

St. John's Church, Concord

Summer Update

June 2021



Dear St. John's Family,

Welcome to this Summer Update on all that is happening at St. John's Church. There is much going on in the life of our parish! This newsletter is full of different events for all ages to enjoy in our church: from outdoor movie nights to hikes (see p. 2 and 6), from fellowship around the firepit or a cup of coffee or tea (see p. 2 and 4), there are many ways for you to reconnect with St. John's.

I've been your Rector for nearly 6 months. I am so thrilled to be back with you all and more excited about our future together, living into all that God dreams for us and the people of our community.

One of the exciting things your Vestry has done since my arrival is to take a leap of faith and install an upgraded audio/video system in the sanctuary. Looking to the future, we at St. John's know that our online presence was not just a 2020 fluke but will be part of the way we reach out to those in our community. The new A/V system (see page 7) makes this future-focused commitment a reality. We will always have an online worship service at St. John's which will supplement our return to in-person worship.

Over the summer, St. John's will slowly add back some parts of our life together that feel "normal." In June, we will have in-person Coffee Hour following our 10:00 worship; thanks to Sandy McKinley and Nancy Diggins for their service as hosts. Music Director Jess Villante will play her violin so that we have live music for our worship, which will complement the pre-recorded hymns we will continue throughout the summer (see Jess's article on page 5).

Leadership at St. John's is committed to doing the "most loving action for everyone." After much discussion and with prayerful hearts, the Vestry decided the most loving action for our community is to keep wearing masks, even for those who are fully vaccinated. We recognize that there are many in our community - including children and the immunocompromised - who cannot be vaccinated; we pledge to keep everyone safe by having everyone wear a mask while in church for worship. The Vestry will continue to assess this protocol by meeting each month of the summer to consider how to bring back the pieces of life and worship at St. John's that we all are longing for.



I hope to see you at our summer events! Let us reconnect with each other and rekindle the fire of the Holy Spirit so that we can go forth into the world being God's hands and feet in loving service.

Peace and grace,
Rev. Jill

Outdoor Fun for Everyone!

FINAL FRIDAY MOVIE June & July

Under a summer night sky, our parking lot will become our movie theater.

Bring a chair, a blanket, and a friend!



THE GREAT CHURCH CAMP OUT!

July 17th - 18th

Put up your tent in our big field. There will be games and camp songs, or simply enjoy sitting around the campfire with friends. We'll provide S'mores, hot dogs, and a simple breakfast; you provide your drinks. The Parish Hall will be open for bathroom access. We'll end with a morning worship celebration in the field. Your friends are welcome to camp out with us!

July 17th - Arrive between 4-6pm

- 6-8pm Games, songs, s'mores & hotdogs

- 8-9pm Fellowship at the campfire

July 18th - Breakfast at 7am

Friday, June 25th at
8:00pm

Solo:

A Star Wars Story

(The story of one of *Star Wars* most beloved characters, Han Solo)



Friday, July 30th at 8:00pm

Mulan

(A fearless young woman risks everything to become one of China's greatest warriors)

Friday Night Fun in August!

An evening for both adults and children! Each Friday evening two events will happen simultaneously: VBS and "Kindle & Connect." After VBS, children will join their parents at the fire for a snack of s'mores.

Fantastic Beasts of the Bible: A Magically Fun VBS

Coming exclusively to Saint John's every Friday in August - Fantastic Beasts of the Bible (and how to care for them). Get ready for some magical fun and experience the wonders of God's handiwork!

We're having a mini VBS for kids aged 4-11. They'll learn about Dragons and Talking Donkeys, Angels and Ants with stories, games, crafts and more!

Fridays in August from 7-8pm

KINDLE AND CONNECT

For parents, adults, and teens

Hang out by our firepit in our big field, enjoying some grown-up time while kids learn about God's magical creation at VBS.

Bring your chair and beverages and enjoy an evening of fellowship with your St. John's friends

Children will join us around the fire at 8pm for a snack of s'mores

Fridays in August from 7-8:30pm

Guatemala Update

From Burt Blackburn

Our brothers and sisters in Guatemala are still very much impacted by COVID. Latest report from the eastern part of the country from Rev. Marben Juarez in Mariscos on Lago de Izabalm via Zoom this past Monday (May 24th) was that the COVID vaccine is slowly becoming available. The government has started vaccinating health care workers and those over 70 years of age. Hopefully other age groups and those with medical issues will be started in the next few weeks.

Food challenges continue to impact many areas due the situation with COVID and the impact of last year's hurricanes.

For young people the education system has been upended with the closure of schools. Many young people have not continued with their education since many families do not have the means to purchase computers or internet service. Church services have been similar to our situation with Zoom and Facebook gatherings. The good news is that many churches have continue their services even though faced with the technology challenges.

Rev. Marben did share that the Diocese of Guatemala has been very supportive of the priests both pastorally and their salaries have been maintained thanks to Bishop Romero and his team. He also shared that one of the blessings of this time has been the support of the American churches.

Our parish continues to support the church in San Andres by paying the monthly rent for the facility. We also sent financial assistance to Padre Miguel and his family for medicine and care when they were suffering with the COVID virus. Please keep them in your prayers as they continue to recover.

I have included the English translation of an email I received this week from Padre Miguel:

Brother Burt,

Good night, thank you for your message and the prayers that continue towards us. It has been two months since we no longer have covid-19, only the consequences are very strong and desperate, and it is a very slow recovery process. We were 4 who got infected – I, Roselia, Esdras and Angel – the reactions are different, but we are coming out little by little.

The chicken and vegetables project was a great blessing for the families who benefited, now they have experience and a place where to grow what helps the economy. If it is possible to receive other help, it will be good, because there is always a lot of need with these families. We have to take food to 206 families in different places.

We celebrate Pentecost with joy and pray for you. Please say hello to Rev. Jill.

A hug from a distance but with a lot of love.
Padre Miguel



Fr. John Sorensen & Burt Blackburn with Padre Miguel, Rosalia, and their son Esdras in 2017

Outreach to St. Mary's Food Cupboard

Saint Mary's Food Cupboard in Chester distributes items to 200 families each month. They are thankful for the food & personal care items that are delivered twice a month by Saint John's volunteers.

We continue to collect household cleaning products for St. Mary's Food Cupboard - especially the disinfectant types (Lysol, Mr. Clean, Pine-Sol, Clorox, etc.) PLUS toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent and dish soap. Personal care items are a constant need, with the most requested toiletries including toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, sunscreen, feminine hygiene products, etc. We also provide food items including cereal, canned vegetables & meat, peanut butter, pasta, spaghetti sauce and Spaghetti-Os.

Donations can be dropped off during Parish Office hours Monday - Friday between 9:30 am to 1:30 pm and on Sunday morning after church services. We have boxes just inside the Parish Hall for these items. For any questions, please email Mary Alice Peeling at mapeeling@outlook.com.

Thursday Morning Café

Drop into the parish hall for coffee or sit on the terrace with some iced tea on select Thursdays; we'll provide drinks & light continental breakfast items. Visit with the St. John's friends you've been missing!

June 24th from 9:00-11:00
July 8th from 9:00-11:00
July 22nd from 9:00-11:00
August 12th from 9:00-11:00



Memorial Herb Garden

This spring we refurbished the Memorial Herb Garden by the pin oak at the intersection of the driveway. New herbs were added to the garden, and although some have already been eaten by the deer, the rest of growing and thriving! A sundial given by Maggie Hibbs has been placed on the pedestal in the center of the garden, and Grace Raak planted four hydrangeas in the semi-circle above. This is now a pretty and shady spot to sit and spend time in quiet reflection—feel free to drop by and spend time in this lovely garden.



Spring Clean-up

We had a great Spring Clean-up this year! Prior to the clean-up days, new plants were added to the beds and several overground bushes were trimmed or removed. New this year, we spread the clean-up over two Saturdays and we had help from Girl Scouts, Cub and Boy Scouts and their parents and several St. John's members. The flower



beds were edged, weeded and fully mulched; sticks were picked up around the yard and cemetery. Estrada Landscaping and one of the Cub Scouts parents donated a total of 14 yards of mulch which saved our parish over \$400!



After the clean-up, we were able to focus on cleaning up the area near the fire pit. The Girl Scouts have made use of our fire pit this spring for an outdoor event. Rev. Jill has planned events from camping to campfires during the summer. We are also in the process of installing a paved

area next to the sacristy entrance using the slate pavers which were saved from the Courtyard; this will give more room in an area where people congregate after worship.

We want to thank everyone, especially Grace Raak, who helps on the gardens and grounds during the clean-up and the rest of the year! Our property looks welcoming and beautiful because of your hard work.



Joyful Noise!

A Note from our Music Director

What an exciting thing it is, to plan for the return of live singing! Our hymn singing will follow the best practices for singing indoors, as determined by what's referred to as the Colorado Aerosol Study. This study is the guiding document for most performing arts organizations in the world, and acts as a blueprint for how to make music safely. I will post links to the Aerosol Study (and the 3 minute video recap!) to the St. John's Facebook group.

We will continue to use the tracks made by Chris and Josef both during live singing and for the hymns that are not yet being sung live. Violin music will also be re-introduced into the services. My sincere hope is to be able to safely reincorporate choir at some point during the Fall.

As with so many things, these plans are subject to change. If new science emerges that better informs how we make music or if as a congregation we prefer more or less singing, we will adjust.

Here are our tentative first steps which will begin later this summer; remaining masked and distanced, we'll:

Step 1: Incorporate live singing of the closing hymn

Step 2: Add live singing of communion and closing hymn

Step 3: Sing all hymns

There are still many questions that I do not have the answers to, but I look forward to working with Rev. Jill, the Vestry, and the congregation to bring back live singing. Let's make a joyful noise!

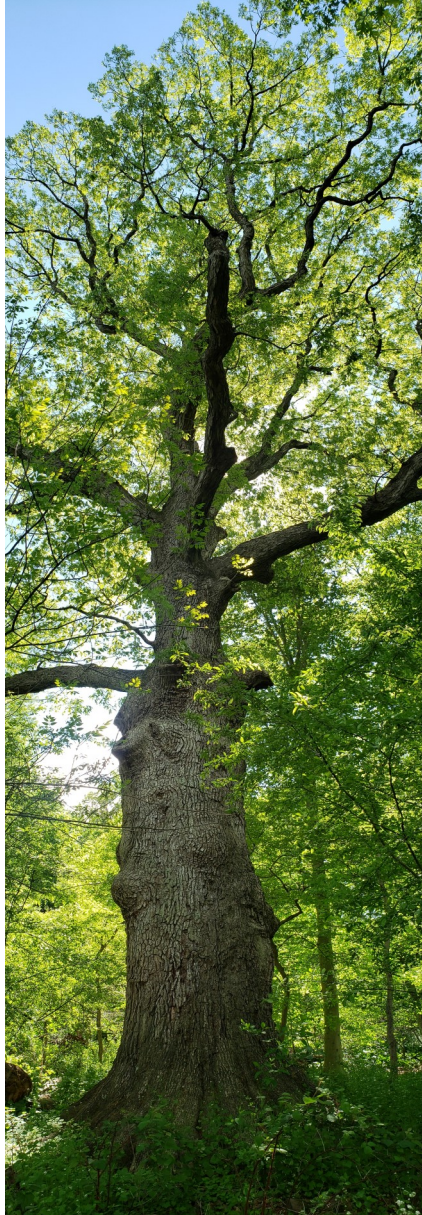
Jess Villante (Music Director)

Our First Holy Hiking: To the Penn Oak!

On Saturday, May 8th our parish was active and full of life – the various groups meeting on our campus felt like **new life breathed into the dry bones** of the past year. Karate Kaze held a practice in our parking lot while the Boy and Cub Scouts helped finish our Spring Clean Up. We also had over a dozen children create a Mother's Day gift for their moms: decorating a plant pot and then placing a marigold or pansy inside. [Mark your calendar for our **Father's Day craft on June 19th from 10-11**]



May 8th was also the start of our Holy Hiking events. Nearly 40 folks of all ages hiked down to our historic Penn oak tree. Scott Wade, a Longwood Gardens arborist with a special focus on big, old trees, lead our Holy Hike. Scott gave the history of the land our oak tree is on: St. John's has only owned the property the historic tree is on since the 1960s (part of a property expansion that began in the 1950s with the building of the Rectory and purchasing the big field). Prior to our ownership, the Penn Oak was part of the Darlington Farm, so some folks call this tree the "Darlington Oak."



Our historic Penn Oak!



Once we hiked the quarter mile to the massive oak, Scott held us all enthralled with the facts he knows about big trees. A dozen children listened and quizzed Scott on all things tree related. We certainly learned a lot from the person Philly Magazine once dubbed the "King of Pennsylvania's Big Trees."

Holy Hiking will continue through the summer and fall on the second Saturday of each month. Parish families will "host" the hike, taking their fellow parishioners on a local hike (within an hour of St. John's). If you have a favorite trail you'd love to share with your St. John's family, please let Rev. Jill know.

HOLY HIKING Second Saturday of each month

Join us in the great outdoors! Pack a snack or a lunch to enjoy with friends. Hikes are planned by parish families.

Saturday, June 12th at 11:00 at Newlin Grist Mill – Hosted by the Yoch family

Saturday, July 10th – 10:00 at Ridley Creek State Park (meet in the Mansion Parking Lot)
Hosted by the Blackburns

Saturday, August 14th – TBA

Saturday, September 11th – TBA
Hosted by the Mowers

Upgrades in the Sanctuary

One of the silver linings of 2020 is that St. John's now has a global presence...or at least a robust online presence!

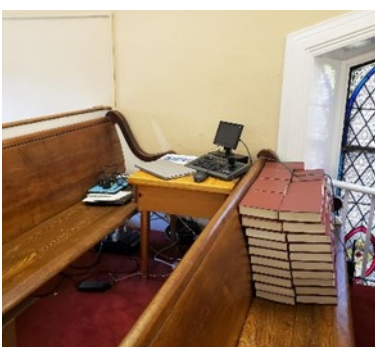
Many parishioners have come to depend upon our live stream worship service to keep them connected to their parish family as well as to stay spiritually fulfilled. Recognizing the importance of our virtual presence, the Vestry voted this spring to install an upgraded digital audio and video system in our sanctuary.

In May Sound Designs, a local audio-visual company in Media, installed a new audio system as well as a new camera with which to live-stream our worship services. This upgrade was made possible through a Diocesan Technology Grant, a generous donation from a parishioner, and the support of the Vestry to fully fund this project.

The new video camera is what is known as a PTZ camera – it can Point, Tilt, and Zoom. This allows us to have a clear picture of our worship, along with a 20X zoom capability. The camera is very user-friendly with nine pre-set camera angles, so that our tech volunteer who controls the live-stream can seamlessly change camera locations with the touch of a button; the system also uses a joystick to zoom in for even tighter shots. We've installed a small tech station in the balcony from which our tech crew can produce our live-stream worship.



The PTZ camera



The balcony Tech Station

Perhaps even more exciting is the upgraded audio system. Using our iPad, we now have audio control over every microphone in the sanctuary. For folks watching the live-stream service at home, this means that our sound quality will now be excellent!

Several parishioners deserve our thanks for spearheading this new system: thank you to Paul Pearlman, Gerry Tierney, and Phil Thompsen who have given countless hours to this project.

As with any new technology or change to our worship, please be patient with us! There will be bumps in the road as we perfect our usage of this new system, but it won't be long before this new technology becomes comfortable and familiar.

Finally, we are in need of a few parishioners to join our **Sunday Morning Tech Crew**. Being a Tech Volunteer would take no more than an hour and half on a Sunday morning. If you are interested, please let [Rev. Jill](#) or [Gerry Tierney](#) know.

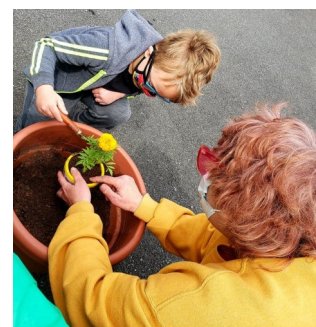


Our Mother's Day craft

FATHER'S DAY CRAFT

June 19th from 10-11

Come and make a special craft to give your dad on Father's Day!



Planting a flower for Mom

June 2021

May '21							July '21								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	1	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	19	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	26	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
30	31						30	31							

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30		31	1	2	3 9:00-11:00 Thursday Morning Café in the parish hall	4	5
6	10:00 Worship	7	8	9	10	11	12 11:00 Holy Hiking: At Newlin Grist Mill Hosted by the Yoch Family
13	10:00 Worship	14	15	16	17	18	19 10:00-11:00 Father's Day Craft on the patio
20	10:00 Worship	21	22	23	24 9:00-11:00 Thursday Morning Café in the parish hall	25 Final Friday Movie Night: <i>Solo: A Star Wars Story</i> 8pm in our Parking Lot	26
27	8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	28	29	30	1	2	3
4		5	Notes St. John's Church, Concord 576 Concord Rd Glen Mills, PA 19342		Contact us at: 610-459-2994 office@saintjohnsconcord.com	Find us online at: facebook.com/saintjohnsconcord www.saintjohnsconcord.com	

August 2021

July '21							September '21						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3				1	2	3	4
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	26	27	28	29	30		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 7:00 - 8:30 Friday Night Fun: VBS / Campfire (adults)	7
8 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	9	10	11	12 9:00 - 11:00 Thu. Morning Café in the parish hall	13 7:00 - 8:30 Friday Night Fun: VBS / Campfire (adults)	14 Holy Hiking Location & Time TBA
15 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	16	17	18	19	20 7:00 - 8:30 Friday Night Fun: VBS / Campfire (adults)	21
22 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	23	24	25	26	27 7:00 - 8:30 Friday Night Fun: VBS / Campfire (adults)	28
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July 2021

June '21							August '21						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				29	30	31				

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27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	5	6	7	8 9:00-11:00 Thu. Morning Café in the parish hall	9	10 Holy Hiking Ridley Creek Park Hosted by the Blackburns
11 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	12	13	14	15	16	17 Great Church Camp Out camp in our big field 4:00pm - 9:00 Sunday
18 8:00 Outdoor Worship in the field 10:00 Worship	19	20	21	22 9:00-11:00 Thu. Morning Café in the parish hall	23	24
25 8:00 Worship 10:00 Worship	26	27	28	29	30 Final Friday Night Movie: <i>Mulan</i> 8:00 pm in our Parking Lot	31
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