

ST. JOHN'S HERALD

St. John's Episcopal Church
518.274.5884 | 146 1st St., Troy, NY 12180

JUNE - JULY 2020

SPECIAL INTEREST ARTICLES

Ministry feature:
Damien Center
Ministry feature:
Virtual Ministry
Interview:
Shawna & Nick Mizer

INDIVIDUAL HIGHLIGHTS

Editor's Note	2
Damien Center Dinners	3
Empty Property?	4
Interview	5
A Look Back	6
Children & Youth	8
Virtual Ministry	9
Deacon's Den	10
Serving Our Neighbors	11
DOK	13
Memorial Page	14
Digital Giving	15
How Are You Faring?	16

A Message from the Rector

In his spiritual classic *Beginning to Pray*, Anthony Bloom speaks about humility. The root of humility is *humus*, Latin for fertile ground. Good soil becomes rich through its ability to take all that is thrown on it and break it down into something that will nourish new life.



Much has been thrown at the church lately. And yet, we have been able to break down our former patterns and rework them into something that is giving new life to our community and the world around us. We have moved to online worship, and parish leaders have attended webinars. Our Vestry and Finance Committee meetings, Coffee Hours, Talent Show, Bible studies, Daughters of the King meetings, and Wednesday Morning Prayer services all continue using Zoom. Our thrift store has begun to receive donations again, the Damien dinners have continued as parishioners drop off their contributions curbside, we continue to distribute bread and groceries, and the Haiti ministry continues to deliberate. Properties are being renewed and the grounds are lovingly attended. Communication continues well through this fabulous newsletter and frequent e-blasts that connect us with one another and the church around the world. And even our chimes broadcast the living reality of God still living among us.

We have been given a singular opportunity to embrace new technology and use our strengths in new ways. But in the midst of all of this stands the humble telephone. Deacon Paul is making his way through the directory for a second time now, calling each parishioner. I love it when I hear from you, or get the

(continued p.2)

A Message from the Rector (continued)

chance to give you a call. The sound of your voice alone is enough to make my day.

If you are feeling sidelined during this time of increased technology, know that the telephone is still a great tool for connecting with one another. When we use it, our bonds strengthen as surely as when we use the latest technology platform.

It breaks through this isolation with its familiar ease. So let's all stay in touch. A year from now we might well say, "We were acquaintances before the coronavirus hit, but we became fast friends during the pandemic. Our hearts burned within us as we walked together with God along the road."

Mother Judith+

A Note from the Editor

The changes in our lives during the two months since the last edition of St. John's Herald have been a study in contrasts, as we find ourselves in the midst of circumstances both remarkable and unremarkable, abnormal and status quo, unusual and usual. The onset of COVID-19 does not represent an unprecedented, unheard-of event, albeit a most unusual one. And our response to its devastation and loss does not represent new and uncharacteristic actions, rather the reaping of a harvest of good fruits lovingly tended.

Many of us were surprised to learn that a similar epidemic ravaged the world a hundred years ago. In the "A Look Back" section (pages 6 and 7), Donna Rem tells about the impact of the Spanish Flu of 1918 on the churches in the Capital District area. Upon the resumption of services at the Cathedral of All Saints, Bishop Richard H. Nelson expressed sentiments remarkably similar to those being expressed today as leaders try to find the proper balance between "the desire of the congregation to have the comfort and help of religion in these trying times" and "the danger of spreading infection."

Jason Smith tells us in the "Virtual Ministry" section (pages 9 and 10) that in early March, before COVID-19 necessitated that church gatherings be halted, he

was already thinking about ways to use the church's audio system to record not only Mtr. Judith's sermons but the entire service to be uploaded to the internet. Soon the restrictions of the pandemic made the availability of these recordings a priority and Jason's role grew tremendously—springing from skills and efforts already in place. Likewise, in the Rector's Message to us, Mtr. Judith describes how our existing ministries adapted their usual delivery methods to be able to continue providing core services during this time of disruption.

The counterbalance to the devastating loss we contend with now is the good soil whose seeds we faithfully planted and nurtured long before this pandemic hit. Katie Brillat tells us in the "Children and Youth Ministries" section (page 8) that in keeping with present restrictions, she hopes to offer families—individually—the opportunity to explore the new Catechesis of the Good Shepherd curriculum. In this way, entire households can be nurtured and grow together. Our apparent disruptions can instead reap benefits.

May we continue to faithfully cultivate and tend to all entrusted to our care. ✚

Jennifer Firth

A Reflection on Damien Center Dinners

Dale Nelson



"For about 3 years we have been providing tasty and varied meals for our South Troy neighbors at the Damien Center."

St. Francis Fellowship Damien Center Dinners Provide Food and Fellowship

Once a month, parishioners from St. John's, St. Paul's and St. Anthony's churches (the St. Francis Fellowship) work together to create and serve a meal to the folks at the Damien Center, a Troy Area United Ministry (TAUM) initiative that includes those affected by HIV/AIDs and other serious illnesses as well as the food-insecure in the neighborhood and beyond.

For about three years we have been providing tasty and varied meals for our South Troy neighbors at the Damien Center. Three-star meals have included Gary's meat loaf, Lois' take on Chicken a la St. John's, Carol's brownies and Brian's mac and cheese. We have enjoyed making friends with our counterparts from other parishes as well as those in the South Troy community. It is heartwarming when we meet them again at the Bread Ministry and Community Breakfast.

During this time of lockdown and social distancing, we have devised the method of our wonderful team making their contributions at home and bringing them curbside to be placed in take-out containers and distributed outside the building. Often recipients will take several containers home to their family. We are grateful to be continuing this ministry when it is most needed; we look forward to seeing our Damien Center friends and sharing fellowship and delicious meals with them again when the lockdown is lifted. Please join us; for information contact Dale! ✚

Schedule of Weekly Virtual Worship, Study, and Social Opportunities

Sunday Morning	Bible Study (Zoom) Holy Eucharist Rite II Children's Sermon Coffee Hour (Zoom)	8:45 a.m. Host: Eileen Manz Available by 9:00 a.m. (YouTube) Available by 9:00 a.m. (YouTube) 11:00 a.m. Host: Robin Prout
Tuesday	Bible Study (Zoom)	11:00 a.m. Host: Gail Richardson
Wednesday	Morning Prayer (Zoom)	9:00 a.m. Host: Sue Rielly

All are welcome! To connect with a Zoom meeting, please contact the office. YouTube channel links are found on our website at [Worship Online](#).

Our “Empty” Property Is a Beehive

Dave Hunn

While our response to COVID leaves our spaces *relatively* empty, our absence means we took on projects that would normally have to be “fit in” to a busy schedule. Here’s an update of what is happening in Properties in mid-May 2020.

Disinfecting	We have new information resources on COVID facility care; both our Sexton, Albert Ferro, and our weekly cleaner, Kevin Salvi, have gone through church and parish house to implement those practices. Our sexton cleans key areas, including bathrooms, several times a week. We continue to learn more about this critical function.
Office Needs	Our computers are nearing obsolescence. A study group including Mtr. Judith and Christiann will be sending out a bid package in May. This project is our highest priority for June.
Gym Floor	This has undergone a transformation and it is now gleaming. It was not refinished to bare wood, but underwent a “deep buff” and multiple recoatings.
Painting	The sills and insets of the stained-glass windows along the north and south wall were prepared and painted. By June, all door frames, and multiple radiators and window frames will have been scraped, prepped, and painted.
First Floor Hall & Kitchen	These floors have been stripped, re-waxed and buffed. They sparkle.
Pew Repairs	Dale Baxter continues his carpentry work fixing issues with sagging seats, broken braces, loose pew ends, kickboards, and nails.
Chime Tower	In preparation for a 150 th Anniversary, lighting in the tower is being improved, and additional safety holds for ascent and descent are being added. The “tolling” function of the tenor (largest) bell via rope is being restored. Andy Mace is overseer of this historic effort, assisted by Brian Thomson and Albert Ferro.
Parking Lot Bollard Covers	At least three parishioners have damaged their cars on the steel stanchions that “guard” the entrance walls of the parking lot. We have installed big yellow bollards (yellow tubes) to increase the visibility of these stanchions.
Foyer	The entrance to the Parish house has not been welcoming. To improve its appearance, Albert has moved seasonal items, swept, and mopped. The door is going to be refinished. We are exploring lighting to give it a warm glow at night.

So . . . St. John’s is a large, beautiful historic structure with many architectural assets and a commercial level infrastructure. Put another way, St John’s is an old, large, high-maintenance structure where deterioration is constant and repair costs high. Our infrastructure is complex and must be maintained by licensed professionals.

What is remarkable is that somehow the parish has always responded and filled the need, from our nationally known Tiffany windows to our lowliest plumbing leak. We are blessed. ✚

Interview with Shawna & Nick Mizer



Q: Where did you grow up?

A: Nick: I grew up in southern Michigan, but my family spent a couple of years in Colorado as well.

Shawna: I grew up in San Antonio, and then my family moved to Utopia, Texas in the hill country

north of San Antonio—they call it the Swiss Alps of Texas.

Q: What was your religious life like growing up? Were you “religious” as a child?

A: Nick: When I got to my senior year of high school, I was very burned out on evangelicalism for a variety of reasons. So much of my faith experience was based on hyper-emotionalism and trying to pursue impossible, self-destructive standards of what it meant to be “holy.” The teachings from Teen Mania had me only listening to “Christian” music, for example, and I got to a point where I really only saw my non-Christian “friends” as potential converts rather than real people to love. It was a very anti-sacramental view of reality, even though I didn’t know what that meant at the time—instead of seeing Christ in the world around me, I had been trained to only see threatening impurities. The year I spent at the Teen Mania internship, ironically, was when I started to move away from all of that. Shawna and I, along with a group of friends, started questioning that line of thinking and trying to figure out a better way. When I got to college, I visited an “Anglican Catholic” church in California, and I immediately knew that I’d found a home in the Anglican tradition. It was the embracing of a sacramental worldview that made the difference for me, realizing that the presence of Christ in the sacrament doesn’t depend on me, and in fact that the Word is being communicated to me through the whole of creation all the time.

Shawna: My journey was pretty similar. I got tired of the idea that holiness and salvation was dependent on me, the whole guilt culture of evangelicalism. I constantly felt like we were reinventing the wheel, instead of connecting with Christians who came before us. In finding the Anglican tradition I

connected with the prayer book, the idea of the Church universal all praying together, and the presence of God being independent of our feelings.

Q: You recently moved to the Troy area. How has the transition been? What do you like most?

A: We fell in love with Troy immediately, and feel blessed every day that God brought us here. With St. John’s in particular, it felt like home from the moment we stepped into our first coffee hour. We love that Troy is so walkable, we love the beautiful historic buildings, we love the sense of community. One of our personal favorite spots is actually the falls at Burden Pond, by Campbell and Vandenburg. There’s something about Troy that’s hard for us to put our finger on exactly, except to say that it’s a place that wants to be lived in the same way that we want to live in a place.

Q: How have your lives been during COVID-19? What has been especially difficult? Any joyful surprises?

A: It’s funny, because you see a lot of things online saying “Now that you have all this extra time...” and give you a new book recommendation or home project. We’ve actually been more busy since COVID-19. We have both been teaching online, and the girls have their schoolwork too, so at times there’s some jockeying for position when it comes to computers. We try to get outside and enjoy the weather, and go for a walk around the neighborhood most days. This is our first Spring in Troy, so we get joyful surprises all the time right now, with all the new blossoms coming in.

Q: What are your favorite things to do?

A: We love cooking, especially for other people; reading in the yard; exploring the area; and playing board games.

Q: Is there something about you we don’t know that you’d like to share?

A: Although Shawna grew up in San Antonio, she was born down by the border with Mexico, which might be why she likes Cumbia and other Spanish music so much.

Nick wanted to be an astronaut when he was a kid. ✚

A Look Back

Donna Rem

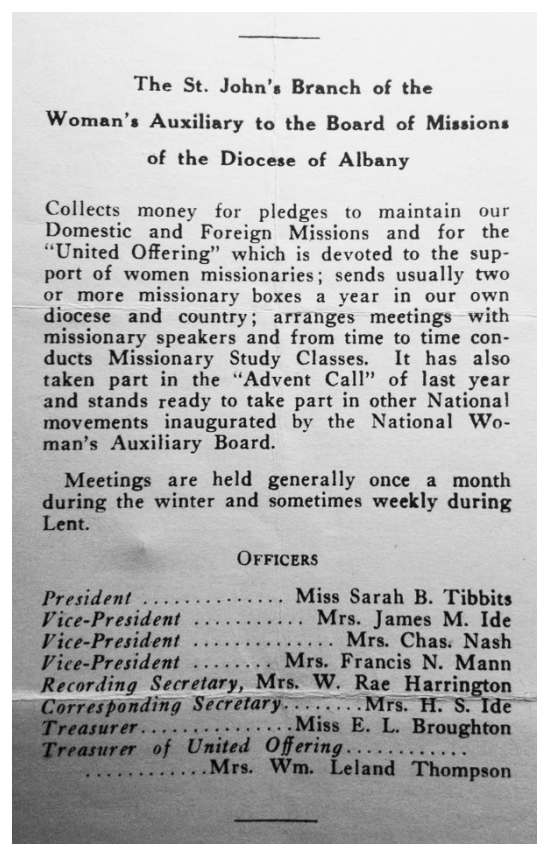
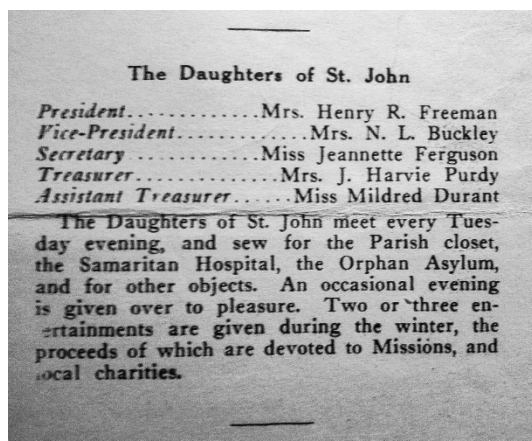
After searching through St. John's archival materials, only one direct reference to the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 was found. It is from a secretary's notebook recording the 1918-1919 Roll for the Daughters of St. John. In place of attendance tallies for the dates of Oct. 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5, a notation reads "No meetings on account of Epidemic." Another notebook kept by the recording secretaries for the Woman's Auxiliary offers a brief reflection near the close of their "1918 Annual Report" submitted by Hazel Payne Stone, "... a year so filled with conflicting interests, sorrow, and mixed demands-

In the church register, the Reverend Dr. Henry Freeman recorded the number of deaths as 27 in the year 1918 and 19 in the year 1919. Although not given for all, the cause of death is documented for most individuals. Influenza is not mentioned, however pneumonia which would often occur as a result of that disease is listed as cause for six of the 1918 deaths and for three of the deaths in 1919. For the preceding and following years surrounding the epidemic, the register shows 17 and 13 deaths, respectively. We can sadly assume that the Spanish Flu is responsible for the 53.3% increase between these two-year totals.

Internet research on the impact of the 1918 epidemic on St. John's, revealed facts about the Capital District and the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. An article that appeared in *The Record* on October 11, 1918 stated, "... The city (Troy) has shut down its schools and movie theaters but so far plans to let churches run their full Sunday schedules except for Sunday School." In comparison, Schenectady and Albany churches were closed. The State Health Department on October 24th reported the number of influenza deaths in Troy to be 154, Albany to be 226, and Schenectady to be 311.

I speculate that today while facing the Coronavirus pandemic, our church and her people have much in common with the St. John parishioners who experienced the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918. It is speculation because from our archival sources, we have little evidence beyond those of a greater loss of life and briefer restrictions on church attendance. Hopefully, we will be mindful to leave future generations of parishioners a more complete picture regarding St. John's church family and the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic.

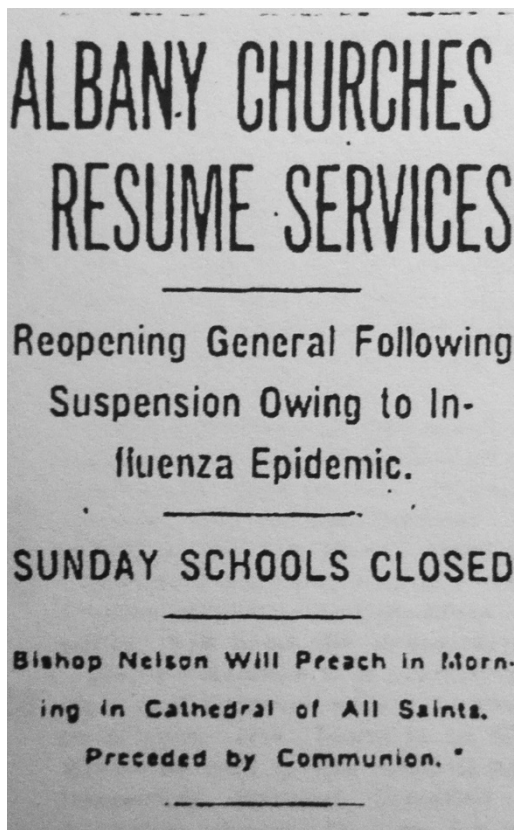
These women's groups are summarized in the *St. John's Church Advent Bulletin* dated November 30, 1919.



A Look Back (continued)

October 25th and 26th headings are from the *Albany Knickerbocker Press*.

Due to poor legibility, a transcription was made of the first article quoting Bishop Nelson and is as follows:



The ban on church services in Albany having been removed by the health officials, most of the churches in Albany will resume regular services on Sunday. In many of the churches, notably the Episcopal churches, special precautions will be taken to avoid danger of influenza contagion. Bishop Richard H. Nelson, having issued a proclamation showing how such danger may be avoided.

"The clergy of the Episcopal churches," Bishop Nelson's communication reads, "have obeyed the orders of the bureau of health and will continue to cooperate in all measures which may be necessary to the public welfare. In determining the measure with which they will avail themselves of the permission to hold services on Sunday, October 27, the rectors of the various churches will act according to their own discretion."

Will Attend in Groups

"In announcing Sunday services at the Cathedral of All Saints, I am moved by due regard for the desire of the congregation to have the comfort and help of religion in these trying times, as well as to offer their united prayers for all who are suffering from war and pestilence. At the same time I feel that the danger of spreading infection must be considered and it has seemed wise to me to omit the afternoon services next Sunday and to arrange the morning service in such a way that groups of people may attend at different hours. This will lessen the number of those who will come together at any one time and the short services will be convenient to those whose special duties at this time have interrupted the usual order of their lives."

"There will be plain celebration of the holy eucharist at 7:30 and 9 o'clock and a choral celebration at 11 o'clock. At the last named hour, I propose to address the congregation on matters which I have set forth in a pastoral letter to the clergy of the diocese. In particular I shall explain the practice of administering the communion by "intinction." This is designed to obviate any danger of communicating infection by the use of the communion cup or chalice. This practice has been authorized and followed in places where the prevalence of tuberculosis has made it advisable and I feel that the epidemic of influenza justifies me in giving a wide authorization in a method which has been employed for a long time in the orthodox churches of the east, and which may find a permanent place in the usage of the Episcopal church."

Children and Youth Ministries

Katherine Brillat

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

I am excited to announce that St. John's is adopting a new hands-on curriculum called the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Mother Judith eloquently described this program in her sermon on May 3, 2020—fittingly, as the Gospel reading included the Good Shepherd parable.

The curriculum has been carefully and lovingly designed for three age groups ranging from 3 years old to 6th grade. The high-quality materials used are much more than simple, playful toys. These sets of materials (presentations) are displayed individually in a dedicated, sacred space called an Atrium. The presentation will invite the child to work with the materials, allowing the child to ponder their own personal relationship with Jesus. Mtr. Judith has an

abundance of these resources, including items used in worship (an altar, elements of The Eucharist and baptism), and items relating to the proclamation of faith (parables, prophecies, geography of Israel, and the life of Christ).

They are extraordinary!

We are transforming the large Church School Room into St. John's very own Atrium! I know you'll be as impressed as I was after visiting a few Atria. In keeping with the pandemic restrictions, it is our hope to bring in one family at a time to experience this joyful journey. We will also be offering our own training and invite *anyone* to take it, NOT just those interested in working with children. It is my understanding that the increase in faith after going through the training is a blessing in and of itself. Stay tuned for updates! Peace and good health! ✚



Virtual Ministry: Creating Content for Viewing Online

Jason Smith

Given the unprecedented times in which we are living, it seems to me that any sort of normalcy will go a long way towards our mental well-being. For some of us, being able to be a part of our Sunday services, in any way, would certainly be helpful. As the de-facto keeper of the church audio system at St. John's, in early March it became clear that there might be a way for me to help. Around that time, Mother Judith mentioned that she had been recording her sermons onto a handheld personal audio recorder, which could then be uploaded to the internet for parishioners to hear after the service. My thought was that maybe we could do even better.

Years ago, a generous anonymous donor provided the means to upgrade our audio system, which included the installation of a digital recorder. That recorder had never been used, primarily because the instructions had never been passed down to a current caretaker. Having a comfort level with electronics and sound equipment, I offered to investigate, and was able to determine that we could use this recorder to capture audio from any microphone we regularly use. We now had a way to record the service audio, but Mother Judith and I then wondered: Could we do video? So many modern churches now offer some form of live video of their services. Could we do the same? Further investigation revealed that, while we had the audio system that could probably suffice, we have absolutely no video capabilities, and no robust way to broadcast live audio plus video to the internet. So it appeared that we were stuck. But maybe we could "fake" it...

The current environment of Social Distancing and prohibition of non-essential gatherings makes coming together for our usual Sunday mornings essentially impossible and certainly not advisable. However, we thought maybe we could pre-record a video of the service, and post that video to a location easily accessible to our parishioners on Sunday mornings.

Maybe we could include images from in and around our beloved St. John's, to help viewers feel even more at home while watching. Among the questions to be answered were: Do we have a video camera? How can we get the great audio from our microphone system into the final video? Do we have a way to create a single video from clips of audio, video, and photos?

The current setup we're using seems to be providing a worthy solution. By taking down one of the sanctuary speakers and adding a wire so that it can be placed right next to the camera we are able to get decent sound quality while recording video. And the "camera" is actually an iPhone! It turns out that Apple loads a pretty decent video processing application onto the phone, which also allows me to upload the video to YouTube after I'm done processing it. So, for now, our one-of-a-kind solution is in place. And there are just enough microphones for a minimum number of servers—our "e-Liturgy Team"—to create the content you've been viewing while remaining "appropriately distant" from each other. We've been filming our services the day before the video goes "live" to our parish (and the world, for that matter), and have really started to find a comfort level with providing you a means to attend church services without actually being able to be there.



Virtual Ministry (continued)

As an engineer, however, I often find myself in the role of a “fixer”; in this case, I feel like I can probably “fix it” and make what we’re providing even better. At some point in the near future, we will be able to resume attending services in person. However, there will likely always be a need to bring what we do to those who cannot come to church, or who may not be comfortable in public for some reason. In recent history, this would mean an audio recording of the sermon. But I envision the ability to provide a video feed of the live service in its entirety, on Sunday mornings, starting at 10 a.m. as we always do.

The complete solution is not yet clear to me, may not be fully implementable, and will likely mean some new technology for the church if it is to happen, but we’ll eventually figure it out. In the meantime, it is my hope that the “virtual ministry” we are providing brings you a sense of normalcy and a little slice of your St. John’s “home” on Sunday mornings. If you want to access our service videos, but are unable to do so, please contact Mother Judith or the church office. +

From the Deacon's Den

As I write this for *The Herald*, I hope the pandemic is over and we all came out of this period of time healthy and happy. I sat in the office today with Mother Judith, sitting six feet apart and both of us wearing masks, when I came up with this topic to relate to you. I said to her I finally realized that this pandemic has brought all of us to our knees (pun intended), and there were certain things that I missed about being in community with all of you. What exactly did I miss?

Well, we can start with worshiping with all of you. Although the worship team provided you with a service online each and every Sunday, it just wasn’t the same without all of you being there. I missed sharing the sign of peace; as you know, I always tried to reach out to each and every one of you, as did James. (He would pass out candy if you had a frog in your throat.)

I missed coming down to Church each and every day to sit in the office and discuss with Mother Judith what was going on at St. John’s, and what if anything was needed for the spiritual or physical health of the parish.

I missed bugging Christiann about whatever I could think of.

I missed coming down each and every Saturday and visiting with our other St. John’s community that doesn’t necessarily attend Church every Sunday.

I missed going down to the thrift shop and visiting with the ladies, not to mention our cashier Michael Salway.

And last but not least, I miss talking to my friend Bill Muller; we would talk every day before and during his illness and long trip home to our Lord and Savior.

So I ask you: what did you miss during this very trying time?

Many blessings to all of you. You were missed. +

Deacon Paul



In Service to Our Neighbors

So much has changed during this time of face masks and social distancing that it is easy to forget that we are still doing many of our ministries but in a different form.

Bread Ministry	Panera suspended donations for a time. When they resumed, Carol Daniel initially picked up and packaged the bread. Then, Mother Judith began picking up and packaging the bread and pastry donation to freeze and then distribute to those who contact the office for help with food. Surplus goes to a food pantry in Valatie.
Shepherd's Storehouse Pantry	We have seen increased use of our pantry for non-perishable items and Price Chopper gift cards. Carol Daniel has been shopping and pre-packing items in bags for the office to give to those in need. We also made financial donations to the food pantries at the Roarke Center and TAUM, which have been able to continue operation during the pandemic.
Thrift Shop	The Shop resumed accepting donations on Thursday, May 14 th . Donations may be brought to the gym via the ramp on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; gloves and masks must be worn, and these items are not accepted: books, CDs, VHS tapes or DVDs, furniture, or knives . Thrift Shop staff have begun sorting items; it is not known when the Shop will be able to reopen.
Damien Center Dinners	Please see the article on p. 3.
Masks	Cindy Schmehl has organized a large network of mask-makers. Jennifer Firth and Linda Muller are participating, and bringing these masks to the office for distribution to those in need.
Meneely Chime	The chime is being played every Sunday morning by Andy Mace or Lydia Smith. A bell is tolled every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. to celebrate the heroism of frontline workers, thanks to Albert Ferro. He also keeps track of when someone in our county has died, and the bell is tolled then as well. Mother Judith has learned to play the chime and will be treating the neighborhood to noon concerts.
St. John's Memorial Garden	The urns were freshened up for Easter, and have since been replanted with pansies. The sidewalk tree well near our entrance is flourishing with new plants. Some garden maintenance is being done each Thursday morning. Thanks to Jennifer Firth, Danyelle Brownlee, Wendy Ide, Lois Hodkinson, and Gail Richardson.

We continue to be grateful for your prayers as we discern what God is calling us to do in the post-COVID-19 era. ✝

In Service to Our Neighbors - Photos

MEMORIAL GARDEN

Jennifer and Danyelle planted lillies. Gail pruned azaleas. Wendy Ide created a lovely tree well.



THRIFT SHOP donations being received by Albert Ferro.



Daughters of the King Partner with Brotherhood of St. Andrew

Jennifer Firth



DOK President

Lilian Soper

cuts the 7- layer
cake (1955)

Like so many others, The Order of the Daughters of the King rapidly embraced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by developing and offering novel ways to maintain relationships and support one another. Saturday, April 4, 2020, was to have been a grand celebration of The Order's 135th anniversary at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection in Manhattan—the place where The Order began in 1885. Instead, the national leadership team moved quickly to prepare a program for the celebration that could be offered live via video-conferencing—a platform allowing Daughters throughout the world to participate. A recording of the celebration is now archived on The Order's YouTube channel. And as far afield as these delivery methods are from what Margaret Franklin and the other founders could have imagined, the guiding sentiment remains the same:

The mission of the Order is the extension of Christ's Kingdom through Prayer, Service, and Evangelism.

A Daughter's commitment to prayer, service, and evangelism resembles that of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew's threefold discipline of prayer, study and service. The Brotherhood (men and boys) began on November 30, 1883 at St. James Episcopal Church in downtown Chicago, just two years before The Order of the Daughters of the King (women and girls) began. Both groups developed from Sunday School classes within their churches and soon partnered together in joint endeavors.

In 1886, the Brotherhood sponsored a resolution to General Convention to sanction the formation of The Order of the Daughters of the King. After that they often hosted display tables, prayer vigils, and Eucharists together at subsequent General Conventions. Members from each group regularly visited each other's Triennial Conventions. On the occasion of The Order's 70th anniversary in 1955, the Brotherhood provided a huge seven-layered cake to the Daughters. For over a century, the two groups partnered together in

Daughters of the King (continued)

St. John's Daughters chapter—The Daughters of the Holy Spirit—have started conducting their monthly meetings via Zoom. The next meeting will be Monday, June 1 at 6:30 p.m. You are welcome to join us.

ministry. But by the beginning of the 21th century, the groups' interaction with one another was less frequent.

Recently, Jeff Butcher, national president of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and Krisita Jackson, national president of The Order of the Daughters of the King, have begun making plans to rekindle the former strong bonds by working together on two initiatives. First, a joint national day of service was planned for April, but that plan has been postponed. Second, they organized shared liturgies and prayer vigils for the National Day of Prayer, May 7. Plans are actively underway for joint activities at their respective Triennial Conventions in June 2021 in Baltimore.

There are three chapters of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the Albany Diocese. For more information about the Brotherhood, please visit their website at <https://www.brothersandrew.net>. +

May She Rest in Peace . . .

*"...I am the
resurrection
and the life..."*

John 11:25



Margaret Rose "Margo" Close
(April 28, 1936 to May 14, 2020)

Margo enjoyed serving others. She was devoted to her husband Charles, her children, and her grandchildren. She taught third grade for 30 years and through her dedication, humor, and love was able to reach even the most challenging students in her class. She and Charles enjoyed traveling together, both domestically and internationally. On a trip to New Zealand, she learned new educational approaches that she brought back to her school in South Glens Falls. Her faith was an important part of her life. We are thankful Margo shared her humor and energetic spirit with us and her perseverance and kindness will inspire us always. +

Digital Giving

Pat Rielly



"...our pews are empty on Sunday with no collection being taken. We must move to "surrogate" or "electronic" ushers to bring our offering to St. John's."

As I prepare this article, we are in the middle of "stay at home" orders due to COVID-19. While we all hope this will end soon, no one knows when normal life will return or what the new normal will look like. St. John's is leading us in worship through YouTube videos and Zoom bible studies. Several other committees are using Zoom or Facetime to conduct the church's business. Yes, regular business continues in new and different ways. However, our pews are empty on Sunday, with no collection being taken. That is why we must move to "surrogate" or "electronic" ushers to bring our offering to St. John's.

Surrogate ushers are our mailmen, essential workers who will collect your contribution and deliver it to the church office.

Electronic ushers include your bank's bill paying service and St. John's on-line giving function through our website (currently under development).

Let's take a basic look at how each would work.

1. **U.S. Mail** (for parishioners under 30) - a service those over 30 have been using for years. A paper check is completed, placed in a stamped envelope, and mailed to the church office.
2. **Bill Pay** - most banks offer this service in which you can set up St. John's as a payee of your donation. The bank will then prepare a check and mail to the church. You should contact your bank for help as options for using this service vary by bank.
3. **Website** - we are adding an on-line giving function to the homepage of our website. This will allow parishioners to make pledge or other donations using **debit and credit cards, or a PayPal account**. We will be using a secure Paypal network to encrypt and protect your personal data. You will not need to open a Paypal account to use this service, unless you want to set up a recurring donation. We will notify you when this is available.

We encourage all our parishioners to use these new "ushers" to fulfill their pledge or make other donations as the expenses to keep our church operating continue uninterrupted by the coronavirus. ✚

How Are You Faring?

We invited parishioners to share their experiences, both challenging and inspiring. We asked for any challenges, revelations, new habits, struggles, and moments of grace experienced during this time.

Losing the restaurant industry, for a cook, is a problem. Thankfully I have other talents. I am usually socially distant, remote even. I am practiced at living small. Much is as it was before. Simple, quiet living. I feel at least somewhat prepared. (Albert Ferro)

I am privileged in the face of this tragic pandemic that is costing lives and livelihood, exposing the injustices of economic disparity, racism, etc. I am retired and safe but busier than ever, thanks to the internet, my books and projects, and streaming classical concerts. Immensely grateful to the heroes. (Dawn Stuart Weinraub)



We have retrieved jigsaw puzzles from the basement, and completed them under the supervision of our cat, Lili! (Gail & George Richardson)

Well, it is very challenging. I miss seeing my friends at St. John's. I miss seeing my children and grandchildren. Going to the grocery store is my highlight of the week. I feel sad for all the students who can't go to school and see their friends and teachers. I also feel sad for all the graduates this year who couldn't participate in their graduation. 2020 is going down in history as a hard time. Prayer is getting Christians through this. I pray for the unemployed who lost their jobs and our country suffering in this year. I am also grateful for more quietness and less distraction. I am happy that St. John's offers Mother Judith's sermon, virtual coffee hour, bible study to get me through this. God is great! (Judi Goyer)

How Are You Faring? (continued)

Tim and I participated in a parade through Coburgh Village, a very large residential retirement community, in Clifton Park on May 6th. The parade was hosted by the Shenendehowa Rotary Club and its purpose was to put smiles on the faces of the residents of the retirement community who have been sheltered in place for many weeks without visits from family and friends.



83 decorated vehicles were in the parade and as soon as we entered the community, we realized just how special this moment was for the residents. They were waiting for us in their windows, doorways, on sidewalks and on the grass near the road. They were in lawn chairs and in wheelchairs. They held handmade signs saying "we miss you," "we love you," and "thank you." Vets proudly wore their military caps and waved American flags. (Cindy Schmehl)



How Are You Faring? (continued)

In response to a challenge from a podcast by Hubbard Hall, called "Writing Like Shakespeare," I wrote two sonnets. They are my very first and they both relate to my response to the coronavirus. I have been writing poetry since I was a girl, particularly during times when no other outlet is sufficient. (Rene McGovern)

Sonnets by Rene J. McGovern, April 15, 2020

renejoy_2000@yahoo.com

Uncharted Distances

I was tired of the petty pressures,
Lack of rhyme or reason in giving.
A virus awakened something to treasure,
Hastened alertness to the exception of living.

Time of great value never be wasted,
Breath and awareness yielding delight.
Rainbows of feelings shout to be tasted;
Flexing muscles of bravery and might.

Social distance gave time for reflection,
Spacing of minds for original thought.
Stepping into uncharted exception,
Encountering frightening treasures unsought.

When Co-vid is over, old time resumed
Forget not what the usual assumed.

Writing Like Shakespeare

A cute young man with dark curls and dark eyes
Spoke about Shakespeare, a writer renown.
He suggested that in writing we make up lies
And tell tall tales, stretching truth up and down.

He told us to carefully read words aloud,
Listen for notions of rhythm and sound.
Sonorous drumming of our proud spirit,
Words moving enraptured readers around.

Write, write, write, he exhorted us too
And borrow or steal from stories of old.
Making from past treasures a novel stew
That when sciddled by us will turn to gold.

New words fashioned by us most heartily
That through Webster's we gain immortality.

Then of course, there is this problem ...



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See us at:

www.stjohnstroy.org

Save the Date

SUNDAY, JUNE 21 AT 11:15 A.M.
PLEASE PLAN TO JOIN US VIA ZOOM
FOR A CHILDREN'S PRESENTATION

A note from Miss Katie—

Lydia Smith and I are assembling a delightful montage of our active children being their most energetic. It is not too late to send along a short clip (about 15 sec.) of **your** lively kids. They don't need to say anything as it will be put to music: a very upbeat song called "Undignified" by The David Crowder Band. We are looking for jumping, running, dancing—the wilder, the better! Put on some crazy music and let them do the rest!

As a fun addition, we would LOVE to get the whole family lip syncing the "La,la,la,la,la,la, HEY!" part. Easy, silly, joyous.

Please, help make this a success. It would be a terrific slice of life for St. John's Archives!

SEPTEMBER 11-13, WE WILL CELEBRATE THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MENEELY CHIME! Details to follow.

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CALENDAR

For the current version of our June Calendar: click [here](#)

For the current version of our July Calendar: click [here](#)

THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IS:

*TO WORSHIP AND GLORIFY JESUS CHRIST,
TO PROCLAIM GOD'S LOVE JOYOUSLY, AND
TO SERVE THE WORLD THROUGH GOD'S GRACE*