



The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church

Springfield, Missouri

November 2024, Issue 140, No. 11



*Daylight-Saving
Time Ends*

**Set your clocks back
on Saturday night,
November 2!**

**Don't be too early for the All Saints' Sunday Mass
on Sunday the 3th.**

In This Issue

- † Introducing our Interim Rector
- † Good Grief!
- † Under New Management
- † Listening to Understand rather than Respond
- † Outreach Ministry Group
- † Big Doings at the Rectory!
- † Remembering Special Dates and People

All Saints' & All Souls'

All Saints' will be observed Sunday, November 3, and we will remember all the saints with a special liturgy. The next day, All Souls', Monday the 4th, we will remember all the Faithful Departed near and dear to our hearts and entrust them to the Son of God. Names submitted earlier will be read at the 12 noon service.

Thanksgiving

Join us in person Thursday, November 28, for the annual Thanksgiving Morning Prayer at 10:30 a.m. and a great meal following. The turkey will be provided; please bring a side dish to share. There is a sign-up-sheet on the bulletin board. Before we gather together for dinner, let us gather in thankful prayer.

St. John's Episcopal Church

Bishop Provisional
The Right Reverend Diane M. Jardine Bruce

Interim Rector
The Reverend Ronald Keel

Director of Music
Kevin Grice

Senior Warden
Victor Matthews

Junior Warden
Jan Rorrer

Parish Office: (417) 869-6351
website: www.stjohnspringfield.diowestmo.org
e-mail: stjohns-spgfld@sbcglobal.net

Advent

December will be here before you know it!
Advent starts December 1.

Important dates: Lessons & Carols, December 8; Annual Ladies' Luncheon, December 10; Blue Christmas, December 21st; & Christmas Eve, December 24th. Watch your *Messenger* for details.



Introducing our Interim Rector

A Brief Introduction to The Rev. Ron Keel

On October 1, The Rev. Ronald D. Keel (Fr. Ron) joined St. John's Church as Interim Rector. His ordained ministry has been focused within the Dioceses of West Missouri and Arizona. In 2005 following graduation from the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, Texas, he served as Rector of The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Blue Springs, Missouri for ten years. Moving to Arizona in 2016, Fr. Ron successfully completed two Interim Rector assignments in Arizona and, most recently, an Interim Rector position at Christ Episcopal Church, Springfield.

Father Ron is a second vocation priest, having previously worked for thirty years in the healthcare industry as a hospital administrator. In addition to his seminary preparation, he holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Missouri and a Master of Arts degree in Health Services Administration from Central Michigan University. He has traveled broadly in mission service to Haiti, South Africa, Kenya, Cuba, Albania, and Kosovo.

Fr. Ron is a veteran of the US Army; a sports enthusiast, particularly baseball; active in pickleball and other forms of exercise. He describes himself as a restless soul who wants and or needs to be involved in meaningful activities.

Fr. Ron is married to Victoria (Vicki) who is a nurse employed in the pharmaceutical industry. They have two adult sons, seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Fr. Ron is excited to begin this new journey with all of us at St. John's Church, supporting our existing ministries and joining us as we continue to live into our Christian identity and mission.



Good Grief! Finding Healing in the Midst of Loss

The Parish Health Ministry Team is delighted to announce that we will be hosting a half-day session about grief, grieving, loss and healing on Saturday, November 16 in the parish hall. We will have two speakers well versed in the subject of grief and grieving who will share their training and experience and explore practices that are beneficial to healing.

Grieving is not only associated with the death of a loved one or a special pet, but also with any significant loss, such as the end of a career, the last child moving out of the house, the oldest child starting kindergarten, or a loss of independence, such as giving up driving or having to depend upon another for care. And grief is an expected emotion with any of these losses. The good news is that God's abundant love provides us with approaches not just of coping with loss, but ways to find deeper meaning to life and renewed spiritual health and growth.

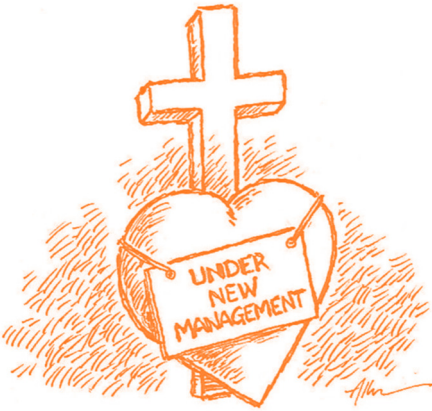
Nannette Thomas, BS, has been connected in various roles to Lost & Found Grief Center since 2003. She became a Program Coordinator in 2012 and continues in that capacity. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Biblical Studies from Evangel University and has specialized training in working with children who have experienced trauma. Nannette finds grief work especially meaningful since the death of her oldest brother in 1997. She loves helping families find hope in the midst of one of life's most difficult journeys.

Micki Pulleyking teaches at MSU and preaches at Westminster Presbyterian Church. She holds a PhD and is ordained to Christian ministry. Micki is a licensed Pastoral Grief Counselor and has been on the Board at The Compassionate Friends for thirty years. Like all of us, Micki brings her lived experience to the conversation, having buried her son, her parents, and many friends.

The program will start at 9:30 am and conclude at noon. If you are planning to come, please let us know so that we can provide enough materials (and donuts!) for everyone. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin boards at the glass doors if you are at the church, or you can call the church office (417) 869-6351 and leave a message that you plan to attend. A donation of \$10 per person is requested but not required.



Under New Management



When a business such as a restaurant changes ownership, we may see a sign that reads, “Under New Management.” The restaurant will often change the menu, the service, and even the décor. The old restaurant is hardly recognizable. So it is with our lives in Christ. St. Paul writes, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:19b-20). In essence, we live under new management. The old godless person is hardly recognizable as the new person in Jesus is created. “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation ...” (2 Corinthians 5:17). God is now in control of our lives. We have a new Father, master and a new purpose: to live for Christ.

Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord of the world, alone meets our needs perfectly. His love, given as he sacrificed himself for the world conquering death and sin, is the “drawing power”—drawing us away from selfish desires and sinful habits and pulling us to real peace and joy in Christ. His love changes the direction of our lives from self to him who has made and redeemed us all. Living for Christ allows no room for self-love that denies the priority of God and of service to others both within and outside our congregation. The compelling love of Christ pulls us away from a gratification of our old nature and of sinful desires or of seeking security in earthly things and human ingenuity and strength.

God’s love is the energizing power so essential to every life. Christ’s love summons us to a secure and joyful life of repentance, forgiveness, and fruitful service. Indeed, “For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died” (2 Corinthians 5:14). Under Christ’s new management, we “who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them” (2 Corinthians 5:15). As new people in Christ, we see our blessings as gifts from God that are to be used to serve God by loving and serving others. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we recognize our

Rector Search Input Opportunity

The Rector Search Committee will hold two town hall meetings for parishioners to share their ideas. The sessions will be after a brief coffee hour following the 10:30 service on November 10 and at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 16. Please mark your calendar and watch for further details.



A reliable and efficient kitchen crew contributes time and talent to parish dinners. And that’s stewardship!

Listening to Understand Rather Than Respond

by Holly Hughes Stoner, LFMT

One of the most important gifts we can offer in any relationship is the gift of deep and authentic listening. This is best described as listening to understand, rather than to respond.

Our good listening skills are easy to practice when a relationship is going well. However, listening often deteriorates in a relationship when there is unresolved conflict. So, the first step we can take to begin to heal the conflict is to listen and sincerely attempt to understand what the other person is thinking and feeling.

As therapists, we have seen the effectiveness of this approach in conflict resolution. When we work with people in conflict, helping them to de-escalate enough to actually be able to listen to what the other is experiencing is always the first step we take. We remind people that listening is not agreement, but is instead an attempt to understand what it is truly like to stand in the other person's shoes.

This is not easy, and we usually find that the first attempts at this kind of listening are often interrupted by a need to respond and "correct" the other person. As we mentioned above, the concept of listening to understand rather than respond is simple to understand, but is much more challenging to practice.

Most of us think of ourselves as good listeners. And hopefully, that is true much of the time. Most of us struggle to maintain good listening skills, however, when we strongly disagree with another person. With practice and commitment, we can increase our ability to listen to truly understand, thus strengthening our relationships.

Making It Personal: Is there a specific relationship with which you would like to practice "listening to understand, rather than to respond" this week?

Reprinted with permission from **The Wellness Compass Initiative** <connect@wellnesscompass.org>



More Great Participation in the Annual Chili Cook-off!

St. John's parish annual Chili Cook-off on Sunday, October 20, was another tremendous success! The turnout was wonderful and more than \$1,300 was raised for Harmony House. Our speaker, Amber Mueller, explained their wonderful service to those who are fleeing domestic abuse. Attendees at the cook-off voted for their food favorites by putting dollar bills in jars beside the entries. **Michael Richerson** scored the top chili among the excellent array of very tasty chilis. There were also over a dozen outstanding baskets and other items in a silent auction. We would like to thank everyone who contributed food and silent auction items and who voted for the entries.

Now Thanksgiving is approaching, and we are planning to again provide baskets to three food insecure Bowerman area families, as we have been doing for a number of years. Please sign the list on the bulletin board to indicate which items you will purchase for the baskets. Cash is also welcome to provide the fresh food items. Your generosity continues to be greatly appreciated.

Big Doings at the Rectory!

If everything went as planned, by the time you are reading this, the Green Team, ably assisted by J.P. Jones, Rod Buckner and a half dozen Kappa Alpha fraternity brothers from Drury, will have acquired and planted seventy shrubs and perennials in newly configured flower beds in front of the rectory on November 2, 2024.

This project began in early summer when we became aware that the burning bushes which have been a dominant part of the rectory landscaping for decades, were rapidly succumbing to a soil-borne bacterial infection called verticillium wilt. It is highly contagious and lives in the soil for several years after the removal of infected plants. Research showed that native conifers in the arborvitae (Tree of Life) family are reliably resistant to the disease.

Due to the necessity of removing such a large component of the plantings, it seemed the time to reimagine the landscaping as a whole – apparently for the first time in the 64 years since the rectory was built. A design using all native or nativar plants was approved by the vestry. J.P. Jones planned and installed the rock and dirt work, even after his skid-steer quit, forcing him to do shrub removal and heavy moving with only hand tools.

Weather cooperated, with a good rain a couple of days before the planned installation, softening the dirt to allow easier (comparatively!) digging and planting. A compostable weed barrier was installed around the new plantings to help suppress the weeds and grass, and mulch from Springfield's yard waste recycling center was used to top off the garden. We are hoping the prediction of regular rains over the next week or two will reduce the need for watering.

Having the winter to settle in, the Virginia bluebells, wild indigo, coneflower, Texas Green Eyes, Black-eyed Susans, asters and goldenrod, should produce some flowering next year, providing a long season for our native pollinators. Each year these perennials will increase in size and number of blooms with little effort on the part of any gardeners.

So, as you drive up Benton, slow down a bit to admire what can be done with native plants, some dedicated workers, and a vestry willing to try innovative approaches to solving problems.



Come ye thankful
People come...

St. John's Episcopal Church
515 E. Division St.
Springfield, MO 65803

Return Service Requested

The Messenger
a Newsletter of
St. John's Church

Remembering Special Dates & People

Birthdays

Nov. 1 Isabel Bowers
Nov. 2 Sydney Cox
Timolyn Hardy
Nov. 3 Gabriel Delgado
Janet Rorrer
Nov. 4 Chris Nelson
Nov. 6 Christopher Taylor
Nov. 7 Barbara Daniel
Nov. 13 Victor Matthews
Nancy Ratcliff
Nov. 14 John Busch
Nov. 17 Kelsey Ollis
Nov. 19 James Chaffin
Nov. 24 Kerri Mothersead
Dcn. Constance Tyndall
Nov. 26 Joe Emerson
Blake Smith

Anniversaries

Nov. 12 James & Jillian Merrill

Faithful Departed

Nov. 1 Robert J. Moon, Sr.
Nov. 2 Sheila Bucy
William W. Reaves
Nov. 3 Robert James Ewing, Sr.
Nov. 4 Anne Ehle
Manie Read
Nov. 5 Emma Butler
Nov. 7 William BeSore
Louis Leigh
J. Glenn Sinclair
Nov. 9 Warren Gamel
Nov. 10 Willis Edward Baker
J.J. David Bond
James A. Nickelson
Nov. 11 Adalyn Cravens
Emma Haszelbart
Bette Lee James
Ione Wilson
Nov. 12 Mary Sand
Nov. 13 Ruthe L. Forrester
Bernice Holden
Nov. 13 Honor K. Moorman
Elna M. Jensen
Nov. 14 Harold L. Kerr
Lewis Leshner
Nov. 15 Twana Lee Jones
Nov. 16 Earle Craig Haydon
Nov. 17 Emma VanNoy
Nov. 19 Ross J. Whitlock

Nov. 20 Fern Gamel
George Harvates
Joan Steury
Nov. 21 Henry Lohman
Nov. 22 Hortense Bowman
Nov. 24 David Gorman
Nov. 26 Alice Abson
Nov. 27 Ruby Dark Kinnaird
Nov. 28 Geraldine Golden
Gladys Tegarden
Velma "Lee" Wadley
Kenneth Williams
Nov. 29 Verna Faaborg

