



Stepping Stones or Stumbling Blocks A Season of Passages

In the months of May and June St. John's enters a 'season of passages'. The confirmands are completing their studies, preparing to make *passage* into full membership with our church community. The third graders will be presented with their own Bibles as they celebrate their *passage* into readiness to read and understand our Holy text. The Sunday School, from pre-school to sixth graders draws to a close after learning about biblical heroes and stories from the Bible, therefore *passing* through another year. Our church gathers for Baccalaureate in June to bless our high school, college, and post graduates as they *pass* into the next phase of their lives. Passages mark endings, but more importantly they mark beginnings.

This is also a time for parents and the St. John's congregation to ponder passages in our own lives. How have we grown in our spiritual journey, broadening our understanding of God and scripture? There have been surveys that declare many Christians stop learning and growing in their faith at the age of our confirmands. Are we showing our young people that we, too, are on a journey to deepen our relationship with God?

Children are naturally spiritual, as Jesus reminds us in Matthew 18:3: "*Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*" Our sacred task is to nurture our children in their own journey of an ever growing relationship with God - thankfully the Holy Spirit helps with that. How have we, by our example, led our children into this adventure of discovering God? Have we been companions along the way, *stepping stones not stumbling blocks*? Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us that by becoming a "beloved community" we fill our children with the love of Christ.

Following are ways that might contribute to our children's faith journey:

- * Could we begin by sharing our earliest memories of hearing about God and of prayer - remembering aloud the places we learned the great stories from the Bible and the people who told us about Jesus and His love?
- * Could we help them to pause and reflect about; the wonders of creation, the reality of suffering, the struggles of people in our community and the world, and the presence of hope and love for our planet and its people?
- * Can we help our youth ask difficult questions about faith and life, knowing their questions and our honest heartfelt response will encourage their growth and ours?
- * Could we create, in the midst of our busy lives; time for prayers of thankfulness and healing? May we enjoy praise filled music, stories of Jesus and opportunities to serve others? May we encourage time for quiet listening to hear the voice of God and simply enjoy the gift of life itself?
- * Could we create rituals and traditions in our families and congregations that give us a sense of security and touchstones in a rapidly changing world? Praying at meals and bedtime and also at birthdays and holidays is a good start. Rituals and traditions create a legacy, a gift for your children to pass on to their children.
- * Could we find ways to re-claim the ancient, spirit-filled practice of "giving blessing" - parents to children, as did Moses to the children of Israel, Jesus to his followers, the faithful to each other in the early church. Rabbi Sandra Sasso speaks of a Friday evening Sabbath tradition in Jewish households, when the mother lights the candles at supper and then gives a blessing to the children, each in turn. Rabbi Sasso's college age children call her every Friday evening to receive that blessing.

May we, in this season of passages bless our children and youth, that they may genuinely know they are the 'beloved' children of God!

-Written by Betsy Friend

'Sum' thing to Celebrate Pastor Sum



It's hard to believe that we're already approaching the end of Thang Sum's year-long Senior Internship with us. As most of you know, Sum will graduate from Palmer Theological Seminary in May. Together with his wife, Anna, he plans to find a permanent position where he will have opportunities to share his

love of God and his gifts for spiritual leadership within the American Baptist denomination.

Because Sum's contributions at St. John's have enriched our lives in so many ways, there will be a special farewell celebration on **Sunday, May 16**. Join us for worship, followed by brunch in Fellowship Hall to show Sum our thanks. A message about *Servant-hood*, and a time to share fun memories and kind words with Sum and Anna will compliment this special celebration. We are looking forward to this special morning with Sum and Anna and hope you'll be there too!

If you're able to attend the brunch, please make a reservation by signing up in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour or by contacting Nancy Higgins (tomandnancy@verizon.net or 610- 644-3642), or calling Rody in the church office (610-688-5222). Please indicate the number of adults and children attending. Let us know if you would like to help with the meal by contributing food or assisting in the kitchen – we welcome your support! If you have questions, please contact Nancy or Bob Miller.



Victor's

C o r n e r

Jesus said, "*Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.*" (Matthew 7:7-8)

Toward the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches that our God is a very available presence. The one who asks receives, the seeker will find, the one who patiently endures (knocks), will be admitted. All three, as the parallel verses in Luke 11:9-10 confirm, are about persistence in prayer, which is *the principal* way to God.

But why is persistence so important? When God sees our sometimes desperate need, why not just answer immediately? I recall going to a revered professor of mine at Emory years ago. I had just read an influential book of his that grew out of the writings of a famous Dane named Søren Kierkegaard (SK). So I asked the professor for what amounted to a quick summary of Kierkegaard's idea on a certain subject. The professor looked at me and, rather than give me what I wanted, he gave me what I needed. He told me, not unkindly, to read what I knew to be a particularly long and dense book by SK, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Once I got over my initial pique at having been "brushed off," I bought a copy and read it. After which, rather than consigning a quick nugget of information to gather dust in some recess of my mind, I instead actually "owned" the insight, because I had labored to make it my own.

I feel that God often responds to prayer in the same way. Prayer is a partnership between two who are committed to each other for the long haul. A "friend" who only asks for help in emergencies, but then falls off the radar, is less than a true friend. Why should God enable a bad relationship?

Prayer that asks, seeks, and knocks is prayer that doesn't have the answers, and so shouldn't set the agenda, telling God what we want, even when it seems self-evident to us. It may not be what God thinks best. Oh, and having prayed, remember to do what we teach our children - say "Thank you." Saying it in advance is a lovely expression of faith and trust, not to mention gratitude.

ST. JOHN'S BUILDERS' TEAM 2010

Written by Carol Netter



Some of our St. John supporters: Nancy Fielden, Betsy Miller, Lee Duke, Don & Ginger Black, Melody Ticknor, and John McClintick!

The 2010 Builders Competition produced nine Habitat for Humanity home framing packages. Over ninety pairs of hands, hammered, sawed, hoisted and honed future homes to be erected and built-out in New Castle County, Delaware; Camden, NJ and Delaware County, Pa. Sponsors and donations covered all the costs of this expanding project and excess lumber was given to Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County. The impact of this project, originally designed to send new homes to Hurricane Katrina victims, now reaches into four Habitat communities in three states; a mighty accomplishment for a little church in Devon.

The idea that John McClintick conceived of and implemented four years ago, continues to flourish and attract new builders and participants every year. This year's competition took place in a new venue. In his quest to guarantee good weather conditions, John moved the event to a cavernous exhibit hall at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, PA. It proved to be a good move. The Expo Center was thrilled to have the builders as interesting entertainment for attendees at the Greater Philadelphia Construction Expo that ran concurrently with the Builders competition.

Many of the nine building teams have already committed to the next phase of the project, the 'Build-Out'. Here the framing packages for the homes are raised on location at their final sites. These houses will help fulfill the dream of home ownership for nine families as they take possession of their new homes and commence paying the zero-interest mortgages provided by Habitat for Humanity. This is a true gift of love from all those who gave of their time, money and talent to make life brighter for a 'stranger in need' who will enjoy and treasure that gift for many years to come.



The St. John's building team included: Mike Wagner, Tom Johnson, Rick Shinnars, Becky Wagner, Herb Thal and John Alexander (not in photo) from St Johns along with some extra pro help from local friends: Wayne Colflesh, Steve Tait, Lenny Hatch, Stuart Dixon, Ed Higgins, Brian McCarthy,



Rick Shinnars leads the way, but not without help from Mike Wagner and Herb Thal. Another great year, thank you for your commitment!

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW OFFICERS

ELDERS:

S.W. "Lee" Holt brings rarefied gifts to his second term as Elder in the soundness of his faith, his reliance on the teachings of Jesus, his experience as a previous Elder, and his career in law and finance. Lee perceives his call to serve as a response to the Lord's generosity and mercy that he has experienced throughout his life.

Debbie Railton brings to her first term, as Elder, her enjoyment of youth fellowship and her eagerness to assist in the Christian education of young people, for which her twelve years as a Sunday School teacher has well prepared her. Debbie also brings her unique experience in the leadership of St. John's, formerly as a Trustee, and subsequently as a Deacon.

DEACONS:

Kris Graham comes to her new position as Deacon with an eagerness to listen, learn and explore new opportunities founded on tradition. During a visit last summer to the sites of the Early Church in Greece and Turkey, Kris thought about Paul's journey and commitment, which lead her to wonder about her own calling. She realized that "we are still the Lord's hands and feet, eyes and ears. That is how I am called to serve."

Frank Hollinger brings an extensive career and his supportive experience guiding cub scouts to fill another supportive role, namely that of Deacon. When faced with opportunities in the past, Frank had a sense of being spiritually guided, and this impetus, led him to accept the invitation to serve as a Deacon.

Judy Mileto enters into the responsibility of Deacon once again with a desire to contribute to local mission projects and provide support to those within the church and larger community who are in need. She also senses a calling to provide pastoral care assistance, especially to senior citizens given the very positive support her own mother received.

Jim Netter looks forward to his second term as Deacon with a particular fondness for the kinds of contributions that Deacons make, especially in the care they give to other people. Jim has a deep appreciation for people at a disadvantage, and for the great value of treating each other as "if God were one of us."

TRUSTEES:

John McClintick will join the Trustees very well prepared as he enters his third term including a previous responsibility as Treasurer. John is eager to help engage the congregation for the well-being of the entire church family.

Lee McConnell will become a Trustee with the experience of this office at a fellow Presbyterian church. He also brings his own personal experience related to the prospective business of the Trustees. Lee approaches his new role as a "steward of God's resources," within which he will seek to help balance the needs of mission and expenditure.

Nancy Wolfe is eager to serve St. John's as she feels it is home. Nancy was raised at St. John's and is now raising her two children, Ian and Meggie here. She brings her experience in organization and professionalism to the Trustees as well as her commitment to serve God and her church family.

The Strawberry Festival Sunday, June 6

Bring your family, your friends, your neighbors, a blanket or lawn chair to St. John's annual Strawberry Festival. We will tempt your appetite with fresh strawberries and cake topped with whipped cream. We will excite your spirit with "joyful noise" performed by the St. John's Joy Messengers, the Youth Band and Youth Ensemble. This event is popular with anyone who enjoys Spring's most popular dessert and toe tapping music. We will gather on the lawn area to the right of the church following the worship service, about 10:45 a.m. Contact Cindy Wilson with questions.

(Rain will not dampen our spirits, Fellowship hall will be used in case of inclement weather!)

Come one come all !

*St. John's Progressive Dinner
Saturday, May 1*

*Beginning at 6:00 p.m. with appetizers
At the home of Don and Ginger Black*

Please contact:

Nancy Higgins, 610-644-3642 or

tomandnancy@verizon.net

Elizabeth Ator, 610-644-3634

EDAator@comcast.net

APRIL SESSION UPDATE

Our April 12, 2010 meeting began with the traditional All Boards Dinner to welcome new officers and to thank the officers who have completed their terms of service. Our gratitude goes out to retiring officers John Alexander, Brian Bouvier and Cammy Wagner (Session); Lisa Estabrook, Ron Hinderer, and Pam Schafer (Deacons); and Mark Ator, Ted Babi and Shellie Unger (Trustees). We welcome new Elders Lee Holt (with thanks for his completed three year term and more thanks for returning for another), Jim Little, Debbie Railton and Rich Scott; new Deacons Frank Hollinger, Kris Graham, Judy Mileto and Jim Netter; and new Trustees John McClintick, Lee McConnell and Nancy Wolfe. Special thanks to Cammy Wagner for providing yet another delicious meal that fed our bodies and a beautiful setting that nourished our fellowship.

The dinner was followed by an All Boards meeting facilitated by Lisa Howell to discuss the goals our officers have established, evaluate our progress and determine next steps to build on that progress. Bob Miller presented information on Growing our Membership and Engaging Existing Members; Mike Wagner talked about Deepening Spiritual Enrichment; and Stephanie Eft shared news on Strengthening Children and Youth Programs. While we were pleased to note progress toward all goals, the officers are also dedicated to continuing to improve and strengthen these key areas of focus.

The Boards then adjourned to their separate meetings. Kathy Shaw began the Session meeting with a devotion on the theme of "Commencement." Session acknowledged with gratitude \$440 received in response to the recent campaign for contributions to the Seminary Scholarship Fund, bringing us closer to our immediate goal of \$12,000 to meet our obligations to interns Thang Sum and Emily Chudy. Contributions will be accepted on an ongoing basis; please make checks payable to St. John's with a notation for "Seminarian Fund." We hope to exceed our goal so that we can continue to provide support to aspiring ministers.

Bob Miller reported increased attendance for both the Maundy Thursday worship service (71 in attendance) and Easter Sunday (255 worshipers). We continue to see many visitors in our midst; please take the opportunity to greet new faces and introduce visitors to our fellowship.

Session is looking for volunteers to form a Christian Life committee to support fellowship activities throughout the year and to develop new ideas. Betsy Miller and Lee Walsh have already offered to take on this assignment. If you would be interested in joining them, please contact Bob Miller (RGMDevon@aol.com) or Elizabeth Ator (EDAtor@comcast.net).

Please be sure to join us in a send-off for our beloved intern Thang Sum on Sunday, May 16th. Look for more information in this issue of the newsletter.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Ator

Current Board Members

Session

Class of 2011

Sue Chudy, Worship & Music
Jerre Lieberman, Worship & Music
Bob Miller, Membership Enrichment
Kathy Shaw, Christian Education

Class of 2012

Elizabeth Ator, Clerk of Session
Nancy Higgins, Administration
Mike Ruhl, Personnel
Mike Wagner, Christian Education

Class of 2013

Lee Holt, Christian Outreach
Jim Little, Membership Enrichment
Debbie Railton, Christian Education
Rich Scott, Music & Worship

Trustees

Class of 2011

Tom Johnson, President; Long Range Planning
Rick Shinnors, Church Properties
Susie Stetson, Secretary

Class of 2012

John Apathy, Administration
David Markle, Church Properties
Becky Wagner, Vice President; Church Properties

Class of 2013

John McClintick, Church Properties
Lee McConnell, Support Campaign, Investment Comm.
Nancy Wolfe, Personnel

Deacons

Class of 2011

Jim Friday, President
Deacon assignments
will be made in May



CE News

Recent Shenanigans

St. John's youth have been busy this winter and spring! If you missed any of the fun, here's an update on some of our recent adventures. Our spring lock-ins were held in early March for both age groups and had wonderful turnouts! Thanks to all who came to Beauty and the Beast, played marathon Grog, brought out the old school Nintendo skills, served the church by preparing Easter Week flyers, and participated in our own Cranium March Madness. If you missed us this time, keep posted for our the dates of our fall lock-ins and summer events! We also had a couple of hangout activities during spring break week for those remaining in exotic Pennsylvania. Students played Spoons (a flatware version of capture the flag), enjoyed pizza together, helped stuff Easter Eggs, attended Maundy Thursday service together, and participated in a friendly (but always competitive) bowling session at Devon Lanes. Keep posted to the Facebook group (St. John's Youth Ministries) or send Stephanie your email address to receive updates on future fun days!

Easter Egg Hunt

On Saturday, April 4, 27 children and their families participated in St. John's annual Easter Egg Hunt. It was such a joy to see so many shining faces enjoying the festivities and story of Easter together. Children were invited to guess how many jelly beans were in our jelly bean jar, and the closest guess was awarded the stuffed jar! Participants then filed outside to our two Egg Hunting areas to look for our candy filled eggs and fill their colorful baskets. After all the eggs were found (except for one which we credit Clara Steege for rescuing the week after Easter), families and children were invited back inside to enjoy their spoils, make an Easter "stained glass" plate craft, and hear the Easter story. Thanks to all who came and made this day such a special time for all of us!

Youth Christian Education Calendar

- May 1- Confirmation Stoles due to Mrs. Ator
- May 9- Mother's Day Church Service (Youth Led)
- May 16- Brunch to Celebrate Sum following church
- May 23- Confirmation (be at church at 8 am)
- May 27-June 5- Horse Show Parking! **Mission Trip youth required to work at least 2 shifts**
- June 6- 3rd Graders recite books of the Bible at church service and receive Bibles
- June 12- Teacher Appreciation Dinner (evening)
- June 13- Last Day of Sunday School
- June 13- Last Youth Fellowship meeting before summer break! Party Celebration
- June 26-July 2- Sr. High Mission Trip
- July ??- Middle School Trip (TBD)
- Aug. 15-21 Camp w/ Bryn Mawr Pres (5-12 grades)
- Aug. 22-26- VBS: Joseph's Journey (5-8pm daily)
- Summer Amusement Park Trip- TBD

Sunday School Teacher 's Appreciation Dinner

Saturday, June 12

Invitations will be coming in May

Youth Fellowship

All youth are invited to join us for youth fellowship on Sunday evenings. Middle school (6-8 grades) meets at the Carriage House from 4:30 to 6pm, and Senior High (9-12 grades) meets from 6:30 to 8pm. Our weekly routine includes about 45 minutes of games and hangout time mixed with about 45 minutes of study, discussion, and reflection. We are always open to your suggestions on how to make our time more meaningful and exciting! This group is YOUR group, and we want it to be something you help shape and grow. Recent games included Spud, Grog, Taboo, Spoons, Backwards Baseball, and Group Frisbee Golf. Recent discussion topics included comparing the Easter story in the different Gospels (complete with our own Easter egg hunt), talking about promises from the Bible books of Habakkuk and Malachi, and forgiveness. We've also been blessed to have several St. John's adults come and share their stories about faith and life with us. We have a great core group for each age group, but we are always excited to welcome new faces and ideas! Hope to see you soon!

Mission Trip

Our Summer 2010 High School Mission Trip is coming up quickly! From June 26 to July 2, more than 20 St. John's youth and adults will be serving God alongside the community of Calais, Maine near the Canadian border. The first three deposit/payments are already due (total amount \$350). There are no further payments due at this time as we anticipate the total cost per student to remain around \$350 total. If you are interested and have not yet committed with payment to Stephanie, please do so ASAP! Spots could fill any day, and we cannot guarantee spaces that have not been reserved with payment. Likewise, if you have turned in payments and have found you are unable to attend, please contact Stephanie ASAP so that we can work on finding a replacement for you. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee refunds on deposits and payments that have already been made due to our financial commitment for all registered spots on the trip. We are still in need of at least one male adult chaperone, so give it some prayerful consideration and contact Stephanie or Kathy Shaw with interest. Thanks to those participating, and please keep us in your prayers leading up to this summer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFERING

Since September, our Sunday School students have raised more than \$150 through their classroom offerings. At the beginning of the year, the children voted to donate this year's offering to the Heifer Project. Please encourage your students to continue to bring an offering to Sunday School. While each family will have their own practices, we encourage youngsters to take on chores to earn the funds they contribute as a means of understanding how our gifts are returned to God. We thank you for your support!

HORSE SHOW PARKING . . . It's Coming & We Need Your Help!

In late May, St. John's will again be parking cars for the Devon Horse Show in order to raise funds for youth fellowship, youth mission trips, and benevolence organizations that we support.

Our CE committee will be calling to check and see if you can help out this year and you will also be able to sign-up at church!

May 27 to June 5

VBS AUGUST 22 - 26

JOSEPH'S JOURNEY FROM PRISON TO PALACE

We have selected our dates and theme for Summer 2010 Vacation Bible School! Our theme will be Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace. The program will include journeys through an Egyptian marketplace to help experience the story, activities within the Bible lessons, crafts, games, and lots of goofy songs. VBS will be held from **Sunday, August 22 to Thursday, August 26 from 5 to 8pm**. All are welcome! If you are interested in signing up your children or receiving more information, please contact Stephanie. We will also need volunteers for adult leaders and teen helpers! **See you in Egypt this August!**

St. John's Presbyterian Church
First Quarter Financial Summary

Income	Jan-Mar 2010	Budget
Envelopes	99,173	109,689
Plate	4,471	3,000
Other Income*	<u>-- 8,578</u>	<u>9,050</u>
Total Income	112,222	121,739
Expenses		
Benevolence**	23,725	23,725
Personnel	67,936	69,047
Operations & Maintenance**	31,129	31,869
Christian Program	5,362	6,318
Contingency Expense	<u>0</u>	<u>125</u>
Total Expense	128,152	131,084

*Other Income includes interest, prior year surplus, parking lot.

** Benevolence, Planned Maintenance and Operating Reserve are accrued on a monthly basis. Planned Maintenance and Operating Reserve is not used unless needed for unexpected expenses on the church or manse. \$1,981 has been placed in the Planned Maintenance account and \$250 in the Operating Reserve account for emergency use. Benevolence is paid out on a schedule designated by the Outreach Committee.

Wellington Fund
First Quarter Summary

Value as of 1/1/2010:	Dividend:	1 st Quarter Gain/Loss	
\$263,549.29	\$1,825.06	\$8,039.44	
Value as of 3/31/2010	% Return	\$273,413.79	3.74%

WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE OUR ST. JOHN'S GRADUATES?

Katie Markle Experiences Uganda

I spent my previous college term studying abroad in Uganda through the School for International Training's (SIT) development studies program. I lived with a family, took development courses, traveled, and conducted an independent research project. It was an incredibly potent mix of adventure, disheartenment, challenges, and fun. Even now, after a few months of reflection, I am still unable to neatly sum up the experience or lessons learned. Although I had volunteered previously in rural India and Uganda and had seen poverty and illness before, my experiences over the past four months broke my heart to a new extreme and rearranged my thoughts on development and my potential role in it.

Uganda is a country littered with the good intentions of foreign countries. You can't walk one block without passing ten NGOs and seeing a UN vehicle drive by. And still, despite all these interventions, Uganda struggles to meet the basic needs of its citizens. True, the problems are great, but NGO efforts have also been very ineffective. I admire the good heartedness and sense of humanity possessed by people who work to help develop African nations. But these kind intentions must be paired with a certain modesty recognizing the limits of one's own knowledge. Ugandans are the experts on Uganda. Rather than stating "Let me help you," we should be asking "How can I help you?" or even "Would you like some assistance?"

The most inspiring NGOs I saw in Uganda were Ugandan-led. Slum Aid Project trains slum residents to be Key Community Volunteers who work among their neighbors to reduce domestic violence, encourage family planning, resolve conflicts, and generally help those in need. Similarly a farmers' cooperative I visited worked for their own self-betterment by systematically analyzing their challenges, brainstorming solutions, and collectively putting their ideas into action.

Uganda does need foreigners to care and contribute, but donations and projects also require a component of self-direction. Projects should consult with Ugandans when formatting their aims and methods. Efforts to empower Ugandans by giving them the skills to analyze their situations (like the famers' cooperative) or through micro lending should be encouraged. Ultimately effective change comes from the experts: Ugandans.

-Katie, Conestoga HS Class of 2007 ; Carleton College, Northfield MN class of 2011

Spent fall semester 2009 in Kampala, Uganda through School for International Training (SIT) Summer of junior year in HS worked at an orphanage in rural India; summer of 2008 worked at an orphanage in Uganda.

TRUSTEES

The new Board of Trustees for 2010 assumed office officially on April 12. A plethora of new church and property maintenance and long term maintenance items materialized to greet them.

Work day, organized by Becky Wagner was a huge success and eliminated much of the ever-present "to do list". As is customary a prime time luncheon was served by caterer Ken Dilloway (Church Financial Secretary). **Thank you, Ken!** The group of volunteers who served the physical needs of the church are *thanked* and *praised* by the Trustees for their valuable assistance and for the great fellowship that was provided by all.

We've gotten both fellowship hall and the McMillan rooms painted. The roof has been fixed over the organ loft and the two roof boots plus the gutter over the entrance door in the carriage house have also been fixed. We've installed a new microwave space-saver in the carriage house kitchen and we are updating the phone and computer systems to Fios. The ramp outside of fellowship hall has been redone and next the Trustees will be looking into getting new carpet for the sanctuary.

The Trustees continue to evaluate, prioritize, and plan ahead to insure that we have a beautiful facility to share as we focus on the real mission of the church "serving the Lord, helping others and growing as Christians."

submitted by Tom Johnson

SESSION UPDATE

Elizabeth Ator led a devotion based on the Parable of the Great Physician (Matt 9:10-13, Mark 2:15-17, Luke 5: 29-32). In this passage, the Pharisees are questioning Jesus' disciples as to why He was dining with tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees are experts at following the letter of the Law; they portray themselves as above the people, needing to be heard and with a right to question Jesus and his followers. They attempt to trick or embarrass Jesus and the disciples with their vast knowledge, but show their narrow-mindedness when they overlook the obvious. Jesus responds to them, saying, "Those who are well have no need of a physician ...". Then He orders them, "Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" This parable seems to be asking if we are like the Pharisees, or are we compassionate, empathetic and forgiving? Do we follow the spirit of Jesus' message, or the Commandments alone?

Elizabeth facilitated a discussion on the roles of the other people in the story: the "tax collectors and sinners"- tax collectors were typically grossly unethical, known for taking what wasn't theirs; the "sinners", possibly a metaphor for the rest of us; and Levi, the host of the dinner. Levi a tax collector himself, had recently been invited by Jesus to, "Follow me." Elizabeth illustrated two related texts (Hosea 6:6 and Luke 6:36) where we are instructed first by Hosea, speaking in the name of the Lord, "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice..." and later by Jesus, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Elizabeth then opened the meeting with prayer.

St. John's Memorial Garden News



We have been busy in the garden and want to thank everyone who helped us on workday. Many hands make light work! *Judy Mileto*, is a welcomed new member of our garden committee and if anyone else is interested in joining the committee please let Earline know. Our current committee; Chrissy Bouvier, Earline Eck, Christine Markle, Judy Mileto, and Charlie Scott would enjoy new gardeners.

This month a new tree will be planted on the left front corner to help manage the care of that space and the wall will be undergoing repairs as well.

If anyone would like to order a memorial plate please let us know, it is a wonderful way to remember loved ones.

Once again we will try to organize a group of individuals who enjoy gardening and can volunteer to help with the weeds over the summer months. If you are interested please contact Earline Eck, 610-644-5418 or email htieck@aol.com

Deacon's

- ♥ Thank you to those families/individuals who helped with our Easter React food items.
- ♥ Call the church office (610-688-5222) or call Terru Be;zer if you need transportation to St. John's, or if you can provide transportation.
- ♥ Care giving: If you find yourself in need of a little TLC (Tender Loving Cooking!), because of health concerns or any difficult situation please let Barb McConnell know.
- ♥ The beautiful sanctuary flowers are created by Cowen's Flowers in Wayne and billed directly to the sponsor at a cost of \$47.70. Sponsors may take the flowers after the service. If you would like to sponsor flowers please sign up on the flower calendar on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or call

Learn What's Going on at Stjohnsdevon.com!

Have you taken a look recently at our church website, www.stjohnsdevon.com? You might be surprised by all it has to offer! With just a click or two of your mouse you can

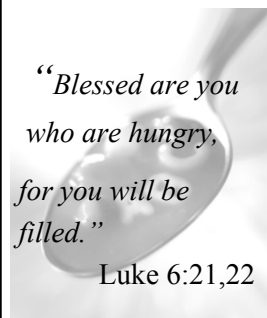
- **Listen to recordings of Sunday sermons**, with sound professionally recorded and edited by John Senior. You can either play them directly from the website or download them in .mp3 format to your computer or the player of your choice. Why not tell your friends or extended family about your favorite sermon and ask them to listen to it? Text copies (in PDF format) of selected sermons are also available.
- **View or download copies of recent newsletters and Sunday bulletins** in PDF format.
- **Check the church calendar.** The online calendar is up to date with St. John's activities. Check it out and see what you might be missing. Are you afraid you'll forget about an event? Don't worry...the calendar will even send you a reminder! Just click on the activity, and then click on "Set Reminder". The site will ask you how long before the event you would like to be reminded, and to what e-mail address you would like your reminder sent.
- **Sign up for an activity or submit your pledge.** Many of our St. John's programs require a sign-up, but how can you do that if you're not in church? Don't worry, you can register on-line for activities such as the Progressive Dinner (sign-up posted currently) and Supper at St. John's. You can also sign up for your Devon Horse Show parking shifts through the website (coming soon!). During our Stewardship Campaign in the fall you can also submit your pledge in a confidential and secure manner through the website.
- **Download forms required for youth activities**, including the Medical Consent and Permission form and the Driver Permission forms, available on the Children & Youth page.
- **Learn more about the many programs offered at St. John's.** Short summaries of all of our programs are available, with a particular focus on upcoming events. There's something at St. John's for everyone, so take a look for a program that fits your interests, or a way that you might get more involved.

Even with all that's available on the website, we're always looking for ways to make the site even more useful. If you have ideas for additional content or features to add to the website, please contact Mark Ator, webmaster (mator@comcast.net) or Nancy Higgins, Elder for Administration (tomandnancy@verizon.net).

Women's Biblical Reflections

Please join us at 8 am on Sunday mornings in the Carriage House as we build community and grow in our faith. We are just starting a new book by Thomas R. Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*. Since its first publication in 1941, by the renowned Quaker teacher Thomas Kelly, it has been universally embraced as a truly enduring spiritual classic. Plainspoken and deeply inspirational, it gathers together five compelling essays that urge us to center our lives on God's presence, to find quiet and stillness within modern life, and to discover the deeply satisfying and lasting peace of the inner spiritual journey.

If you have questions please call or speak with Nancy Davis, Betsy Friend, or Debbie Railton.



Suppers at St. John's Returns in September

For the whole family!

Every Wednesday (except 11/24)

September 22 - December 1



A special thank you to our retiring church officers:

Session - John Alexander, Brian Bouvier,
Cammy Wagner

Deacons - Lisa Estrabrook, Ron Hinderer,
Pam Schafer

Trustees - Mark Ator, Ted Babiy, Shellie Unger.

They have served with love, dedication, and care over the past three year and their gifts from God have truly been a blessing to St. John's.

LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYERS. . .

Lord, we lift these individual and their families, asking your healing grace to surround them with a peace which can only come from You. Bless them and the others among us, whose needs we may not know, but whose needs You know. Help us to minister with love and compassion to members of our extended St. John's family.



PRAYERS FOR GOD'S HEALING. . .

Barbara Alexander, recovering from stent surgery
Ginger Black, is in treatment for a lung condition
Adele Craufurd, in Lifecare Hospital for an infection
Elizabeth DeMarco, daughter of Wendy DeMarco recovering from eye surgery
Sue Hardin, recovering from shoulder surgery
Lee and Virginia Holt, as Virginia's father is placed in hospice care
Craig Koch, in treatment for a bone loss disorder
Evelyn Kronmiller, recovering from foot surgery
Rob and Amy Lord, as Amy's father is placed in hospice care in Dunwoody
Zoe Tinley, as she continues treatment for Pancreatic cancer.
Agnes Ulrich, recovering from a fall
Victor Wilson, is recovering at home following shoulder surgery

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S PEACE WHICH PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING . . .

Sue and Frank Hollinger, mourning the death of Sue's sister

PRAYERS OF JOY . . .

Congratulations *Beth Kephart*, her new book, *The Heart Is Not A Size*, based on her experience on the St. John's mission trip to Juarez Mexico
Congratulations *Lillian Keenan*, celebrating 103 years of life!
Congratulations to *Barbara McClintick*, who was honored at a luncheon celebrating her 25 years of service with Boeing Company as Lead Dynamic Engineer on V22 Osprey program
Congratulations to *Lori Palmer and Randy Mileto*, son of Chris and Judy Mileto, on their marriage

A Summer Missions Opportunity

YoungLives, an evangelical ministry to teen moms in Northeast Philadelphia and Norristown, is looking for people who would be interested in babysitting at camp with us this summer. You must be 18 or older (14-17 year olds may also come as long as they are accompanied by a parent or someone else 18 or older.) The dates are August 3-9 and the camp is Lake Champion, 3 hours away in Glen Spey, New York. If you would be interested **please** contact Debbie Perkins, Area Director for YoungLives at 484-947-1429 debperkins17@gmail.com or Ellen Moeller, ellmoe@aol.com



Congratulations Sum!

As we bid a tearful goodbye to our dear intern Thang Sum, we recognize that our farewell also marks a celebration as he moves a step closer in his call to ordained service. Sum's graduation from Palmer Theological Seminary is on Saturday, May 22.

Please keep Sum and Anna in prayer as Sum continues his job search, with the goal of a pastorate in an American Baptist church. Of course, don't miss our St. John's celebration of Sum the preceding Sunday, May 16, following worship. Contact Nancy Higgins or Bob Miller if you would like to help.



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Upcoming Events

May 1

May 16

May 23

May 27 - June 5

June 6



St. John's Progressive Dinner

Celebration Brunch for Sum

Confirmation

Horse Show Parking

Third Graders receive Bibles &

Strawberry Festival following church

The Reverend Dr. Victor M. Wilson, Pastor: Victor.Wilson@StJohnsDevon.com

Reverend Howard Friend, Parish Associate: hfriend@prodigy.net

Stephanie Eft, Director of Christian Education: Stephanie.eft@StJohnsDevon.com

Sum Thang, Theological Intern: tSum@eastern.edu

Emily Chudy, Theological Intern: chudye@gmail.com

Rody Gratton, Administrative Assistant: Rody.Gratton@StJohnsDevon.com

Visit our website: www.StJohnsDevon.com

Please contact any member of our newsletter team with suggestions and contributions.

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Submit your articles or any news to Earline Eck, htieck@aol.com, 610-644-5418

DEADLINE: the 15th day of the month