

THE EPISTLE

JULY 2025

The theme of our June Second Sunday Sharing was “Stump the Rector”—and boy did we start off strong by rolling into considerations of the Trinity right off the bat! We had a wonderful discussion, but I was asked to consider some additional questions that I didn’t have the opportunity to address previously, so here are the unanswered questions lingering after Stump the Rector, now with answers!



“Is the Coffee Shop Office Hour off site helpful? More work for you than helpful to connect with others? What usually happens during this time?”

I do find Coffee Shop Office Hours helpful. Interest has waned a bit—from 3–5 visitors most weeks to 1–2, and occasionally none—but the beauty of this model is its flexibility. If no one shows up, I can still work remotely (often more productively than in my office), enjoy more of Midland, and support a local business. I’d love to see you at Grove Tea Lounge on Thursdays from 9 to 11am!



“How could the congregation be most helpful to you and your family, especially during busy times of the year? What would give you a break? Stay away, bring meals, mow the lawn, help with child care/transportation, cat sitting...”

This is such a thoughtful and generous question! In all honesty, the biggest help is when we work together to keep the life of the church running smoothly. Things like shared leadership, reliable follow-through, and building systems that support everyone make a lasting difference, and help me focus on what I’m called to do. Encouragement matters, too. If something here has made a difference in your life, I’d love to hear about it—it helps more than you know.



Will we ever return to drinking from a common cup/being able to intinct ourselves?

I admit this one is a bit of a stumper, mostly because there’s no simple answer. In Episcopal tradition, drinking from a “common cup” (a shared chalice) is the norm for Communion. Our current practice of intinction (dipping bread into wine) by Eucharistic Ministers at stations has remained in place since COVID; other Episcopal churches generally use some combination of drinking from a common cup, intinction, or drinking from individual cups, at stations or at a rail.

There are many layers to the decision: scientific data about disease transmission, differing theologies of Communion and directions from bishops, the number of volunteers needed to serve, what feels most reverent to each person, and even the materials of the bread and wine. The general consensus from my reading is that drinking from a shared chalice (particularly with silver, fortified wine, and properly wiping between sips) is actually considered relatively safe. Intinction by communicants is considered the least sanitary, and is prohibited or strongly discouraged in many dioceses, including the most recent written guidance I could find from ours (in 2022). That said, actual practices vary widely.



So: I don’t know yet. This is still an open question, and I’ve heard strong feelings from perspectives that are at odds. While I can’t give a definitive timeline or direction at this time, I remain open—and genuinely interested in hearing what matters most to you.



June Worship Links

Below are direct links to last month's worship services.
If viewing electronically, **click on the date to view the video from that day.**

[7th Sunday of Easter \(June 1\)](#)

[Holy Eucharist](#)

[Day of Pentecost \(June 8\)](#)

[Holy Eucharist](#)

[1st Sunday after Pentecost \(June 15\)](#)

[Holy Eucharist](#)

[2nd Sunday after Pentecost \(June 22\)](#)

[Holy Eucharist](#)

[3rd Sunday after Pentecost \(June 29\)](#)

[Holy Eucharist](#)

You can find older services on this page:

<https://www.youtube.com/@st.johnsepiscopalchurchmid8944/streams>

WE APPRECIATE YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!

St. John's depends on the generosity of our friends and members. Pledges and gifts to St. John's can either be made by check and sent via US Mail to 405 N. Saginaw Rd., Midland, MI 48640, or by visiting tinyurl.com/Give2SJEC. This link will take you to a screen where you will enter the amount of your donation, and

designate a specific purpose or fund. Enter your email address as well, and you'll receive an electronic receipt.



You can also access electronic giving from the upper right-hand corner of our [webpage](#), from the pinned post on our [Facebook page](#), or by pointing your phone's camera to this QR code.



If you have any questions about your continued financial support of St John's, please call the church office and your call will be directed to the appropriate staff person. Thank you for your generosity!



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES



we have a new assisting bishop!

introducing the rt. rev. anne hodes-copple

We are so excited for Bishop Anne to join the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes! She will officially begin her ministry with us in mid-August and stick with us until we consecrate our first bishop diocesan in April 2027. Since she will be primarily working remotely, let's help Bishop Anne get to know our diocese, parishes, and communities. **Scan the QR code to the right or visit <https://wkf.ms/3I8LC7m> to share stories, anecdotes, or really anything she should know about the Mitten! You can also send an email to info@greatlakesepiscopal.org**



the feast
online

being & becoming

[CLICK HERE to read the most recent issue of THE FEAST ONLINE, the newsletter of the Diocese of the Great Lakes](#)



FLASH FLOODS IN TEXAS HILL COUNTRY. PLEASE HELP.

Dozens are dead and dozens remain missing following the recent flash flooding in Texas Hill Country. Episcopal Relief & Development is working with the Diocese of West Texas to provide support in the coming days and weeks. Many in Kerrville, in their diocese and across Texas have personal connections to the missing campers and staff members impacted by this devastating crisis. As the scope of the disaster continues to unfold, we need your help. Please make an urgent tax-deductible donation to Episcopal Relief & Development today.

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)



The July **2nd Sunday Sharing** is **July 13** after the 10 am worship service in Williams Hall. The topic is "Buildings and Grounds" presented by Dave Whisler and John Marcou, facilitated by John Adams. Come hear about all the projects going on in and around our facility.



Masonry Work

Courtyard



St. John's
representing during
Pride Month



Community



Friday, July 11
7-10 pm

St. John's Episcopal Church
405 N Saginaw Rd, Midland, MI



Play our games or bring your favorites! Bring your friends or join in with us! All ages welcome!

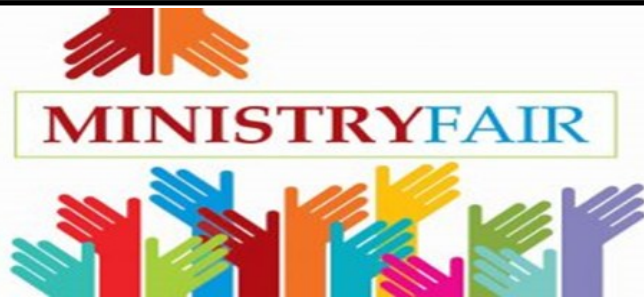


Anna, Drew and Lizzie Albright are having a **Pop Can and Bottle Drive**! All funds raised will go to support their 4H projects. Drop off your donations by July 31 at 216 Nakoma Drive, Midland, Monday thru Friday, 9 am to 9 pm. If you have more than 1-2 garbage bags full and need pick-up, text Toshia at 309-712-7720 to arrange.



The **College for Congregational Development (CCD)** will be meeting at St. John's July 20-25. Because such a substantial footprint of our building will be in use and Mo. Alissa will be an active participant, many regular activities are in a different location or canceled: e.g., **no Wed. Eucharist or Thurs. coffee shop office hours; check the calendar or contact the office for meeting locations.**

LADIES, SAVE THE DATE! St. John's *First Annual Ladies Prayer Breakfast* will be **November 1**. Contact Denée Koonce (deknee@me.com) if you'd like to express your creativity as a *Table Captain*.



SAVE THE DATE!

2nd Sunday Sharing on **September 14** will be a **MINISTRY FAIR**! All committees and groups at St. John's are invited to participate. Table sign-ups will begin in August (see below), but if you would like more information or want to help with organizing, contact Deb Blackhurst.

SIGN UP NOW!

MINISTRY FAIR 2025 will take place on **September 14** during the Fellowship Hours following the services. If you would like your St. John's ministry to be represented, contact Deb Blackhurst to reserve table space. (dablackhurst@aol.com / 989-859-3214)



VBS 2025 - TRUE NORTH

Finding your way in a world gone wild.

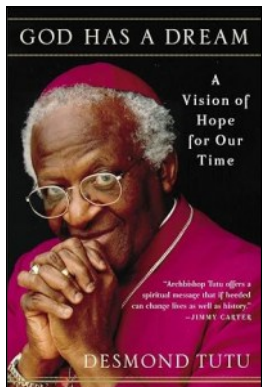


Library News

by Marnie Bash

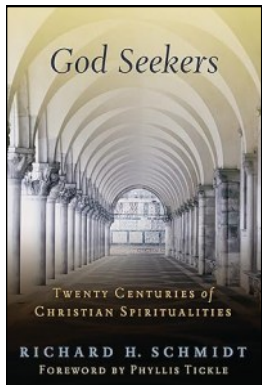
Books currently on the Feature Shelves are an eclectic group by Episcopalian and Anglican writers. Several are by former Presiding Bishops of the Episcopal Church, one by a former rector of St John's, and others by well known Anglicans. A few are about the Episcopal Church directly, and several look at other writers in the Christian/Anglican traditions. Lots of interesting and fun stuff!

Our Presiding Bishops need to get their ideas across to the other bishops and to the people in the pews; this often results in published books. Frank Griswold wrote *Going Home: An Invitation to Jubilee*; Katharine Jefferts Schori gave us *The Heartbeat of God, A Wing and a Prayer*, and other books; and Michael Curry reached out with *Crazy Christians*, all fascinating reading.



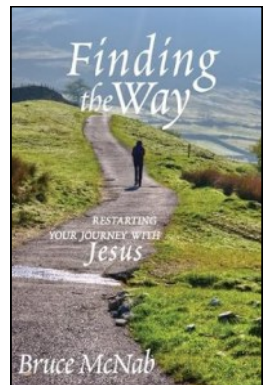
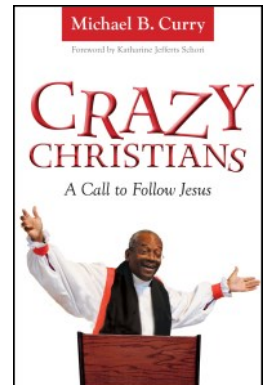
On a totally different topic, Anglican writer Alister McGrath wrote *In the Beginning*, a story of the development of the King James Bible, about all the translators and all the difficulties of pulling them - and the translation - together. Other Anglican writings include Bishop Tutu's *God Has a Dream* and *Made for Goodness*, N T (Tom) Wright's *Surprised by Joy*, and Rowan Williams' *Lost Icons* and *Tokens of Trust*.

Two books about Episcopalians by Episcopalians are Andrew Doyle's *Unabashedly Episcopalian*, and Jay Johnson's *Dancing with God*. Our former rector, Bruce McNab, weighs in with *Finding the Way*, and Nurya Parish, a priest of our diocese, offers *Resurrection Matters*.



Three books give us a wonderful overview of Christian/English spirituality through the ages, with brief discussions of writers and their spiritual visions and excerpts from their writing. *God Seekers*, by Richard Schmidt is subtitled: *Twenty Centuries of Christian Spirituality*. The Little Goddings Community created *The English Spirit: the Little Gidding Anthology of English Spirituality*, and Richard Schmidt also edited *Glorious Companions: Five Centuries of Anglican Spirituality*. Dip into any of these books and learn about folks with whom you're familiar, and then meet some new and interesting people.

As mentioned, this is a very eclectic group of books, but they provide a lovely way for us, as 21st century Episcopalians, to dip into our heritage and learn more of where we come from and how we came to our current beliefs and understandings. Enjoy!



BCP Spotlight

by Ellen McVey

The Book of
Common Prayer

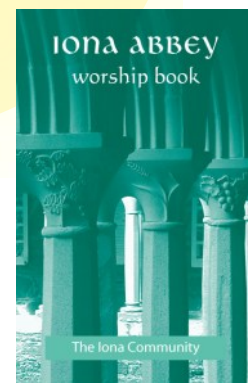


1979

"Hear me, this is the table not of the church but of Jesus Christ. It is made ready for those who love God and who want to love God more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little; you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time or ever before, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is Christ who invites you and God's will that those who want God should meet God here."

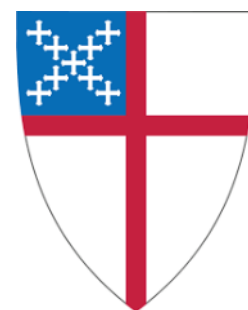
Recently Alissa has been inviting us to the eucharist with these words, followed by the more familiar Offertory Sentence – "Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God."

This invitation is not in the BCP; it is adapted from an invitation in *The Iona Abbey Worship Book* [1]. The description of the worship book states: *"The services and resources in The Iona Abbey Worship Book reflect the Iona Community's commitment to the belief that worship is all that we are and all that we do, both inside and outside the church, with no division into the 'sacred' and the 'secular'. They draw on many traditions, including the Celtic, and aim to help us to be fully present to God, who is fully present to us – in our neighbour, in the political and social activity of the world around us, and in the very centre and soul of our being..."*



Iona Abbey is located on the Scottish isle of Iona, off the West Coast of Scotland. It is considered by many to be a holy, "thin" place. The monastery founded by St. Columba is considered one of the most influential in the British Isles; it was a focal point for the spread of Christianity throughout Scotland and northern Britain.

The Episcopal Church (TEC) is denominational descendants of—and partners with—the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The flag of TEC, which is the official "logo", includes a Cross of St. Andrew, in recognition of the fact that the first American bishop was consecrated in Scotland. This cross is made up of nine crosslets or mini crosses, which represent the *nine dioceses that met in Philadelphia in 1789 to form the Protestant Episcopal Church of the U.S.A.*



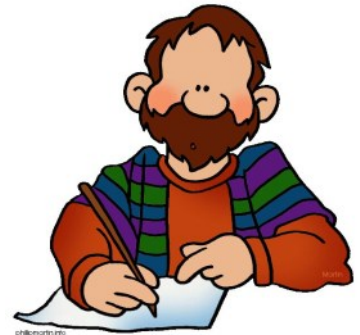
So, it seems fitting that we hear the words from our spiritual siblings in Scotland inviting all who want to meet God to come to God's table.

[1] *Iona Abbey Worship Book* (Wild Goose Publications: 2001), <https://www.ionabooks.com/iona-abbey-worship-book.html>.

Church History in Three Minutes (or Less)

by Eric Carlson

Last month, I mentioned the Protestant Episcopal Church being founded as a consequence of the American Revolution. Here's how that came about. It's important to remember that most American colonies started as places to legally be something other than Anglican. In 1700, 40000 of the 43000 Anglicans in the Colonies were in Virginia and Maryland, and they were barely tolerated in the other Colonies. In 1701, Thomas Bray founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to send missionaries to the "unbelievers" (as Anglicans considered Catholics and the various Protestants in places like Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island). The SPG's missions were very successful, establishing hundreds of Anglican congregations before the American Revolution. Although their member numbers were small, they were influential since they included royal officials and wealthy families.



One consequence of growing Anglican prominence was desiring their own bishop. (Officially, the Colonies were in the Diocese of London!) Non-Anglicans were alarmed. Founding Father John Adams viewed "apprehension of Episcopacy" as a major cause of the American Revolution. More pamphlets were published in opposition to bishops than to the better-known Stamp Act. Bishops symbolized the tyrannical authority of British political institutions. Everyone knew that bishops had to take the Oath of Supremacy, recognizing the English monarch as the supreme authority in all matters spiritual and temporal, rejecting the authority of any other "prince, person, prelate, state or potentate," and swearing to defend the English monarch's authority against all opponents.

Ordination also required taking the Oath of Supremacy. Many clergy in the Colonies kept their Oath and opposed the Revolution. They fled after the British defeat, creating a profound clergy shortage. Ordinations required bishops, but British bishops couldn't consecrate bishops for America because Americans wouldn't take the Oath. In 1784, Samuel Seabury found Scottish bishops to consecrate him without taking the Oath, and in 1786, Parliament passed a law allowing foreign bishops to be consecrated in England without the Oath of Supremacy. William White and Samuel Provoost soon became the first American bishops consecrated that way. In 1789, having the three bishops necessary to consecrate more bishops, the Protestant Episcopal Church was officially born in Philadelphia. However, since many people doubted the validity of Seabury's Scottish consecration, a fourth bishop was consecrated in England. In 1792, all four made Thomas Clagett the Bishop of Maryland, the first bishop consecrated on American soil.

Men's Breakfast — Monday, August 4, 8:00 AM

fellowship

Join us at the Big Boy Restaurant at 1513 S. Saginaw Rd. for our monthly **Men's Breakfast**. Once in the restaurant, walk through the big room to the smaller room located at the southeast end of the restaurant to find our table.

JOIN US for food and fellowship!!



Each month the *Prayer Corner* includes the church's prayer list as well as the anniversaries and birthdays for the month. The prayer list is updated weekly and included in the Sunday morning worship service bulletins, along with the *Daily Prayers for the Wider Church*. The most recent version can be found at any time by clicking the "Announcements" link on the SJEC web page:

<https://www.sjec-midland.org/>



Please keep the following people in your prayers...

Cathy Chang & Juan Lopez, Susan & Bob, Dean, Char Bakeman, Betty Kirkley, Ronnie, Henry Youngquist, Chris, Yvonne, Linda & Dan, Lisa, Peggy, Zoy, the Eady family, Charlene Adams, Ruth Krotzer, Amy Worden, and Levi.

Give thanks with those celebrating July Birthdays...

1 - Josh Anderson	19 - Basil Clark
Kyle Mesler	21 - Mason Keelin
3 - Judith Monto	Ralph Rye
10 - Ella Plishka	24 - Grace Robinson
12 - Chad Garlinghouse	Cathy Strong
Jen Gruhzit	25 - Aaron Koonce
Bud Schartow	Gordon Roush
Fred Schuster	Zach Young
14 - Adam Philo	27 - Tracey Kempzell
Jim Stafanski	Jason Wright
15 - Abigail Garlinghouse	30 - Sheila Mesler
18 - Connor Dasbach	31 - Lisa Miller

Contact the church office

631-2260 / office@sjec-midland.org

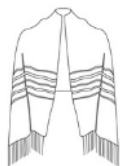
- to add someone to the prayer list
- inform us of your marriage date
- inform us of your birth date
- inform us if you've been baptized

Give thanks with those celebrating July Anniversaries...

12 - Greg & Patty Zettle
 15 - Dave & Karen Whisler
 18 - Stacy & Carol Daniels
 20 - Bill & Jenny Kent
 30 - Dave & Tracey Kempzell
 Zach Young & Sangeeta Mukhopadhyay



Pray WITHOUT CEASING



Members of the congregation who have received Pastoral Care training are available all year for friendly visits. Members who are in the hospital, nursing homes, or homebound may request a visit from our team to receive communion, a comforting prayer shawl or a pocket cross.

Team members include:

The Rev. Alissa Anderson and parishioners

Chris Esquivel
 Chris Lauckner
 Jan Marcou

Pat Roush
 Chris Schuster
 Fred Schuster

Call the parish office (989-631-2260) with a pastoral care request. In the case of a pastoral emergency outside office hours, please contact **The Rev. Alissa Anderson at 616-540-9102 (cell)**.

Robert B. Cook

9/22/1923—6/29/2025



Janet Cook, daughter of Robert Cook, has informed St. John's that her father passed away peacefully on Sunday, July 29, in Lincoln, California at the age of 101.

Robert and his wife Wilma were faithful members of St. John's and attended the weekly 8 AM Sunday service for over 40 years before they moved out to California to be closer to one of their 3 daughters.

✕ ✕ ✕

*Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord;
and let light perpetual shine upon him.*

✕ ✕ ✕

Photo taken in April 2025 in Lincoln, CA.

**How to Connect
with Rev. Alissa**

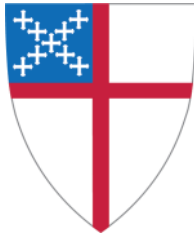
Schedule a time via Calendly

[CLICK HERE](#)



Drop in Coffee Shop Office Hours

Thurs., 9-11 AM. This month you'll find her at Grove Tea Lounge (2405 Abbott Rd.)



HEAD OF THE CHURCH - JESUS CHRIST
MINISTERS - ALL OUR MEMBERS

To get in touch with any Clergy, Staff Member or Member of the Vestry, call or email the parish office:

(989) 631-2260
office@sjec-midland.org

OUR VESTRY - OUR ELECTED LEADERS

Clergy

The Rev. Allissa G. Anderson *Rector*

Staff

Dr. Amon Eady *Director of Music*
Travis Fader *Organist*
Linda Germain *Children & Youth Director*
Colleen O'Dell *Bookkeeper*
Ellen Woodard *Administrative Assistant*
Nick Lowthian *Sexton*
Vickie Densmore *Janitor*

Class of 2026

Deb Blackhurst
Angela Garcia, *Co-Warden*
Gail Hoffman

Class of 2028

John Adams
Doug Germain
Ann Wright

Class of 2027

Eric Heglin, *Clerk*
Susan Rye
Fred Schuster, *Co-Warden*

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday

8:00am Holy Eucharist..... Sanctuary
 9:00am Fellowship Hour..... Williams Hall
 10:00am Holy Eucharist..... Sanctuary & Facebook
 11:00am Fellowship Hour..... Williams Hall
 11:30am Handbell Choir..... Bell Zone
 5:00pm NA..... McNab Room
 7:00pm Bible in the Basement (1st & 3rd)..... Activity Rm

Monday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

12:00pm AA..... McNab Room
 6:00pm Popup Bible Study..... Library

Tuesday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

10:00am Samaritan Fund Clients..... Library
 1:00pm Knitpickers..... Williams Hall



Wednesday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

12:00pm Holy Eucharist.... Chapel (use office entrance)
 1:00pm AA..... McNab Room
 5:30pm Tai Chi in the Garden..... Courtyard
 6:30pm Christian Meditation..... Activity Room

Thursday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

10:00am Love Knots (2nd & 4th)..... Williams Hall

Friday (Parish Office open 9am-noon)

12:00pm AA..... McNab Room
 5:45pm Peer Support Meeting..... McNab Room

Saturday

12:00pm AA..... McNab Room
 7:00pm NA..... McNab Room



The 10:00 am worship service is livestreamed on YouTube. At the time of the service, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.johnsepiscopalchurchmid8944/streams>. A live service will have a prominent "LIVE" badge on the video thumbnail or title indicating the video is currently being streamed live. Previous services can also be viewed here at any time.

*We joyfully gather to pray, worship, learn and serve as we seek to follow Jesus,
 and invite all to join us on a sacred journey of hope and transformation.*

The next edition of **The Epistle** will be published in early August. The final deadline for submissions is Monday, August 4. Please consider submitting stories of your group's activities, or news of coming events and activities.

If you are not currently receiving an email notice to tell you that **The Epistle** has been published on our website, and you would like to receive one, please email office@sjec-midland.org.

If you prefer a printed copy of The Epistle, they are available in the church office, the narthex and each entrance into the church building.



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
linking lives in the love of Christ



St. John's Episcopal Church

405 N. Saginaw Road • Midland, MI • 48640

(989) 631-2260 • office@sjec-midland.org

www.sjec-midland.org

Rector - The Rev. Alissa G. Anderson



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