is that he comes so much and don't get paid for it. You know what I'm saying? That's one thing I like. He comes up here on his own free will, brings his own money to buy me snacks, talk to me when I need to talk and don't get paid for it. That's what really touches me cause he don't have to do this. He's one of the persons who actually cares.*

What would you say to the volunteers?

Trevon: *Continue helping other youth. Also, stay in contact with them in case they needed their support even outside of Gainesville. It wouldn't be right for me not to stay in contact with them after I leave.*

Tyler: *Keep on doing what they are doing to help other kids, cause it's all about him... God.*

Luke: *Come down here and help the youth and plant a seed to help them believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, so he could forgive us and we could go to heaven.*

As you can see, there are some genuine sentiments here that the volunteer programs are meaningful to the boys and have had a positive impact on them. If you would like to hear more about our program, what we do, when we go, etc., please don't hesitate to write or call on me. We meet with the boys every month and I would be delighted to tell you more and win your participation on our team.

In the face of God,
 Carl Lapiska
cfl@argilosgroup.com
 817-709-8315

St. Laurence Day



Ken Stone and team chopping and slicing.



The guys that started it all!
25 years of BBQing for the St. Laurence Day picnic. Frank Wagon, John Browning and Bill Barthelemy.



The Bubble Machine was a huge hit.



Sarah Kate and Charlotte Baade



Our Snap Chat Filter!
Jude and Liz Jordan, Katie Campbell

We're Kicking Off a Great Fall!

Summer's over and we're getting ready to launch all our fall activities. Check out what's coming!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School kicks off for both kids and adults on Sun, Sept. 10, between the two services at 9:50am. Come to the early service and stay for Sunday School or come to Sunday School first and then go to Church. We want everyone to have an opportunity for Christian Education.

MALAWI MISSION TRIP PRESENTATION

Adult Sunday School will begin with a 3 week class about the Malawi Mission Trip. The missionaries that went on the trip will show us photos and talk to us about all that they did and learned during their 2 weeks with the people of the Diocese of Northern Malawi. They have so much to tell us about all that God is doing there.

LIVING WATER 1/2 DAY RETREAT

On Sept. 9, we are offering a free, 1/2 day women's retreat which will focus on Jesus Christ as our Living Water and how prioritizing our relationship with him will quench our spiritual thirst. Join us Sat, Sept. 9 from 9:00am-12:00pm in the St. Laurence Music Building, with an optional lunch excursion afterward. Nursery is available. Even though the retreat is free, please complete a registration form so we can prepare the right amount of materials. Registration forms are in the Church narthex, Parish Hall and on the website.

ADULT MISSION TRIP

The Adult Mission Trip to Austin is Sept. 21-24. They'll be working at the Community First! Village which provides affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for the disabled and chronically homeless. Our missionaries will be cleaning and prepping houses for new people to move in, weeding and preparing the gardens for new crops and preparing the food for food truck runs to the homeless and low income people of Austin. They will also participate in a "Welcome Home" ceremony when the new tenants are blessed before they move into their homes. Katie LaPenna is leading this trip of about 16-18 parishioners.

AND SO MUCH MORE!

- Canterbury Children's Choir - Sept. 6
- St. Laurence Chorale - Sept. 6
- Jr. High Youth Group - Sept. 6
- St. Laurence Men - Sept. 7 (now on Thurs.)
- Sr. High Youth Group - Sept. 10
- Newcomers' Welcome Brunch - Sept. 10
- Christian Formation - Sept. 10
- Divorce Care - Sept. 10
- God Squad - Sept. 24
- St. Laurence Women - Sept. 28
- Blessing of the Animals - Sept. 30
- Oktoberfest - Sept. 30

Financials January-July 2017

	<u>2017 Actual</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>	<u>2016 Actual</u>
Receipts			
Pledged Offerings	\$459,352	\$437,000	\$450,773
Non-Pledged Offerings	\$ 30,718	\$ 28,000	\$ 28,607
Other Receipts	\$ 96,252	\$ 42,250	\$ 40,297
Total	\$586,322	\$507,250	\$519,676
Disbursements			
Pastoral Care	\$180,315	\$181,831	\$179,790
Spiritual Growth	\$ 88,469	\$ 86,769	\$ 92,180
Worship	\$178,953	\$168,099	\$163,575
Evangelism	\$104,090	\$ 91,263	\$ 89,473
Total	\$551,827	\$527,962	\$525,019

Christian Formation Starts New Year

**Sunday Nights 6:00-7:45pm
Sept. 10-April 29**

Christian Formation is a series of classes that teaches the apostolic faith, equips you for ministry and supports you as you establish a more personal relationship with Jesus. It also prepares you for baptism, confirmation or reception. Come to our Introductory Session Sun, Sept. 10 at 6:00pm in the Parish Hall and see if it's right for you. Contact Ed Roach at edward.roach@verizon.net for more info.



St. Laurence Church

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**ST. LAURENCE
CHURCH**

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