

## *A Tribute to Cynthia J. Hallas*



When Cynthia J. Hallas answered our call for a new rector in 2004, she became the first female spiritual leader of St. Giles. There may have been some members who were skeptical or unsure about having a woman lead our congregation. We had a history of strong, male rectors, and we all know that sometimes change is difficult.

After a brief “honeymoon” period, Cynthia had to attend to the “difficult business” of building strong relationships with parishioners and the even more difficult work of enlarging our faith community. She took to both of these tasks like a fish to water (and Jesus to fishermen).

To say that she brought a wealth of talent and skills to our parish would be an understatement. She brought a virtual hardware store of these qualities and resources to our community, and she wielded them deftly, showing her sensitivity when needed, being strong and decisive when necessary.

It is not easy to sum up a person’s life or even her contributions to and accomplishments for our modest church community. Cynthia possessed all of the qualities her flock sought in their pastor: kindness, directness, tact, honesty, consistency, education, intelligence, initiative, support and much, much more.

Among the characteristics which Cynthia may be remembered for, her scholarship and support are two which bear emphasis. Her sermons were consistently thought-provoking, scholarly and full of promise and a positive outlook and/or interpretation of scripture. She would spend hours preparing her homilies, and this thoughtful preparation paid off on Sundays. She would deliver her ideas in a very engaging way: she could be dramatic or ironic or humorous or melancholy as befit the sermons she gave us. And, truly, her sermons were among her most precious and thoughtful gifts to our parish.

Another gift she bestowed on us was support and willingness to change. Her openness to suggestions led to our community’s developing and implementing a variety of initiatives that benefited not only ourselves but also our community at large:

- Second Sunday Community Breakfast
- “Open mic” sermons
- Hunger Resource Network
- St. Giles Community Garden of Feedin’
- Meditation Labyrinth
- Ministry Teams
- Bible Challenge

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**St. Giles  
Episcopal Church**

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Northbrook, IL 60062  
Phone: 847-272-6622  
www.saint-giles.org

**Office Hours**

Monday: Office closed  
Tues-Thurs: 9 AM - 2 PM  
Friday: Office closed

**Diocese of Chicago**

The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey D. Lee,  
Bishop

**Vestry**

James Brooks, Sr. Warden  
Kay Okoli, Jr. Warden  
Ellie Bonebrake  
Ted Chabreja  
John Hanzel  
Glenn Hunt  
Lewis Kirkwood  
William Perley

Jocelyn Turner, Clerk  
Gloriann Harris, Treasurer  
Ned Libby, Bookkeeper  
Tom Page, Chancellor

**Team Leaders**

*Building & Grounds (Facilities) -*  
Bob Schultz  
*Communications -* John Hanzel  
*Fundraising -* Huw Williams  
*Green -* James Brooks  
*Hospitality -* Jan Hutchins-DeWitt  
*Newcomers -* George Miller  
*Pastoral Care -* Leslie Ruttenberg  
*Social Justice -* Jocelyn Turner

**Staff**

The Rev. Thomas Scott  
Priest-in-charge  
The Rev. Charles Hensel  
Assisting Priest  
Jim Brown  
Director of Music  
Cathy Leimbeck  
Parish Administrator  
admin@saint-giles.org

*This is a sampling of initiatives that began with Cynthia's support and blessing. All but one of these continue to function and grow to this day. The Bible Challenge was a year-long program that was fulfilling for all of its participants.*

*Her support for new programs and activities did not stop with those listed above. If there was one area of secular and spiritual life that seemed near and dear to Cynthia, it was social justice. She persuaded the Vestry to add the rainbow flag to our church sign, announcing to the community at large that St. Giles accepts everybody as they are. This may seem like a minor action, but it was emblematic of Cynthia's commitment to serve and protect everybody who wanted or needed any kind of aid.*

*A tribute to Cynthia would be incomplete if it did not include mention of her artistic side. She loved to sing, and she always displayed her musical flair during Sunday services. She also graced us with her musical talent when she performed at some of our musical events. Her interest in and love of music led her to build a strong working relationship with our music director, and they would have many conversations about all kinds of music, not just liturgical selections for our services.*

*Cynthia J. Hallas was a strong, compassionate, scholarly, sensitive, supportive spiritual leader of our church for 15 years. She shared with all of us her grace and generous spirit, her intelligent insights, sense of humor, and sense of social justice. She was the best and right person to lead St. Giles Church during a period of trials and turbulence and change. She will be remembered for all of her gifts to and guidance of our community.*

—Jim Brooks, Sr. Warden

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## A message from our Priest-in-charge:

Dear friends,

These are difficult times for us all, especially when we feel isolated and cut off from each other and unable to worship in our church building. But please do not think that nothing is going on at St. Giles, as this issue of the Bells will show.

Your search committee is doing online interviews with job candidates.

Your vestry is delving deeply into the challenges we face to be able to open the buildings for our worship and the groups who use our space. Your wardens are tireless in their work for St. Giles and truly lead us all by example. John Hanzel and others have been looking at the mechanics of our doing worship online.

As I hope you have heard and seen in photos, the rectory improvements are complete and the result is just stunning!

Our outreach ministry continues. In fact, there is a plan already being developed for resuming our Christmas basket ministry. CROP walk plans are coming together. And the life-saving work of the food program we participate in is a godsend to more people than you might imagine.

There is a weekly check-in and prayer time on Wednesdays at 5 p.m. Kay Okoli sends out the weekly zoom details for that. In addition, many of us are checking in with people in a regular way.

Our choir still gathers weekly (online, of course). Your parish administrator is a faithful and dedicated "connector and facilitator" for all paperwork and publishing.

The faithfulness of committee members and the finance people for St. Giles is humbling and very encouraging to see. Updates on our finances are coming.

The Community garden flourishes.

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## July Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Birthdays:

- 3 Jan Hutchins-DeWitt
- 9 Glorian Simon
- 26 Jim Brooks



### Anniversaries:

- 6 Bill & Barbara Perley
- 16 Martha McGuire & Roy Tambourine



### ***Cont'd from Pg. 2 (Message from Tom):***

I know this sounds a bit like a laundry list of praise—what a wonderful problem to have!—but it's all true.

Yet there are things missing. While Jocelyn and others send out material and recommendations, we don't have an adult class. Our other groups are not meeting either for safety reasons. These are hard—but correct—decisions. Obviously, we are not gathering for worship. But we are St. Giles still—in diaspora for a time—but a lovely, healthy congregation still.

I can add that other congregations in our diocese are facing their challenges and maintaining their ministries as well, even though some have put off re-opening for some time, (St. Gregory's won't open until 2021 sometime, that Vestry decided).

What is the future? Short term, we don't know. Longer term, it seems clear to me that because we are being so deliberate and careful, we shall be able to gather safely again, and we'll all be able to rejoice with one another.

My prayer now is like this:

“ O Lord, the giver and preserver of all life, receive our thanks and praise for bringing us safely to this new day and for all the blessings of this life; uphold our efforts to maintain and extend the ministry of your church, especially St. Giles, and grant us your comfort and peace to sustain us in our separation from your altar and our fellowship; give your hope and courage and grace to the doctors and nurses and all health care workers as they deal with this terrible public medical crisis, inspire the researchers in their investigations, and sustain the courage and clear thinking of officials who must make decisions that effect us all; we ask your comfort for those who grieve, healing for those who are ill, and that you would preserve us all from unnecessary exposure to this illness; this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

*God's peace and joy; TCH Scott*

## Music Notes

The St. Giles Choir has met periodically during the pandemic on Thursday nights at 7:30 using the Zoom format. We are all very happy to see each other and visit during this period without collective singing.

If we can't sing, maybe we can ring!! To that end, I am pleased that Alex Williams is working on a complete maintenance/restoration of our set of Flemish handbells. Jim Robb (deceased) used to maintain them, but that was quite a few years ago. Speaking of ringing, it was wonderful that the tower bells were rung in April at the Easter Vigil and on Easter morning. St. Giles is still here!!

I will continue to send out music selections each Sunday while we are in quarantine. I am rather pleased at the variety of fine music offerings that I have been able to find on the internet, and I hope that you find this a blessing each Sunday.

*With love and prayers,  
Jim Brown*





## Sr. Warden Report:

Greetings All Saint Gileans,

So much has happened in our world since the last issue of The Bells (March 2020). I know I've said this before, but it bears repeating: "I had no idea what I was getting into," when I agreed to stay on as senior warden this year.

We have all discovered that life without our Sunday service is different but not devoid of meaning and spiritual enrichment. Thanks to our leaders, Tom, Jim Brown and Kay, we have been provided with resources for attending "virtual" services, listening to beautiful music and reading engaging and thoughtful homilies.

Other members of our community have also stepped up to provide "church activities," which include:

- a recent meditation labyrinth walk (organized by Tracey)
- a 3-D tour of the renovated rectory (shared by Bob)
- social justice news (shared by Jocelyn)
- weekly "chat and prayer" meetings (organized by Kay and Tracey)
- search committee meetings
- vestry meetings
- community garden growing

Working in partnership with GoGreenNorthbrook, our green ministry team celebrated (a late) Earth Day on June 7 by planting three young Black Tupelo Trees in the front yard of the church. As you drive in, the three saplings are on your left. They'll grow to 30 feet tall, and their leaves will turn orange-red in autumn. (Note: The GoGreen group procured these beautiful trees from a nursery in Monee and donated them to St. Giles. These were the first trees that GoGreen has planted this year as a part of its "Plant a 100 trees in 2020" initiative.)

Bob Schultz and his contractors finished "phase two" of the rectory renovations, and the place looks almost like a new home. Bob and his son Rob put together and shared a 3-D film presentation of the interior, so we can all take a "virtual look" inside of our "new" rectory. Great work, Bob!

The Vestry will discuss with Father Tom the Bishop's church re-opening guidelines at our June 16 meeting. We hope to announce our re-opening plans very soon.

It may feel like an eon has passed, but it was only a few months ago that our choir performed on Evensong. It was a lovely service and the music was, um, heavenly.

If anybody would like to attend our next Vestry meeting, please check Baby Bells or contact me for the Zoom meeting ID and password. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday July 21, 2020. Also, please talk with Vestry members about any issues or concerns you may have regarding our modest but amazing parish.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
James Brooks, Senior Warden*

## **Our Community Garden Continues to Flourish**

As we begin planting in our 12<sup>th</sup> year of growing, the St. Giles Community Garden of Feedin' is happy to welcome new gardeners this season.

Five new families will be growing and harvesting their own produce this summer in the church's backyard. The garden has three plots dedicated to the Northfield Food Pantry, and we have a team of volunteers who pick produce and then deliver it to the food pantry every week.

Our garden has grown from 12 plots in 2009 to the 29 plots we have today. Gardeners this year are planting a wide ranges of vegetables and fruit:

- watermelon and strawberries and tomatoes
- basil, beans, broccoli, chard, "cukes", dill, kale, lettuce, peas, pumpkin, summer squash, winter squashes, zucchini and more!

Visitors have been dropping in to look at and enjoy our peaceful community garden and crab apple trees. They have also been walking our meditation labyrinth and memorial garden.



## Exodus with Ellie ... and Zoom to the Moon! *(Submitted by Tracey Solano)*

Ellie and I took a walk at Techny Prairie mid-May. It was right after much rain and some flooding. Wow, how the frogs called out to us! We listened, laughing, and then chatted on about, e-learning, tech troubles and, several laps later, about the possibility of a labyrinth walk at church.

"If we can't do it at St. Giles because of Coronavirus restrictions, then we can just do it at my house. I'll draw a labyrinth with chalk on the driveway," I croaked to Ellie, who jumped at the chance.

So we floated the idea to Kris, Leslie, and some others via email. Then we caught up with Kay on Zoom. We kept hopping along until our idea became real.

Okay, enough silly amphibian allusions. To the moon instead!

You nature lovers will be hoppy (oops) to know that our group met at church on Friday, June 5, the night of the full Strawberry Moon. The reality of COVID-19 and Recovery Phase 3 in Illinois meant we had to limit attendance to 10 and wear face coverings. It felt a bit awkward but we gave each other extra time and space and adjusted.

Coming 10 days after the death of George Floyd, and what followed in the wake, the time together seemed even more sorely needed than the planners had expected. The simple service combined some of the readings for Evening Prayer with meditations on consensus (<http://globalhealingresponse.com/ghr-2014-q1/>). We took turns reading and sharing open-heartedly our mixed emotions and our hope in God, who "ordained the moon and the stars" (Ps. 8).

We walked the labyrinth at sunset and closed with prayer. Until we meet again, walk in Love wherever you may be.

*What spirit animal do you see? Ellie Bonebrake imitates a blue heron at Techny Prairie - May 15*



*What separates Heaven and Earth? Electrical Power line along Techny Ave. on June 5.*



### ***A prayer shared at the labyrinth walk —***

O God,  
after all the time we've spent together  
I never thought it would come to this--  
an immense chasm carved between us,  
holding the empty echoes of my prayer.

All that remains of my worn out cries  
is a tiny voice that longs for you.

Where are you God when I need you most?  
Why won't you fix my life for me?  
I need you to get me out of this darkness.  
I demand that you give me extended bliss.

But my demands and my desires go unheeded  
and all I hear is a tender Voice  
whispering repeatedly "I am with you"

— Joyce Rupp





## The Latest from CROP Walk:

*From George Miller:* Thanks to everyone who participated in last year's Crop Walk to End World Hunger. Results were excellent both locally and nationally. Here, we raised over \$35,000, the most ever by walkers. We placed 35<sup>th</sup> in the US, and our brothers and sisters from Northfield Community Church were #3 in the country. Speaking of the country, over \$7.6 million was donated from 800 walks with 100,000 walkers. Church World Service continues to bring people together with effective programs with great longer-term effects. This year's walk will be held on October 18<sup>th</sup>, at St. David's in Glenview. We don't know yet whether we will do a physical or virtual "walk". May God's work among us be praised!

## St. Giles GREEN TEAM Partners with GoGreenNorthbrook:

Sunday June 7, our Green Team celebrated a late Earth Day by planting three young Black Tupelo trees in the lawn in front of St. Giles. The trees had been graciously donated to St. Giles by GoGreenNorthbrook, an environmental group. GoGreenNorthbrook is spearheading an initiative to plant 100 trees in Northbrook.

"These are the first trees we've planted this year," said Clare Poupard, a member of GGN. She and other GGN members were present on Sunday to help with the digging and watering of the three young trees.

"The Black Tupelos are beautiful trees whose leaves turn orange-red in the fall," said Claire Thoms, another GGN member and also a licensed arborist who was on hand to help with the planting.

Our Green Team was represented by Meredith and James Brooks, who assisted with digging and carting chunks of sod to the back yard of the church for disposal.

James contacted GGN last December to inquire about the tree planting initiative, and in April, walked around the St. Giles grounds with Meredith, Claire Thom and Audi Montalvo, another arborist. Clare and Audi developed a plan for planting new trees, and the three Black Tupelos became our first transplants. GGN bought the trees from a nursery in Monee and donated them to St. Giles. Claire Thom and Audi also donated their time and expertise to prepare the planting plan for St. Giles. We are grateful to all of them for their generosity and contributions to help improve St. Giles' property.


Our Green Team hopes to plant more trees this year in an effort to create a more welcoming space and also to make our property more eco-friendly.

*Planting our new Black Tupelo trees - (L to R) Bruce Poupard, Clare Poupard, Sharon Brown, Audi Montalvo, Claire Thoms, Jim Brooks, Bob Schultz, Bob Brown (taking picture). Photo by Meredith Brooks.*





# ST. GILES EPISCOPAL CHURCH • JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Zoom "Pray and Chat" - 5 PM	2	3 Office Closed	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY 
5 5 Pentecost	6 Office Closed	7	8 Zoom "Pray and Chat" - 5 PM	9	10 Office Closed	11
12 6 Pentecost	13 Office Closed	14	15 Zoom "Pray and Chat" - 5 PM	16	17 Office Closed	18
19 7 Pentecost	20 Office Closed	21 7 PM—Virtual Vestry Meeting	22 Zoom "Pray and Chat" - 5 PM	23	24 Office Closed	25
26 8 Pentecost	27 Office Closed	28	29 Zoom "Pray and Chat" - 5 PM	30	31 Office Closed	



Photos of the Rectory renovations by John Hanzel.

**Kitchen—before, during, and after!**

(also see last page).



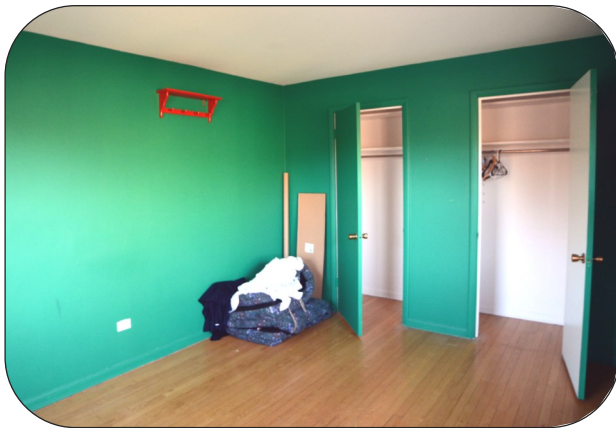




St. Giles Church  
3025 Walters Avenue  
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[www.saint-giles.org](http://www.saint-giles.org)  
Look for us on Facebook!

Time-Sensitive Material



*Bedroom, before & after*



*New flooring  
in front hall*



*Tub in master bath,  
before  
and  
after*

