



# The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church

Springfield, Missouri

May 2026 Issue 142, No. 5



## Ascension Day Mass & Picnic!

At Saint John's it has been the custom for many years to have a parish picnic after the Ascension Day Mass. This year it will be on Thursday, May 14! The Mass will begin at 6:00 p.m. Following the Eucharist, a picnic will be held in the parish hall. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Parishioners are asked to bring a side dish to share. Drinks will be provided. Plan now to celebrate with joy the Ascension of Our Lord!

### In This Issue

- † Mundane Musings
- † Stewardship: Plenty Good Room
- † Parish Health: Caring for the Caregiver
- † Rogation Sunday
- † Library News
- † Remembering Special Dates and People

### Formation Hour



### St. John's Episcopal Church

**Bishop**

The Right Reverend Amy Dafler Meaux

**Rector**

The Reverend Benjamin George-Thoms

**Director of Music**

Kevin Grice

**Senior Warden**

Mark O'Dell

**Junior Warden**

Linda Robertson

**Parish Office:** (417) 869-6351

**website:** [www.stjohnsspringfield.diowestmo.org](http://www.stjohnsspringfield.diowestmo.org)

**e-mail:** [stjohns-spgfld@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stjohns-spgfld@sbcglobal.net)

Join Fr. Ben in conversations about what it can mean to be an Anglo-Catholic Episcopalian. During the course of the conversations, we'll explore how it fits into the broader Anglican tradition, its far-reaching and lasting effects on the Episcopal Church, and how it's influenced our own community at St. John's. Grab a cup of coffee or tea and pull up a chair at the table beginning Sunday, May 10th, at 9:15am in the parish hall!



**Rogation Days  
are here !**

# Mundane Musings

Beloved of God,

Looking around, it seems that spring is well and truly here! As we roll into the fullness of this season, so we also begin to roll out of the Season of Easter. At the end of May, our great 50-day celebration is also coming to an end. Really, every Mass is a type of Easter where we celebrate and participate in our redemption through Christ. However, our focus is about to change. Spring is in the air, and the new abounds.

Leaving behind the focus of Easter, and eventually the spring not too long after, we enter into that long Season after Pentecost, “Ordinary Time.” It might eventually come to feel like just that. Ordinary. Unremarkable. Blah. The life of the Church seems to stretch on with no principal feast in sight while the next season is months away. It’s just ordinary Sunday after ordinary Sunday, and perhaps in a way that seems to stretch on like the long days of Summer ahead of us. The sun continues to tower ahead with more heat than we might like for more time than we’d wish, and there’s not a cloud in sight. Just like yesterday. Just like tomorrow, and the next, and the next....

Our own spiritual lives can seem that way, too. There can be times where it feels like we are in long stretches where not much is happening, and it simply feels like we’re just dragging. It might even feel like our souls are somewhat parched and waiting for a fresh shower of grace much like the plants in our fields and gardens wait for water. This can be somewhat misleading, though. It’s in these long and steady periods where persistence and careful tending lead to surprising growth. We go through the standard outline day in and day out, same prayers after same prayers, gospel parable after gospel parable, and yet it is precisely in that steady rhythm created by faithful tending of the soul that carries us through the dry periods that can, on occasion, seem to drag on. Little do we know, that God is carefully growing the Spirit just under the surface, almost imperceptibly until that shower of grace finally hits, and we see the growth that God has been working on right under our noses.

Long periods of spiritual malaise, dryness, apathy, or however else one might like to call it can seem like they drag on. We can, at times, feel like nothing’s growing, nothing’s changing, or perhaps God isn’t even listening. However, through persistence, through continuing to show up for God, through maintaining as best as we can, and in a way that our circumstances allow, that steady rhythm of prayer and time spent or given to God, we’ll find that quite a lot was happening even if we couldn’t yet perceive it. God has been at work all along, and God was cracking open new seeds of faith that are now ready to ease their way out of the ground to bloom.

Ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Ben





### Question for Reflection:

How have you used your creativity and experience to overcome scarcity?



J. Davey Gerhard is the Executive Director of TENS and believes in God's all-

inclusive invitation to find Love when we are gathered together. He lives, works, and worships in San Francisco, California.



# Plenty Good Room

## Theological Statement

The Spiritual Plenty Good Room tells us a story about God's inclusive love. The home is there, the table is spread, the place is prepared.

Choose your seat and sit down, the chorus sings to us. Like many metaphors for the Kingdom of Heaven, there is a dual meaning, and in this case, the message is clear: in the eternal reward, there is room for everybody; and in the heaven we create here on Earth we should strive for the same.

What abundance! Images of narrow paths and closed gates of pearl aside, Jesus proclaimed such a radical, all-inclusive love that we know in our hearts that we, all of us, each of us, is a part of God's plan for humanity.

We have each been given gifts to share in order to bring about the fullness of God's Kingdom.

The secret about having gifts to share is that generosity begets generosity. God modeled generosity in the Creation and as we continue to participate in the co-creation we bring our gifts to bear. The more we acknowledge the abundance into which we have been created, the more we are inspired to share our resources, relationships, and responses with our neighbors. Generosity asks us to see scarcity not as a problem that we have to endure, but rather as a system that we need to dismantle.

In God's Kingdom, there is no need that cannot be met. The barriers we have placed between met and unmet needs are ours, not God's. These obstacles can be overcome through a creative use of our gifts. If there is not enough money to address something, perhaps there is an in-kind donation we can make. Perhaps more volunteer hours, or employing our networks to expand the circle of help will be useful. And maybe the only thing we can give is a smile or a prayer. We have every good thing inside of us to offer a place for others, all we need to do is to recall that truth. [TENS.org](http://TENS.org)

---

## Parish Health: Caring for the Caregiver

### Practical tips for caregivers

- Build a predictable daily routine for meals, hygiene, rest, and activities to reduce confusion and stress.
- Break tasks into small, simple steps and give one instruction at a time.
- Use calm, reassuring language, eye contact, and a soothing tone; avoid arguing about mistaken beliefs.
- Limit noise and distractions when talking or helping with tasks so the person can focus better.
- Redirect agitation with a snack, a walk, music, a familiar activity, or a soothing object instead of trying to force compliance.
- Keep the home safer by removing hazards, improving lighting, and using locks or other protections where wandering is a risk.
- Support independence by letting the person do as much as they can safely do for themselves.
- Use familiar objects, photos, music, and reminiscence to provide comfort and connection.
- Watch for medication, hydration, nutrition, and movement needs, since these strongly affect day-to-day functioning.
- Be proactive: look for patterns in behavior or care needs early and adjust before problems escalate.
- Share tasks with family or others, when possible, because dementia care is often too much for one person alone.
- Schedule respite breaks and time away from caregiving duties to reduce burnout.
- Pay attention to your own sleep, physical activity, and eating habits, since caregiver stress can affect health behaviors.
- Watch for signs of overload such as irritability, exhaustion, loneliness, or feeling emotionally numb.
- Seek emotional support from family, friends, support groups, or counseling instead of trying to carry the stress alone.
- Treat caregiving as a long-term role that needs boundaries, not constant self-sacrifice.

### A simple daily approach

A useful rule of thumb: **reassure, routine, reminisce, redirect**. For example, if the person becomes upset about leaving the house, you might calmly reassure them, remind them of the schedule, show a favorite photo, and redirect to a comforting activity like folding towels or listening to familiar music. Caregiver burnout usually shows up as a mix of emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and becoming more detached or irritable than usual. The best prevention is to get ahead of it early: use respite, accept help, and protect your own sleep, health, and time.

### Signs to watch for

- Constant fatigue or low energy.
- Sleep problems, either too much or too little.
- Changes in appetite or weight.
- Irritability, impatience, or anger.
- Feeling hopeless, trapped, or like caregiving controls your life.
- Losing interest in things you used to enjoy.
- Anxiety, mood swings, or trouble concentrating.
- More headaches, stomach issues, or getting sick more often.

### Ways to prevent burnout

- Ask for help early, before you feel overwhelmed.
- Set realistic expectations; you do not have to do everything alone.
- Use respite care or arrange regular breaks.
- Make a simple schedule and delegate tasks when possible.
- Protect sleep, meals, hydration, and exercise.
- Keep medical appointments for yourself, not just the person you care for.
- Join a caregiver support group or talk with a counselor.
- Set boundaries and practice saying no to nonessential demands.
- Spend at least a little time each day on something restorative, like a walk, reading, prayer, or quiet time.

### A simple rule

If you are regularly exhausted, resentful, or neglecting your own health, that is a warning sign, not a personal failure. Caregiving works better long term when you treat your own well-being as part of the care plan.

### When to get extra help

- If stress starts affecting your work, sleep, relationships, or health.
- If you feel depressed, anxious, or hopeless most days.
- If you are having trouble coping or feel unsafe.
- If you are having thoughts of harming yourself or the person you care for.

---

## CAREGIVER BURNOUT CHECKLIST

**Instructions:** Check each box that describes how you've felt in the last 2 weeks.

### EMOTIONAL SIGNS

- I feel emotionally drained most days
  - I feel irritable, anxious, or overwhelmed often
  - I feel resentful, even when I still care deeply
  - I feel guilty when I take time for myself
  - I've lost interest in hobbies or activities I used to enjoy
  - I feel isolated or unsupported
- 

### PHYSICAL SIGNS

- I'm tired even after sleeping
  - I have trouble sleeping
  - I get headaches, stomach issues, or muscle tension
  - I've gained or lost weight without trying
  - I skip meals or eat poorly because I'm too busy
  - I've delayed my own medical or dental appointments
  - My own health problems have gotten worse
- 

### MENTAL & DAILY-LIFE SIGNS

- I have trouble concentrating or remembering things
  - Small problems feel overwhelming
  - I feel like I'm always "on" and can't relax
  - I miss work, family events, or personal time because of caregiving
  - I worry constantly about the person I care for
  - I feel like I can't keep up with care tasks
- 

### WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

**0–3 boxes checked:** Watch closely and keep using prevention habits

**4–7 boxes checked:** Burnout may be building; add support and breaks now

**8+ boxes checked:** You likely need meaningful help soon, not just more effort

---

### WHAT TO DO NEXT

- ✓ Ask someone to take over one task this week
  - ✓ Schedule respite time, even if only a few hours
  - ✓ Contact your doctor, counselor, or caregiver support group
  - ✓ Simplify routines and drop nonessential tasks
  - ✓ Protect sleep, meals, hydration, and movement
  - ✓ Write down the top 3 things that truly must get done each day
- 

### WHEN TO GET URGENT HELP

- You feel hopeless most days
- You are using alcohol, pills, or substances more to cope
- You feel unsafe, panicked, or unable to keep going
- You have thoughts of harming yourself or the person you care for

**Crisis Resources:** National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 | Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

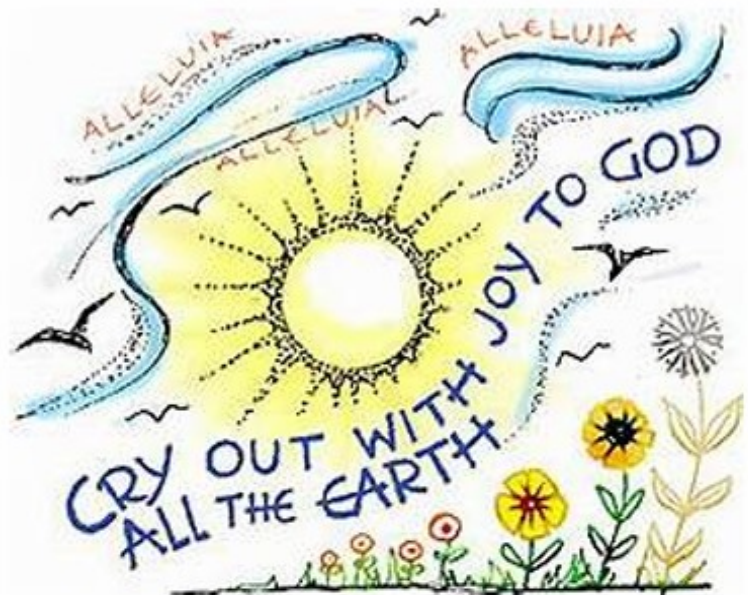
---

## Rogation Sunday, May 10, 2026

“Rogation” comes from the Latin noun rogatio, which means “asking”. The Sixth Sunday of Easter is traditionally known as “Rogation Sunday. This is because the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the following week are known as the “Rogation Days,” which are days for fasting and prayer. The Thursday of that

week is the feast of the Ascension. Although early Rogation celebrations were associated with rural life, agriculture and fishing, the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) now includes commerce and industry and the stewardship of creation. Collects for Rogation are found on pages 207-208 and 258-259 BCP. Rogation days are also known as Rogationtide. Churches will often mark the Rogation Days with a “Rogation Procession,”

and the praying of the Great Litany page 148 BCP. The procession may also be called “beating the bounds” in which a procession of parishioners, led by the priest proceeds around the boundary of their parish and pray for its protection in the coming year. At St. John’s this has also included blessings of new plantings on the property.



The Christian rogation replaced a pagan Roman procession known as Robigalia, where sacrifices to appease Robigus, the deity of agricultural were made. Rogation Day ceremonies are thought to have arrived in the British Isles in the 7th century. During the reign of King Henry VIII, Rogation Processions were used as a way to assist crop yields. Rogation Processions continued in the post-Reformation Church of England much as they had before. The new, Protestant version of Rogation Days became such a fixture in Church life that the tradition was carried over to the English churches across the British Empire. Rogation Days continue as an optional observance in the Episcopal Church and in Anglican Provinces world wide.

---

## ST. JOHN'S LIBRARY NEWS

---

### Attention Readers-

- Most of us think of the Church library as a Meeting Room. To be truthful, it has been more of a multi-purpose room, being used to house the equipment for filming our services on livestream social media, host a Sunday School class, spread out documents and laptops to quietly handle church business in addition to having committee meetings on specified Sundays. And yet...there are books...lots and lots of books.
- Over the next few months, Adele O'Dell and Lindsey Parks will be familiarizing themselves, cataloguing and reorganizing the contents of the Library. They intend to cull duplicates, possibly flesh out areas that are underserved and add children's books. Articles in the Messenger will publicize subjects, resources and review books the Library offers to entice you to make use of the real purpose for this space.
- At this time, we would like to invite the congregation's input, whether you have come across books in the library you particularly enjoyed, could not find what you were looking for, have library experience and information to offer, or books to recommend. Please do not donate any books to the Library at this time, though we definitely would be interested in hearing about what you may have and want to share.
- Strike up a conversation with either of us and/or take a look around the library and tell us your ideas and wish list. Questions are welcome. Answers may be vague. Read on, Macbeth!



**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

May 1 Makayla Strickland  
May 3 Timothy Wilkinson  
May 6 Sarah Hosutt  
May 7 Jeanine Jones  
May 8 Jana Daniel  
May 9 Reagan Walstrand  
May 10 Theodore Kelley  
May 11 Sarah Baker  
Oliver Junod  
May 13 Nicholas Greer  
May 14 Amber Cash  
May 15 Kathryn Follis  
Cinnamon Smith  
May 16 Janice Jones  
Angie Patterson  
May 17 Anthony Gamel  
May 18 Mark Lathrom  
May 21 Alnita Mulvihill  
May 24 Tom Mulvihill  
May 25 David Allred  
Josh Brandon-Vicory  
Clayton Hanson  
May 26 Ben Patterson  
May 27 Clara Busch  
Dan Kesterson  
May 29 John Blomberg  
Rob Close  
May 31 Joe Marshall

#### Anniversaries

May 2 Chris & Tanya Roop  
May 10 Nick & Terry Greer  
Richard & Teresa Ollis  
May 12 Fr. Jim & Cheryl Moon  
Chris & Joyce Nelson  
Dcn. Constance Tyndall (Ordination)  
May 18 Keith & Jeanine Jones  
May 21 David & Kim Westervelt  
May 25 Jonny & Latesa Carter  
May 29 Joe & Mary Marshall  
May 31 Mark & Adele O'Dell

#### Faithful Departed

May 1 Jo Ann Wilhoit  
May 2 Arthur Albers  
John Holliday  
May 4 William A. Moon  
May 6 Harry Holden  
Mildred M. Phillips  
May 8 Eva Aldrich  
May 9 Einar Jacobson, Jr.  
Robert E. Leigh  
May 10 Michael Follis  
Mary Virginia Langsford  
May 13 Ricky "Mountain" Phipps  
May 14 William B. Lincoln  
May 17 Joseph D. Wingo  
May 19 Eva Aileen Ollis  
Warren Simons  
May 20 Connie Nowak  
May 21 Daisy Cravens  
Fred Smith Lines  
May 22 Terry Bremer  
R. Fred Schweitzer  
May 24 Richard Cooper  
Robert Ewing, Jr.  
May 25 Kenneth L. Bear  
Maria LeDuc  
Delores Roberts  
May 28 Billy JoDean "Joe" Reese  
May 29 Ronald Daniel  
Mary Sue Fendlason  
May 30 William Ryder  
May 31 Samuel L. Coover