



The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church

Springfield, Missouri

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St. John's Episcopal Church

Bishop

The Right Reverend Amy Dafler Meaux

Interim Rector

The Reverend Ron Keel

Director of Music

Kevin Grice

Senior Warden

Victor Matthews

Junior Warden

Linda Robertson

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Welcoming Our New Bishop: One Church, One Table, One Spirit



We are honored to welcome our newly elected Diocesan Bishop, **The Rt. Rev. Amy Meaux**, to **St. John's Episcopal Church** for her first pastoral visit since her election and ordination. Bishop Amy will join us for worship at our **Saturday service on September 6 at 4:00 p.m.**, and again at our **Sunday service at 10:30 a.m.**, the next day.

Following the **Saturday service**, we invite **ALL members of St. John's—whether you normally attend on Saturday or Sunday—to join us for a special fellowship dinner at 5:30 p.m.** This gathering is not just for the Saturday crowd—it's for the whole church family. We hope this shared meal will be a joyful time of connection, conversation, and community as we extend a warm and united welcome to our new bishop.

The **main course will be provided**. A **sign-up sheet for side dishes and desserts** is posted on the church bulletin board.

Two worship services. One church. One meal. One spirit of welcome. Let's come together to show Bishop Amy the heart of St. John's.



Meet Riley Brown: A Journey of Faith and Discernment

St. John's Episcopal Church, in cooperation with the Diocese of West Missouri, has begun a new season of discernment with parishioner **Riley Brown**, a newcomer to the St. John's family who has expressed a heartfelt call to ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. A parish-based Discernment Committee has been formed to walk with Riley over the next six months as he explores this calling in prayer, conversation, and community.

Riley was born and raised in Springfield, where he attended Kickapoo High School and Missouri State University. His early faith was shaped within the evangelical tradition, where he was a serious and devoted participant in youth group, summer camp, and Bible study. That deep curiosity about God and religion eventually led him to major in Religious Studies at MSU. But college brought questions—and challenges—that reshaped his understanding of faith. He discovered that what he had once accepted uncritically no longer satisfied his questions or his experience of the world.

Though disillusioned with the version of Christianity he had known, Riley remained intellectually engaged. He earned both his undergraduate and master's degrees in Religious Studies from Missouri State, and it was during this time that he began to explore other Christian traditions. He attended his first liturgical worship service, began to learn about the richness of the historical church, and slowly reclaimed the word *Christian* in a new and meaningful way.

That path led Riley to Harvard Divinity School, where his call to ordained ministry took clearer shape. In Boston, he became involved with the Episcopal Church through All Saints Parish in Brookline and the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, and found spiritual support through the Society of St. John the Evangelist. But even as he grew deeply connected to his Episcopal community there, Riley sensed that his vocation would bring him home—to serve those who, like himself, had once been left wondering if there was still a place for them within the Christian tradition.

Riley and his wife, Noah, returned to the Springfield area in 2022. They now live in Republic with their two cats, Punchy and Teddy. Noah is a zookeeper currently working at Wonders of Wildlife—an occupation Riley freely admits makes her “the cooler one.” Together they enjoy gardening, games, and the outdoors (when the weather cooperates!).

Riley currently serves as Ministerial Assistant at Westminster Presbyterian Church and is a regular participant in the Saturday afternoon worship service at St. John's. His presence and gifts have already enriched our community, and we are grateful to walk with him as this formal process of discernment unfolds.

The Discernment Committee working with Riley includes Cheryl Moon, Kevin Grice, Pat Schreiner, Phil Mothersead, Linda Robertson, and Victor Matthews, along with Fr. Ron Keel. Please keep Riley and the committee in your prayers as they journey together in hope, faith, and trust in God's calling.



Stay Tuned.
Coming Soon!

Big Changes are coming to St. Johns in September!

Change can be scary, but this time it's really exciting! St. John's will introduce new congregational/church management software and a new streaming platform for our online viewership. Rhelm/ACS is a new church management software with many excellent integrations for parishioners to use and will streamline many of the parish office's current workload. Online Church Platform (OCP) is the new streaming platform with many wonderful features that will make the online viewer feel more connected while viewing from afar. OCP

will replace Facebook sometime in late September and will be accessed from our website's homepage. It will also upload our videos to storage on the parish's Youtube channel, which doesn't have the storage and licensing problems of Facebook. Watch for more details about these exciting changes in the weekly and following publications.

Go and Bear Fruit

Fruit trees are one of the many wonders of God's creation. To see the beauty of the tree and its fruit, to enjoy its taste, and to realize that it all came from a tiny seed is beyond our comprehension. An apple seed is planted in the ground, and, with water and sun as nourishment, miraculously a seedling surfaces and develops into a fruit tree. After a period of time, the apple tree fulfills its mission by bearing apples.

We, as Christians, are like that apple tree. We, too, have been fed and nourished by God so we can bear fruit: "You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last ..." (John 15:16). Jesus tells us, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). The life and power of any plant is found in its vine. The vine uses the branches to produce its fruit. The branch is simply a growth of the vine, produced by it and appointed to bear fruit. The branch exists only because the vine makes it possible.

Fruit characterizes the life of the Christian steward. When we stay connected to Jesus, we are told that we "will bear much fruit." Christ has given us the task of ministering to the needs of others and spreading the Gospel. As we stay connected to him through his Word and Sacraments, we discover God's perfect will for us, and we are empowered to please God by bearing fruit (Colossians 1:9-10). God has created us to bear fruit (Ephesians 2:10), but only through Christ is it possible for us to do so.

"If we live by the Spirit," Paul exhorted, "let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another" (Galatians 5:25-26). As children of God, we have this fruit because his Spirit lives in us, not as a result of our own efforts. We do cease to bear fruit when we give in to our sinful natures, becoming, in Paul's words, "Conceited, competing against one another, envying one another." We are to "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11a) but are to "Live as children of the light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8b-10).

Go and bear fruit!

WOMEN'S MEDICAL RESPITE

WE NEED YOU TO HELP EXPAND OUR COMMITMENT. On the third Sunday of every month St. John's provides a meal for the Women's Medical Respite program. Women's Medical Respite provides recovery housing for women who have nowhere to go following surgery. What started as a program in 2015 at The Kitchen that could house three women became large enough that the non-profit bought separate housing to hold six women at a time. We have been involved for approximately seven years.

St. John's has kept every third Sunday commitment because of the unselfish contributions from parishioners who provide the meal or an accompanying dish. The reward is seeing the smiles on the faces of patients. Often, we meet at the car while making the delivery because they are so thankful. We are truly making a difference in somebody's life.

You can contribute monthly, periodically, or at one time providing a meal or a dish for delivery. For any questions, or to get involved, see Jim or Mary Newman or call at 417-496-4645.

Mary Newman

From the Fairs and Festivals Committee

(members of the Springfield, Ozark and Branson Episcopal Churches)

Opportunity to help cleanup part of our environment with the James River Basin Partnership:

Cleaning a Section of Galloway Creek

Date: September 20th

Can accommodate: 10–30 people.

Meeting place: Sequiota Park at 9 am (3500 S Lone Pine Ave, Springfield, MO 65804)

Clean up: Beginning at 9:30 we will work south downstream towards Republic Road. Depending on how many volunteers and how quickly they pick up trash, we may not make it all the way to Republic Rd and that is fine. We can turn around at any point our volunteers would like to.

James River Basin Partnership: will provide pickers, gloves, and bags. We can take all our garbage bags to one place, and they will also coordinate trash pickup.

Things to Bring:

- Closed-toed shoes
- Hat/sun protection (whatever keeps you comfortable outside)
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Water bottle

Please note: If water levels are high or temperatures are extreme, we may have to cancel. The possible rain date is September 27th. Contact Melissa Gallian if you wish to volunteer: 417 440-0288; melissa.gallian@gmail.com

Treasurer's Thoughts

As we have now reached the halfway mark of the year, the treasurers thank all of you for keeping your pledges up to date. It helps us to continue paying the bills during the summer months. This is a time of year when people are on vacation, but the bills aren't. It also gives us a chance to remind you of the different ways you can make your contributions. The offering plate comes around each Sunday. We are set up if you prefer PayPal. If you would like to set up a bank authorization to send a check weekly or monthly, let me know and I will provide you with the information that you need. For those of you who are retired, if you contribute from your IRA, it is tax free. Speak with your financial advisor for more information.

We here at St. John's are lucky to have several ministries we can give to. In the fall and spring, we have the beautiful sounds of the choral scholars. Each Sunday the altar has flowers on it. The endowment fund is a way to ensure that those who follow us here at St. John's have a way to have the things we have today. The parish discretionary fund helps those who are in need. Speaking of those in need, we have a tremendous outreach ministry that shares the love of St. John's with many who are having a hard time making ends meet. In closing, many thanks for all your contributions made to St. John's.

David Westervelt, Treasurer

Parish Health Ministry

A Blessing from Archbishop Desmond Tutu

South African bishop and theologian, (b.1931, d. 2021)

Dear Child of God,
You are loved with a love that nothing can shake,
a love that loved you long before you were created,
a love that will be there long after everything has disappeared.
You are precious, with a preciousness that is totally quite immeasurable.
And God wants you to be like God.
Filled with life and goodness and laughter – and joy.
God, who is forever pouring out God's whole being from all eternity,
wants you to flourish.
God wants you to be filled with joy and excitement
and ever longing to be able to find what is so beautiful in God's creation:
the compassion of so many, the caring, the sharing.
And God says,
Please, my child, help me.
Help me to spread love and laughter and joy and compassion.
And you know what, my child?
As you do this – hey, presto—you discover joy.
Joy, which you had not sought, comes as the gift
as almost the reward for this non-self-regarding caring for others.

The Book of Joy c.2016

OUTREACH MINISTRY GROUP

Rare Breed provides assistance with basic needs and life skills training to at-risk youth from 13 to 24 years old. They provide necessities and support services so the youth can become self-sufficient. Case managers arrange referrals to community services for those that qualify. There's also access to a computer lab, WiFi, a workout room, art activities and music studio at their drop-in center. You can support this organization by donating requested items during August. Some suggestions are deodorant, sunscreen, antifungal foot spray, aloe vera gel, coloring books for adults, craft items, embroidery floss and hoops. You may also write a check to St. John's with "Rare Breed" on the memo line.

SAVE THE DATE: The Chili Cook-Off will be October 19. Be sure to mark it on your calendar.

Green Team

Reuse, Reduce and/or Recycle Your Plastic

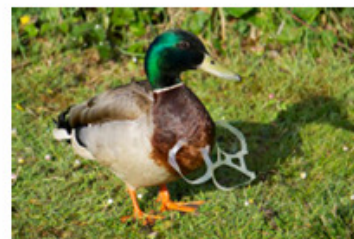
The Green Team is asking all of us who use items sold in plastic containers to eliminate or cutback on plastic use. The following are a few suggestions on how you can do that. Surf the web and/or search closely in the stores you shop at and find many other less plastic possibilities. Many companies are now in the business of providing such environmentally friendly items.



One method of reducing plastic use is refilling your plastic containers over and over with the same or similar product. This can be done by taking your containers to a store like SOAP Refill Station; <https://www.getmosoap.com/> found here in Springfield. Some of the many products they have include shampoo, laundry detergent, dish soap, bar soap, lotion, dog shampoo, glass cleaner, all purpose cleaner, toothbrushing powder and many other products.

Another method of reducing plastic use is to buy a dry version (in a paper container) of what you typically find in liquid form in a plastic container. Many companies now offer laundry detergent sheets to use in the washing machine instead of a liquid detergent in a plastic bottle. Several of the grocery stores in Springfield are now carrying such products. Also these kinds of products can be found on line. One such company is Tru Earth and one of their products is Compact Dry Laundry Detergent Sheets; <https://tru.earth/>. This company like many others continues to produce new products. Tru Earth has also developed other products: all purpose cleaner, toilet bowl cleaner, fabric softener and dish washer tablets. All products arrive in paper containers. There are other companies that make similar products as the detriments of plastic use is becoming more apparent. Look for plastic free containers while you shop. Besides cleaning products another very common product that almost exclusively comes in plastic bottles is hair care products. Of course, a place like SOAP Refill Station has hair care products, but you might want to think about bar hair care products that can be easily found especially if you do some shopping on line.

The point is to reduce your plastic use; please consider trying the following: stop using plastic straws; take your own tote bags to the grocery store or any other store that uses plastic bags; use pod like products that hopefully do not come in plastic containers; buy your cans of beverages in paper boxes instead of the packs that have plastic holders. Look for alternatives to things you purchase that come in non-plastic containers. If you have to use plastic at least use it more than once. Help yourself and the environment.



A Poem sent by Euphemia, a 64 year old woman living in Jos, Nigeria.

Our land is soaked with blood.
Families are wiped out.
Children are slaughtered.
Fathers are butchered.
Communities are burnt.
Souls are perishing.

And yet, the Church sleeps.
Who will speak?
Who will rise?
Who will pray?
The forces of darkness are not asleep.
The terrorists are not tired.
But Christians? Divided, Distracted, Disconnected.

This is not just news. This is WAR.
If we cannot gather in crowds, Let us gather in fives.
If we cannot march in protest, Let us march into our prayer closets.
If we cannot speak in the streets, Let us cry on our knees.
Let every family become a prayer altar.
Let every Christian home become a fortress.
Let every believer rise in the night watch.
You may not hold a microphone, but you can hold the heavens.
You may not carry a weapon, but you can carry a burden.
You may not go to the battlefield, but you can fight on your knees.

This is no longer the time for casual Christianity.
This is the hour of spiritual warfare. Not against flesh and blood—but against powers that love bloodshed.
God is watching.
Heaven is listening.
Let the Church rise—or we will be buried in silence.
Wake up.
Speak up.

Kneel down. Fight back on your knees.

© The Concerned Team

Submitted by Joyce Schmidt on behalf of the Persecuted Church throughout our World in 2025.

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

August 2 Douglas Patton
August 3 Shirley Rogers
 Sherrie Rumstein
August 4 Mary Jane Robertson
August 6 Candace Iott
August 7 Charles Bowers
August 10 Jordan Cooper
 Kathy Devore
 Patricia Schultz
August 11 Clara Bradley
 Maxandra Samaneigo
August 12 Jakob Osborn
August 13 Thomas Heydt
August 14 Jasmine Gamel
 Marybeth Lyon
 Frank Merica
 Lexie Roop
 Joyce Schmidt
August 16 Patricia Lathrom
August 17 Richard Ollis
August 18 Tracy Fay
 Gordon Patterson
August 20 Shirey Van Hook
August 22 Allison Olson
August 24 Samuel Chaffin
August 24 Jessica Ratcliff
August 25 Steve Bendon
 Courtney Hill
August 26 Angela Bendon
 Joseph D. Ollis
 Blake Roop
August 27 Patricia Schreiner
August 30 Liesl Aldridge

Anniversaries

August 6 Russell & Rhonda Axtell
August 18 Lee & Joyce Schmidt
August 28 Jon & Jennifer Stammers
August 30 David & Mary Jane Robertson

Faithful Departed

August 1 Charles S. Christianson
 John Sellers
August 2 Ralph Compton
 George B. Morris
 Fannie Price
 S. I. Smith
August 4 Arlene F. Schmidt
August 5 Lafayette Herd
August 6 Edna Coley
August 7 Donna Gamel
 Terri Price
August 8 Myma Berry
 Frank Leathers
 Julius Seifert
August 9 Wilbur Wickizer
 Charles Winn
August 10 George Huntsman
 Maude Osenbaugh
August 11 Lester R. Langsford
August 12 Nora M. Hoffman
August 13 Gordon Webb
August 15 Gil Morgan
 Nancy Richardson
August 18 Earle Rice
August 19 Norman Jones
August 21 Lewis David Caudle
 Nancy James
August 22 Jerry Dean Hancock
 Clyde W. (Bill) Young
August 24 O. E. Golden
 Robert Barr Smith
 Cecil T. Stiles
 Gladys Westervelt
August 25 Wayne Schweitzer
 Charles D. Toombs
August 27 Marion L. Stephens
August 28 Mary Brown
 Mary Elin Veigh
 Lena Wilhoit
August 30 Irma Edwards
August 31 John L. Butler
 Clarence Iott