A Conversation on the Back Porch:
Why Am I an Episcopalian?

"A Conversation on the Back Porch" (July 9, 16, and 23 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm) is a summer series hosted each year by St. John’s clergy. During the course of three weeks in July, our rector and associate rector will be leading casual conversations about Episcopal and Anglican identity, answering frequently asked questions about the Episcopal Church, and guiding us through a frank and candid discussion about Episcopal belief, practice, and worship.

Are you an Episcopalian, but wonder what that means? Are you a member of St. John’s but still unclear how we are connected to a wider Episcopal Church? Have you ever wondered what makes the Episcopal Church different or similar to other Christian traditions? If you were asked right now for a three sentence elevator pitch on "Why I am an Episcopalian," could you do it?

Come for conversation, fellowship, food, and an opportunity to bask in the beauty of a Minnesota summer's evening on the back porches of your Rector and Associate Rector's homes.

Location information and topic details are coming soon on St. John's website and in the upcoming July issue of The Evangelist.
From the Reverend Jered Weber-Johnson

Dear Friends in Christ,

On Sunday the 18th we heard in John’s gospel that challenging, if oft-misused, passage of scripture wherein Jesus proclaims, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” I say oft-misused, because it has often been lifted from its context in the farewell discourse to be a means of exclusion—a gatekeeper passage that guards the faith from outsiders and heretics and those who don’t believe in Jesus or who don’t believe in anything at all. But, this passage is addressed to the disciples, to the inner core of the faithful followers of Jesus, and addressed to the Church, those who profess to follow Jesus like those first disciples. I said on the 18th that this passage is a challenge to you and to me. I said then that the great apologist and author G.K. Chesterton once asserted that, “Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried.”

If Christianity is a “way,” and if that way is seen most clearly in a life lived, in Jesus, then indeed it is difficult. Jesus is a person and his way is a process and a relationship, not a series of propositions and intellectual assents. Certainly Christianity involves our intellect and certainly in this way we follow speaks to a wider world and to those of other ways, and we must engage carefully and thoughtfully with the world.

But, the challenge of this passage is for us—will we undertake the difficult task of following Jesus? Will we be diligent in acts of mercy and compassion? Will we forgive seven times seventy-seven? Will we turn the other cheek? Sell everything we have and give the money to the poor? Will we be diligent in prayer and in the breaking of the bread?

Of course, if we are honest, the answer is “no,” not always anyway. We may seek to be faithful, to follow in the way, but we need companions and a community together seeking to follow in that way in order to truly be faithful to the call. None of us can do all of it all the time. But together we might come closer to embodying the way, as a people and a particular faith community—some praying with greater fervor, some serving with greater regularity, some discerning, and others leading.

On the 18th we saw and heard as Ademun Odeke spoke to us, just how broad our community of faith can be; it stretches across the ocean and part of a continent to Uganda, and across this city to our companion parish Holy Apostles, to Hmong farmers and families, to many of our neighbors and those who share the pews with us—each of us on the way with Jesus, serving, forgiving, praying, and upholding one another in our lives and in our life of faith.

That way may seem incredibly difficult to us alone, but, as Jesus assures his disciples, together as a community we “will do greater works than these.”

Keep it up, and I’ll see you in church!

Faithfully,

-- Jered

St. John the Evangelist June 2014 Service Schedule

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<th>Time</th>
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<td>June 1, 2014 – The Seventh Sunday of Easter</td>
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<td>Julia Ferguson &amp; Rick Rinkoff Terri Fischel Shirley Sailors</td>
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June Acolyte Schedule

June 1  June 8  June 15  June 22  June 29
Matt Richards  Johannah Frisby  Madeline Weinkauf  Tim Krall  Alisa Schmidt
Alisa Schmidt  Emily Brooks  Rachel Clark  Caroline Krall Helen Baxter
Eli Weinkauf  Maura Lynch  Will Rinkoff  Linnie Krall Samantha Rosendale
Thea Bischof  Lucy Grundhauser  Matt Brooks  Logan Finkel Vivian Scheel
Dear Friends in Christ,

I knew we were a lively part of the body of Christ, but just how lively was brought home to me by the diversity of gifts we shared on Sunday, May 18. I was standing in the back of the forum, watching as 60 parishioners worked in small groups to articulate ideas and dreams for our worship life. More than a dozen pieces of chart paper were soon covered with hopes for how we worship God together!

Just behind the forum participants, Song Yang was offering the first farmer’s market produce of the year, including asparagus, rhubarb, spring onions, and flowers. Several beautiful hanging baskets and many pounds of produce went home with parishioners. A few took home plants for their own gardens, including trays of kale seedlings. Our annual partnership with the Hmong farmers of Holy Apostles and Fields to Families is off to a lovely start.

Sitting in the forum listening to all of our ideas was Professor Ademuni-Odeke, visiting us from Tulane Law School, where he is currently being hosted by the Maritime Center as a Fulbright scholar. He is a son of Kayoro, Uganda, where our medical clinic is. He spoke at both our services about this dream for Kayoro’s development, including the building of a school, church, and clinic, framed by his own journey from Kayoro to being a United Nations diplomat. He expressed his own deep gratitude for our community’s partnership with Give Us Wings in building and funding the medical clinic and borehole on the clinic site.

All of us, parishioners, Song, Ademun, and other visitors, are members in the body of Christ. Working together, partnering with those we have just met, and those we have known for a long time, we are able to do more than we could ever do individually. We grow into a fuller knowledge of the love of God and God’s power working in us. Faithfully yours,

Kate
Visitor from Kayoro, Uganda

On Sunday May 18, the congregation hosted Dr. Ademuni-Odeke (Ademun), a dual Ugandan-British national who grew up in Kayoro village, Uganda, the very same village where St. John’s founded a clinic in partnership with Give Us Wings, and where several St. John’s parishioners have visited over the years. Professor Odeke is in the U.S. as a Fulbright Research Scholar and as Visiting Professor at the Admiralty Law Institute, Maritime Law Center, Tulane University Law School in New Orleans. Professor Odeke admits that he was aware of the creation of the St. John’s clinic in his home village from the start of the project, he has visited it several times, and when he knew his travels would bring him to the States, he sought an opportunity to come to St. Paul to thank the congregation in person.

Over the course of several weeks and through correspondence a visit was arranged, and on the 18th Ademun offered his gratitude in the form of a short homily during both the 8 and 10 AM Eucharist. Moved at moments to tears and speaking from the heart he told the congregation of a village who has all but been overlooked by its own government and by the outside world, a community that aspired to three things—a church (now roughly built with cinderblock walls and a cement floor), a school for 3-5 year olds (meeting in the church after the original structure collapsed due to shoddy workmanship), and a pie-in-the-sky dream of a clinic that would allow the residents of the village to access quality healthcare without traversing miles of swamp and forest to the nearest government operated medical facility.

Professor Odeke, who has been over the course of his career a professor of law and a foremost scholar on maritime policy, a diplomat with the United Nations and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA – Vienna) has now turned his attention to international development, particularly in his home country and community in Uganda. In January a tentative trip has been scheduled with Give Us Wings (St. Paul) to visit Uganda and particularly the village of Kayoro.

Professor Odeke is seeking to coordinate his schedule to return from Guilford, England to be in Uganda when the group is visiting so that he can host members of St. John’s at his home. Members of the Kayoro Clinic sub-committee and Faith in Action Commission will be keeping in touch with Ademun to continue deepening our relationships and connections in Uganda as we continue to support the work we’ve begun there.

Community Life

Calling All OWLs

The clergy and staff of St. John’s cordially invite all OWLs (Older, Wiser Laity) to join us on Wednesday, June 11. Come for Noonday Prayers in the Chapel at 12:00 pm, and stay for a Summer Luncheon in the Fireside Room. Please contact the church office (651-228-1172, x10 or church@stjohnsstpaul.org) to let us know that you will be coming. We are looking forward to seeing you all.

Bible Study

Please join us Wednesdays at 11:00 am in the Library to study upcoming Bible lessons. Contact Diane Elliott, at 804-874-9502, to learn more.

June Meetings

Prayer Shawl - Wednesday, June 4 at 9:30 am in the Undercroft. Contact Anneke Krall at 651-690-0579 to learn more.

Men’s Gathering - Tuesday, June 10, at 7:30 pm in the Fireside Room. Contact Josh Colton at 612-275-6004.

Men’s Breakfast - Saturday, June 14, at 9:00 am in the Gym Kitchen. To learn more, contact Jim Johnson at 651-698-5655.

Down Syndrome Group - Tuesday, June 17 at 6:00 pm in the Undercroft. To learn more, contact Lindsay Radford at LRadford@kstp.com.

Young Women’s Gathering - Thursday, June 19 at 7:30 pm. Contact Erin Weber-Johnson at eweberjohnson@gmail.com.

Safe Church Training Date: June 8, 2014

The Children’s portion of Safe Church training will be offered on Sunday, June 8, from Noon to 3:00 pm at St. John’s in the Fireside Room. All volunteers who work with children, and or youth, as well as vestry members and key holders are required to attend this training as soon as possible. Lunch will be provided for all volunteers who attend this training, so please RSVP either by email or phone to our Safe Church Coordinator, Sarah Dull, by Thursday, June 6 – church@stjohnsstpaul.org, or 651-228-1172, x10.

Put Your Green Thumb to Good Use

Gardens around St. John’s need your help. We will soon be setting up and planting the three gardens around the church. If you are interested in helping, please contact Jeff Olsen (jolsen1533@wblmn.com) or Julia Ferguson (julia_ferguson@mac.com).

Over spring break, the Weinkaufs caught up with the Johnsons in Costa Rica. The Johnsons are on sabbatical, living in a small town adjacent to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. We look forward to the Johnsons’ return later this summer. ¡Pura Vida!
**Bless Someone**

Who can give blessings? Do you have to be ordained to bless someone? Barbara Brown Taylor tells us in her book, *An Altar in the World*, “I think it is a big mistake to perpetuate the illusion that only certain people can bless things.” She goes on to say, “I think that the best way to discover what pronouncing blessings is all about is to pronounce a few. The practice itself will teach you what you need to know.”

Start throwing blessings around and chances are you will start noticing all kinds of things you never noticed before. Did you ever notice the white and black striped stockings on the stick legs of that blessed mosquito before? Did you ever notice the tiny purple flowers on that blessed moss? One liability of pronouncing blessings out of doors is that it gets hard to walk on things. Once you become aware of the life in them, the kinship can really slow you down.

Why do we bless others? What does it mean to give, or to receive a blessing? We belong to the Lord who blesses, and therefore we live as a people who bless. In our part of the world, we announce—and live as instruments of—His blessing. While it is true that a blessing serves as a witness to God’s generosity, in some mysterious way, it also enacts His generosity. As author Eugene Peterson once said in an interview, “Words make something; they don’t just say something.” Whenever we bless others in Jesus’ name, we join God’s healing and restoration. We participate in His intentions to bless the world.

I invite you to practice intentionally giving blessings. Start with your family—and pay attention to what happens.

**A Daily Blessing to Give Your Family**

When you say goodbye to your children leaving for school or daycare, take a moment to remind them that Jesus is always with them. Make the sign of the cross on your child’s forehead. As you do so, say a brief blessing. You might say: “(child’s name), you belong to God, Jesus loves you.” or “remember that Jesus is with you always” or “God has blessed you, so that you can be a blessing today to those around you.” Soon your children will be blessing you!

**Confirmation & Reception May 3**

Three youth and two adults from St. John’s were confirmed on May 3 at St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church in Roseville: Lucy Grundhauser, Payton Kinkead, Timothy Krall, Dean Henderson, and Carol Selin.

Caroline and Linnea Krall (pictured at left) were pick-up choir singers at their older brother’s confirmation service.

**A Gift of Music**

The St. John’s Music Commission and Gifts Acceptance Committee are delighted to announce a very significant cash gift given for the designated purpose of purchasing a concert quality grand piano for use in the nave of the church during worship and concerts at St. John’s. The gift was given by Robert Horn (Bob) in memory of his late wife Mary Ann Horn (1939–1990) and used immediately to purchase a 1977 Steinway Model ’B’ which has been delivered to St. John’s and tuned in our space. Thanks to additional gifts by an anonymous donor the piano is being outfitted with stage casters for ease in moving it in the space, as well as a cover and humidifier.

“This Steinway grand piano will allow us to expand our solo piano and chamber music presentations for church members and the neighbors who surround us in the Twin Cities and attend our concerts and services. Our string school (Artaria Chamber School) is also thrilled that we have a Steinway grand piano in the church. Our beautiful Skinner pipe organ will now have a “sister” keyboard of the same concert quality. This instrument will be used in many settings to accompany our hymns, solos, chorales and also as a solo instrument. Everyone involved with music at St. John the Evangelist is thrilled about this new acquisition!” says Jayson Engquist, our organist and director of music.

A short order of leasing will be used to consecrate the piano for use in the church on Pentecost Sunday, June 8 at the 10:00 am service. At that time the piano will be used for the first time during worship and the congregation will have an opportunity to express thanks to Bob for his generous gift.

“I am delighted to see such generosity in action” said the Reverend Jered Weber-Johnson. “I am so grateful for Bob’s gift—yet another example of the ways that St. John’s parishioners are constantly seeking to improve the life of our parish community with faithful contributions given here and to the glory of God. It is a beautiful instrument and will no doubt enhance our worshiping life for generations to come!”

**Pentecost Baptism**

If you are interested in baptism for an infant, child, or adult, St. John’s next baptism will take place on Pentecost Sunday, June 8. Please contact the Reverend Jered Weber-Johnson (651-228-1172, x11) or Reverend Kate Bradtmüller (651-228-1172, x12) to learn more about baptism at St. John’s.

**Service Sunday**

The Sunday after Pentecost, when Summer Choir begins, is also Service Sunday. On Service Sunday, we will take time to specially thank all of the wonderful volunteers from St. Johns. We will also formally commission their activities and bless their work. If you are a volunteer, please know that the church appreciates your time and effort to help things run more smoothly and make a positive difference in the community.

**Volunteer as a Special Service Usher**

If you have ever wanted to usher, but not on a regular basis, we have a new opportunity for you. St. John’s is hoping to develop a special unit of ushers who are willing to cover special services, like Evensong or Lessons and Carols, in short, services not held Sunday morning.

You need not have prior experience as an usher, or have reached your 21st birthday. We don’t even require a high school diploma.

We do require that members of this special usher unit:

- Accept training, if they have not ushered before
- Commit to ushering at special services
- Work well with parishioners and fellow ushers

We will train any responsible youth or adult who is willing to help out. To learn more or sign up, please contact the church office: church@stjohnnsstpaul.org.

**Include Altar Guild in Your Summer Plans**

Not going on the road this summer? Take a test drive with the altar guild!

Church goes on over the summer and members of the altar guild will be working Saturday and Sunday mornings. Consider working with us some weekend this summer to see what we do.

All members of the parish, ages 13 and older, can participate in the Altar Guild. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Diane Power at 651-222-1031 or dianepower@comcast.net.
Thank You!

"Why did you do all this for me?" he asked. "I don’t deserve it. I’ve never done anything for you."

"You have been my friend," replied Charlotte. "That in itself is a tremendous thing." — E.B. White, Charlotte’s Web

Thank you all for the incredible celebration on May 11 as I transition to my new role as Writer in Residence. So much effort put forth, so much affection, so much beauty—I was truly overwhelmed and grateful beyond words.

I am already pondering over the illustrations in the St. John’s Bible volume that was generously given to me by the church. The words from so many friends echo in my ears. Joan Potter, director-extramunicia, outdid herself in orchestrating the reception. The cake and the reception was perfection. Our rector—who I adore a good deal of the time—was at his best. And when a member of Cantus (and the choir) crowed a song by Leonard Cohen, all I can say is Halehalejah.

I am so happy I’m not leaving. This breathtaking day makes me love you all even more and more determined to keep writing, researching, listening and reading—and taking good notes! I am ready to retire as a deacon after 32 years, content to stop planning classes and retreats after decades, but not ready to stop searching the Great Mysteries and doing my best to preach and write as the Spirit leads. This is a tremendous responsibility and a great, great privilege. The pulpit still beckons and now the Internet does, too. I will be posting regularly on Epistles and Epiphanies. Email or call the office to get these postings regularly.

Thank you again for your continued companionship on the Way. You have become the congregation of my heart.

Barbara

Getting to Know You
Sarah Stengle
Sarah Stengle is an artist, book designer, and single mother of two teens, a 19-year-old son who is a college student, and a 17-year-old daughter who is finishing high school this spring. The family moved to St. Paul from Princeton, New Jersey about two years ago. In late April, Sarah was involved in the St. Paul Art Crawl, working on her Mile Long Book in Union Depot, and exhibiting her drawings at another location. Chiefly, she is a visual artist (represented by Central Booking Gallery in New York City) who also loves books and typography, as well as visual mathematical models made of paper or cloth. When asked what attracted her to St. John’s, Sarah explained that she was drawn to the quality of the music program and the kindness and talent of people she met in Summer Choir.

Sarah’s hobbies include singing, knitting, and, more recently, learning to speak Finnish.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Episcopal Creative Arts Daycamp – ECAD
Episcopal Creative Arts Daycamp is a great week of faith formation, worship and fun for kids. Please consider sending your child for a couple of days, or for the whole week. We can work out a carpool schedule to make sure that anyone who wants to participate can participate. If you have any questions please contact Jean Hansen at 952-201-0424 or rhansen3128@aol.com. Scholarships are available. To learn more, contact Mary Lusk at MaryL@OurCathedral.org.

Who
Children ages 4 through entering 6th grade**

What
Episcopal Creative Arts Day Camp-ECAD

Where
St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove St.
Minneapolis, MN 55403

When
July 29 to August 2; 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Cost
$75.00 (plus $5/hour for early drop off or late pickup)

Find a the registration through www.ourcathedral.org. If you scroll down on the home page, the box and link for ECAD is in the middle column, the fourth row down.

**Adults and youth older than 6th grade are welcome to join the fun! Training events are on June 26 and July 26.

Godly Play News

Our final Godly Play story (on May 18) was the Mystery of Pentecost.

Mystery of Pentecost
Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53, Acts 1:5-14 and Acts 2:1-12. Pentecost is all about transformation. Today we remember the changes that transformed the disciples to apostles when they received the Holy Spirit. But that doesn’t just happen on Pentecost. We are invited by this elusive presence of God, this spirit that is as close as our breath but hard to “see.” Was there a time that you or your child can recall recently when the Holy Spirit transformed you? What was that like? Did other people see it or feel it, too?

Grand Old Day Parking
Just a friendly reminder: St. John’s Youth will be selling parking spots in our parking lot on Sunday, June 1, 8:30am – 3:00 pm for Grand Old Day. Parishioners will not be charged for parking.

Here is my new office (behind the Fireside Room doors) which I’ve named The West Wing after my favorite television series. I’ll be here often but call if you want to make sure we get together (651-228-1172, x17) or leave a note for me outside the door. Left of this picture is still the wine storage area... Barbara

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Summer vacation will soon be upon us, and many children in our community will no longer be getting additional food at school through free breakfast and subsidized lunch programs. Won’t you please join your fellow parishioners and help add inventory to our local food shelves?

Food items that can always be used and are especially in demand during the summer months are:

- Juice boxes
- Mac and cheese
- Hamburger Helper
- Peanut butter
- Sugar, salt, flour, and baking supplies of all kinds
- Canned vegetables such as corn, peas, and beans
- High protein foods in cans like tuna, chicken, and salmon are staples that many families have a difficult time purchasing

As always, you can drop off food at St. John’s in the Undercroft or the barrel in the back of church any time.

God bless,

Vern Kassekert
Faith in Action Huge Sale

Through our Spring 2014 Huge Sale was only one-day event, it lived up to its billing. Mary’s Huge Sale Committee collected abundant donations. There were many who contributed time and legwork to help plan the event, sort donations, stage tables and displays, staff the sale, and bake goodies. We salute you all!

The new single-day sale was super successful. We applaud all who supported this effort, and thank the volunteers who did the heavy lifting: Mary Gilbertson, Jeff Olsen, Mary Warren, Jackie DuBay, Sally Sand, Dusty Mairs, Colleen Swope, Shirley Sailors, Kathy Brown, and Alden Drew. Speaking of Faith in Action, here’s to the Reverend Kate Bradtmiller, Sarah and Diane in the church office, Chris Tegeler, youth families, Senior Warden Don Postema, members of the Men’s Group and Kayoro, Cnocus Hill Preschool, Kowalski’s, St. Vincent De Paul, and others we leaned on this spring.

“My favorite part is to just stop and look at all the people contented to look, buy, and sell.”

“Another 50 people waiting to come in at 1:30 pm. There were huge crowds that took just about everything.”

“Beautiful! The joy on people’s faces as they were offered free donut holes and coffee as they waited inside or outside before the sale began.”

Kayoro Clinic Update

On February 25th, the Health Centre ran a lunch and learn seminar. All the participants arrived at the Health Centre by 10:00 am. The seminar facilitators were:

• A nursing assistant
• The compound caretaker
• A laboratory assistant
• The Village Health Team worker

Though the administrator had registered 36 potential participants the day before, only 14 came for the seminar.

The rubbish collecting and training centre clean up was a strategy used to show the community that the Health Center was willing to work with them on many dimensions of health, including environmental awareness and disease prevention.

After the clean up exercise, all participants were served a sumptuous meal at 1:20 pm. Those who came to the seminar thanked the Centre staff for the day’s activities, said it was the first training of its kind in their community, and promised to do a better job of spreading the word about the Health Centre’s good efforts to serve the community.

There was a lot of food to share, so participants left full of good information and good food.