



THE *Eagle* NEWSLETTER

St. John's Episcopal Church | Lafayette, Indiana | Summer 2023



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LAFAYETTE

ST. JOHN'S LAFAYETTE

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Parish Staff & Leadership

Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Bishop

Bradley Pace, Rector

Jason Fortner, Curate

Teresa Lohrman, Parish Administrator

Michael Bennett, Director of Music

Becky Dick, Senior Warden

Bruce Johnson, Junior Warden

St. John's is a parish of the Episcopal
Church in the Diocese of Indianapolis.

From the Rector

I used to give out the book *Velvet Elvis* by Rob Bell as a gift to our graduates. I always liked that book because it offers a compelling vision of the Christian faith, especially for people — like recent high school and college graduates — who are often on the fence about their faith. I think it helps with the question: what is it about this faith that will sustain me as I make huge transitions in my life?

For instance, Bell tells the story of jumping on a trampoline in the backyard with his kids. He says they had hours of fun on that trampoline (especially, he adds, when his wife wasn't watching). This led, he says, to a rather obvious observation: "a trampoline only works if you take your feet off the firm, stable ground and jump into the air and let the trampoline propel you upward. Talking about trampolines isn't jumping; it's talking. Two vastly different things."

When it comes to our faith, the same thing is true. We can talk about our faith or we can jump. But the point is really about the jumping. So, Bell writes, "we jump and we invite others to jump with us, to live the way of Jesus and see what happens. You don't have to know anything about the springs to pursue living 'the way.'" Worrying about the details —

getting the finer points of doctrine just right — will not save your soul, sustain you as a Christian, or bring about God's redemptive purposes. What is crucial about living the Christian life is getting on the trampoline and jumping — what is crucial is living the way.

This year, the first Sunday of June is Trinity Sunday, the only feast day in the Church's calendar that celebrates a doctrine or a statement of belief rather than a person or event — like Saint John's or Easter. Trinity Sunday celebrates the triune God; the three-in-one; the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If there are doctrines or beliefs or sets of beliefs that are central to the Christian faith, the Trinity is certainly one of them. Christian belief coalesced around these ideas very early on.

In fairness, the Trinity is really hard to understand. The Bible doesn't offer a lot of help. We can rely on the technical language of the Creeds to try and explain it, but most of us aren't conversant with the ancient metaphysical concepts they employ (the three divine hypostases being contained in the single divine ousia, whatever that means). We could try our hand at any number of metaphors and analogies, but they don't really capture the unique truth of the Trinity. The Trinity is like dancing, or it's like St. Patrick's shamrock — three leaves, yet one shamrock. We could say that the Trinity is the lover, the beloved, and the love that is shared between them. Or we can say that — in the same way that I am a father, a son, and a husband — God is a Father, Son, and ... I don't know ... grandmother. Traditionally, these metaphors have all been shown to be heretical if we push them too far — that they either err too close to a rigid monotheism or too close to polytheism.

In one of my seminary classes, we weren't allowed to appeal to mystery until the last five minutes of

class. But when it comes to the Trinity, and I'm sorry if this seems like a cop-out, but I'm throwing in the towel pretty early. Ultimately, the Trinity is a mystery. As St. Augustine said somewhere, if we can explain it, then it isn't God.

As Rob Bell goes on to say in the book I mentioned above, "The very nature of orthodox Christian faith is that we never come to the end. It begs for more. More discussion, more inquiry, more debate, more questions. It's not so much that the Christian faith has a lot of paradoxes. It's that it is a lot of paradoxes. And we cannot resolve a paradox. We have to let it be what it is."

The Trinity is a paradox. But it is also a wonderful, unfathomable mystery. It shows us that we will never reach the bottom of who and what God is. I like to think it means we will also never reach of the bottom of God's love either. All of this, then, leads us back to the point about the trampoline. The Trinity isn't something to understand. It is the way to connect with God, it is the dance, it is a relationship. We can talk about it, mull it over, ponder, and debate. For someone like me, that's fun. But it isn't the same thing as jumping and living out our faith, living the way. That is why the Trinity isn't really a doctrine to talk about or think about, at least it's not only that. It is an opportunity to encounter the living God — the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer; the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; the God who is here, there, and everywhere all at once. "And so," as Bell reminds us, "we jump and we invite others to jump with us, to live the way of Jesus and see what happens. You don't have to know anything about the springs to pursue living 'the way.'" — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohnslaf.org*

From the Curate

An Outline of Faith, commonly called the Catechism, begins on page 845 of *the Book of Common Prayer*. The rubrics on the preceding page

describe how the Catechism can be used to teach the faith, "to provide a brief summary of the Church's teaching for an inquiring stranger who picks up the

Prayer Book,” and even as the basis for a worship service. I have decided to engage with the Catechism in a series of short Eagle articles during my time here at St. John’s. I suspect these pieces will come sporadically rather than regularly and sequentially. This is the first of the series, so we’ll see what happens next month.

The Catechism is divided into 18 parts. Each section starts with a subject heading and contains a series of questions and answers related to the subject. The first grouping of questions and answers is titled Human Nature (BCP 845). This seems to me a reasonable place to start. An understanding who we are and our condition as human beings informs how we relate to the rest of creation and to God.

We are by nature created beings, part of the whole creation of God. We are creatures made in God’s image, but utterly different from, completely other than, our Creator. This recognition, the realization that we are not God, puts us in our proper and healthy place in the created order. We possess intelligence, wisdom, and reason, but we are neither all-knowing nor all-powerful. Acknowledging that we are made by an eternal God who is completely outside of creation can help us avoid the temptation of putting ourselves in the place of God.

Because we are created in God’s image, we are free. The ability to choose opens nearly limitless options for good and for ill. We are free to live in harmony with creation and with God, but we are also free to choose to do otherwise. Unfortunately, it is in our nature to make wrong choices. By that I don’t mean that we are apt to order the wrong thing for dinner or to miss the right exit on the freeway. We do those things, of course, but I have more deliberate decisions in mind. I’m thinking about how we humans tend to rebel against God and put ourselves in God’s place when we lose sight of our status as created beings. The scriptures make it clear that something is amiss. The bit in Genesis

about Adam and Eve eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil doesn’t explain how we came to be the way we are as much as it points out our human qualities and our tendency to misuse our freedom. Thus, we are reminded at the very beginning of the scriptures that something in our nature urges us to set ourselves up as God and then act like we *are* God, doing whatever we want with supposed impunity.

Questions and Answers from The Catechism

Q. What are we by nature?

We are part of God’s creation, made in the image of God.

Q. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

A. It means that we are free to make choices: to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God.

Q. Why then do we live apart from God and out of harmony with creation?

A. From the beginning, human beings have misused their freedom and made wrong choices.

Q. Why do we not use our freedom as we should?

A. Because we rebel against God, and we put ourselves in the place of God.

Q. What help is there for us?

A. Our help is in God.

Q. How did God first help us?

A. God first helped us by revealing himself and his will, through nature and history, through many seers and saints, and especially the prophets of Israel.

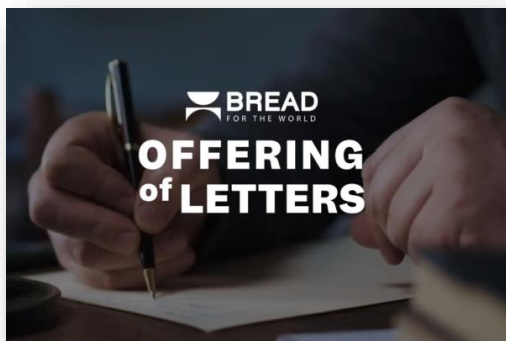
The Catechism eases us into it because it doesn’t want to give away the whole story at once, but there is help for us in our brokenness. Our help is in God,

the Creator who made us and loves us. God began by revealing Godself to us through the wonders of creation, nature, history, and many seers and saints. We Christians find special significance in the way God revealed Godself to and through the prophets of Israel. God seeks to draw us into connection and relationship with Godself through these things, and, skipping ahead quite a bit in the Catechism, ultimately through God's Son Jesus Christ.

Bread for the World Offering of Letters

Each year, Bread for the World holds an Offering of Letters campaign that engages churches in writing personalized letters to Congress on issues related to hunger in the U.S. and around the world. After services on May 7, several folks gathered to write letters asking Senators Mike Braun and Todd Young and Representative Jim Baird to include policies in this year's Farm Bill reauthorization that will bring nutrition access to those that need it most in America.

If you weren't able to write letters at church, you can still participate. Go to www.bread.org/offering-letters/ for more information about this year's offering. After you drop your letters in the mail, email Becky Dick at beckydick.wl@gmail.com and let her know. She's tracking St. John's efforts so we can report them to Bread for the World. – *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*



The summary of this initial section of the Catechism is this: We are created by God, in God's image. Therefore, we are free to choose and love and live in harmony or in discord. We often choose the latter because of our propensity to sin, but there is help and hope in God who wishes to be known by us. There is, of course, much more to the story. I encourage you to turn to page 846 in the Book of Common Prayer to see what happens next. – *Jason Fortner, jason@stjohns-laf.org*

Pentecost Sunday

May 28

“Put on your red dress, baby!” And join Christians around the world as we celebrate Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is the day the Church celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit and the empowering of the Church's life and witness. Wear red to celebrate the fire of God's love and the mission of the Church. Services will be at 8 a.m., 9 a.m. (via Zoom), and 10:30 a.m. We will be joined by our friends from Good Shepherd AND have ice cream sundaes after the 10:30 a.m. service.

Register for Pride Parade and Festival—Saturday, June 10

The Indy Pride Festival is set for Saturday, June 10. The schedule of events includes 9 a.m. Prayer Service at Chatham Commons Park, 10 a.m. parade, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. diocesan booth. Volunteers are needed to march in the parade, staff the diocesan booth at the festival, or both. Registration is required to march in the parade or volunteer for a booth shift. Go to indydio.org/event/indy-pride-parade-and-festival-2/ to register.

Please contact Brendan O'Sullivan-Hale with any questions. – *Brendan O'Sullivan-Hale, brendan@indydio.org*

Worship in the Street

Sunday, July 3

On Sunday, July 2, at 10 a.m., St. John's will join with members from other neighborhood churches for Worship in the Street. Each year, more than 200 people join in this wonderful service celebrating our shared ministry in Greater Lafayette. Come and let us join our friends in Christ as we worship together! — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

Save the Date for Worship in the Park & Parish Picnic

Sunday, August 13, at Happy Hollow Park

The Parish Picnic will take place on Sunday, August 13, at Happy Hollow Park. Look for more details forthcoming. Holy Eucharist will begin at 10:30 a.m. followed by the parish picnic. Please bring a dish to share. — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

Deaths

Lillian Brooks, January 6, 2023
Lillian began attending St. John's in 2022 after moving to the area from Pennsylvania.

Martha (Marty) Mann, April 23, 2023
Marty moved to West Lafayette and attended St. John's briefly before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

Kaye Kleine Ahlbrandt, May 4, 2023
Longtime member of St. John's and of the St. John's choir.

Confirmations & Receptions

Carla Bowerman, Rick Bowerman, and Jim Zimmerman were confirmed, and **Lisa Zimmerman** was received on Sunday, April 23 at St. John's.

Dawn Niccum and Arlene Kusek were received on Sunday, April 30 at St. Paul's in Indianapolis.



Thanks
to our



A Blessing for our Graduates

All wise, all loving God, we thank you for the many gifts you give us; for making us, for saving us in Christ, for calling us to be your people. Look with love on our graduates and bless them as they complete their years of study. May your Spirit strengthen the talents you have bestowed upon them and help them to use these gifts for your glory and for the good of all people. We ask these blessings through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SOLLY CATES

West Lafayette High School

Child of Cresta Coulter-Cates and Colleen Coulter



KATE FORTNER

B.A. in English, Illinois State University

Child of Jason Fortner

LUNA FORTNER

B.A. in English, Illinois State University

Child of Jason Fortner



MICHAEL ENNIS

Elizabethtown High School (Elizabethtown, KY)

Grandchild of Gayle Ennis

JACK KAUFFMAN

Purdue University

Jack will begin graduate school at Indiana University in the fall

Grandchild of Jack and Kathie Basden

MOLLY KAUFFMAN

Harrison High School

Molly will attend Indiana University in the fall

Grandchild of Jack and Kathie Basden

FRANCES SHOOK

B.A., from Drew University

Frances is the child of Rachel and Steve Shook.

HARRY SHOOK

B.A., from Colgate University

Harry is the child of Rachel and Steve Shook.

DEVANEY MOSIER

Harrison High School
Devaney will attend Purdue University in the fall
Child of Angela and Nate Mosier



CURTIS MASON

B. S. in Computer Science, Purdue University
Child of Jacqueline Marina and Franklin Mason

ALEX SCHMIERER

Lafayette Jefferson High School
Alex will attend Ball State University in the fall
Child of Michelle Schmierer

ASHLYN SHORT

B.F.A. in Performing Arts, Clemson University
(Clemson, SC)
Ashlyn has been awarded a post-graduate internship
with Disney Enterprises in Orlando, FL
Grandchild of Sharon Evander

ALANNA SHORT

Lafayette Jefferson High School
Alanna will attend Purdue University in the fall
Grandchild of Sharon Evander

ISAIAH PACE

Independence Academy (Indianapolis)
Isaiah will attend Ball State University in the fall
Child of Katie Elder and Bradley Pace



EMMA ADELIA SHOWALTER

B.S. in Psychological Sciences
In June she will begin work in Employee Experience
with Lincoln Financial Group in Ft. Wayne, IN
Emma is the grandchild of Dennis and Adelia Sorge

**Congratulations
Graduates!!!**



Photos from Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows pastoral visit on Sunday, April 23, 2023.

Diocesan News

Sacred Ground Brings Transformation

Until Bill Hughes of St. Stephen's, Terre Haute participated in Sacred Ground for the first time, he had never learned about the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921. "I had what I thought was an excellent public school education, and went on to earn multiple degrees, and I had never heard or read anything about the destruction that took place that day," Hughes said.

Hughes is one of more than 169 people across the Diocese of Indianapolis who have participated in Sacred Ground, a faith-based series of conversations originally designed to help white people talk with other white people about race and racism. Canon Mariann Scott, Canon for the Circle at Christ Church Cathedral, and the Rev. Deacon Cathy Scott began facilitating Sacred Ground as an online offering in September of 2020.

"We decided to lead in order to foster a deeper awareness of racial issues and reconciliation in the Diocese," Canon Mariann Scott shared. "We wanted to also facilitate the creation of other Sacred Ground groups in our participants' own parishes as a way of starting a groundswell of the program. We have led seven rounds to date."

In reflecting on her experience of Sacred Ground, Deacon Cathy Scott offered: "Through participating as a learner and now as a co-facilitator, my takeaway is that ... we are all learning from history, current events, and each other as we strive to live out the dream of beloved community and our Baptismal Covenant."

Wendy Curto of St. John's, Speedway participated in Sacred Ground in 2021. "Canon Mariann and Deacon Cathy did outstanding work in preparing and facilitating this workshop. The honest sharing of thoughts and feelings in the small group sessions provided valuable, though sometimes difficult, insights," she said.

Vicki Mansfield of St. Matthew's, Indianapolis also experienced growth in understanding, and a deepening of faith. "My acceptance broadened, and internal barriers were removed," she said.

Crystal Black of St. Matthew's, Indianapolis was already aware of some of the difficulty that people of color face, but she "had not learned the full historic context that ... led us to the struggle today." She experienced Sacred Ground as a safe place to learn.

Judy Noggle of Grace, Muncie participated in Sacred Ground first at St. Timothy's, Indianapolis. She chose to take part a second time through the online diocesan offering. "I am able to see and listen better," she said, adding that what she learned has motivated her to take action from a place of faith. Stephanie Denson of St. Paul's, Indianapolis shared a similar insight: "I show up differently in the world because of Sacred Ground," she wrote.

After participating in the online offering, Bill Hughes knew he wanted to do more. He is now facilitating an online Sacred Ground offering, in partnership with the Sisters of Providence, that includes 38 participants. When asked about how his faith has grown as a result of this work, Hughes responded: "I am much more contemplative now...I take a deep breath, and try to have compassion for people."

Deacon Cathy and Canon Mariann are midway through their current series of Sacred Ground. Contact Deacon Cathy at catascott@sbcglobal.net with questions, or to learn about the next offering. – *Diocesan News, indydio.org/2023/05/sacred-ground-brings-transformation*



Vestry Notes

April 2023

The St. John's Vestry met for our regular meeting on Wednesday, April 19. Among the items discussed were:

- Follow-up discussion included Lent and home liturgies. Thanks to hosts and Father Bradley and Father Jason for these special times for community and worship.
- Easter services attendance was in line with past years. Thanks were expressed to all who served.
- Rector's Report: Father Bradley presented new and past items for our information.
- Church Building for Collaborative Partnership; ongoing worship and music events and plans; offering of letters; LUM board; a covenant to root out racism; confirmation; discipleship groups; and diocesan convention delegates.
- Financial Report: Elizabeth Thomas Ladd reviewed and said that all is in line at this time. She noted that utility costs are being watched.
- Plans for the bishop's visit were discussed
- An update was given about the phone/internet provider. The service agreement choices were discussed.
- An update was given on the Church Building for Collaborative Partnership. A site visit is planned for May 2, with a diocesan team and local agencies
- Personnel compensation was discussed and will be continued to be discussed.
- We began discussion of the Covenant to Root Out Racism document. This is an ongoing discussion. Father Bradley will open the discussion to the congregation on May 21 and again on Zoom.

St. John's Financial Summary

April 2023

INCOME	Jan-Apr	Budget	% of Budget
Operating Income	\$164,409.48	\$495,730.62	33.2%
Non-Operation Income	\$13,339.80	\$58,557.40	22.8%
Transfer Income	\$0.0	\$42,100.00	0.0%
TOTAL INCOME	\$177,749.28	\$596,388.02	29.8%
EXPENSES			
Outreach	\$21,583.65	\$86,001.00	25.1%
Program	\$4,937.25	\$28,620.00	17.3%
Administration	\$1,584.17	\$4,450.00	35.6%
Personnel	\$105,746.48	\$342,185.51	30.9%
Office	\$7,758.83	\$28,912.00	26.2%
Property	\$32,756.55	\$106,219.51	30.8%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$174,186.93	\$596,388.02	29.2%
Net Income (loss)	\$3,562.35	0.00	100.0%

Godly Play Teachers

Godly Play is hidden away on the second floor of the church, but there is some intense theological study happening each week during the program year. Many thanks to those who served in the Godly Play classes this year including Becky Dick, Katie Elder, George Moore, Julie Peretin, and Ray Polstra. Thanks to all of you! We are always looking for more leadership assistance with all of our formation for children and youth, so if you have a special interest in this area, please speak with Jason at jason@stjohns-laf.org or me. — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

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Summer Worship Schedule Begins June 4

St. John's summer worship schedule begins on Sunday, June 4.

Moring Prayer with Good Shepherd will be at 9 a.m. via Zoom, and Holy Eucharist will be at 10 a.m.

Connect with St. John's & IndyDio

If you haven't been receiving the email newsletters from St. John's or from the Diocese of Indianapolis, then you're probably missing out. St. John's email comes out each week on Friday morning (other important messages are sent as needed). The Diocese of Indianapolis sends out news each week on Wednesdays.

Go to www.stjohns-laf.org and fill out the form "Connect with St. John's" to join the parish mailing list.

Go to indydio.org/newsletter/ and click "SIGN UP FOR NEWSLETTER" to join the Diocesan list.