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# STAY CONNECTED

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- See our calendar and subscribe to site updates at stjohnsstpaul.org
- Like our Facebook page at tinyurl.com/sjefb
- Read the bulletin insert each week at the 8am & 10am services

### ON THE COVER:

In May, St. John's held a "meet and greet" for families with younger children.
Parents gathered for dinner and discussion, while the kids enjoyed activities of their own — including a church-wide scavenger hunt led by the rector.

### **NEXT DEADLINE**

for September/October Issue:

August 13

Everyone is *encouraged* to submit reflections or to suggest ideas for articles. Bring your *piece and/or photos* to the office or email to church@stjohnsstpaul.org *before* the deadline shown. Thank you!

## ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

#### Clergy

The Rev. Jered Weber-Johnson, *Rector* The Rev. Craig Lemming, *Associate Rector* The Rev. Margaret Thor, *Deacon* 

#### Staff

Jacki Cook, Communications Assistant
Sarah Dull, Executive Administrator
Tracy Johnson, Nursery Coordinator
Scott Jungbauer, Building Manager
Richard Gray, Director of Music
The Rev. Barbara Mraz, Writer in Residence
Lea Anne Schmidt, Coord. of Growth & Member Engagement
Hanna Stenerson, Administrative Assistant
Ellie Watkins, Office Coordinator

### **Vestry Members**

Bette Ashcroft, Membership Bob Baumann, Fellowship Fred Berndt, Music Karen Chatt, Faith Formation Marilyn Conklin, Senior Warden Josh Colton, At Large Lynn Hertz, Junior Warden Alice Johnson, Pastoral Care Jenny Koops, Children, Youth, and Family Gabrielle Lawrence, At Large Bob Linehan, Liturgy Dusty Mairs, Building Brad Parsons, At Large Rick Rinkoff, Treasurer Sally Sand, Clerk of Vestry Greg Torrence, Faith in Action

## FROM THE REVEREND JERED WEBER-JOHNSON



Dear friends in Christ,

I know I've talked about my friend Naomi in the past, but I was thinking about her as we began this summer's Connect Meals. Naomi was a co-worker of mine during the year my wife Erin and I

served as missionaries in Taiwan. One weekend, she invited us to her home to learn how to make *baozi*. We knew only parts of her story: that she suffered partial paralysis connected to treatment for brain cancer; that her husband was unable to work owing to significant back injury; that she also had an adult daughter with significant developmental challenges, needing round-the-clock care.

Naomi lived in a typical tiny Taipei apartment, cramped further by the additional tables she had set up. Food was everywhere: platters of dumplings and stir fry, bowls of noodles and rice, trays of fresh fruit, and all the ingredients to make *baozi*. It was clear that our cooking lesson was a formality — the main event was us, her honored guests, and feeding us in abundance. It was almost overwhelming to receive such generosity.

What sets this particular experience apart was not only the quantity of food, nor the generosity with which it was given, but also the very real vulnerability Naomi showed in inviting us into her home. She brought us into closer proximity with both her joy and abundance, as well as her pain and struggle. Medical equipment took up residence next to serving platters, and couches doubled as storage for displaced home goods. This was not a magazine-worthy dinner party with an emphasis on appearance. This was scruffy hospitality, given from a place of genuine care.

During our recent Instructed Eucharist, we repeatedly used the word "discern." We talked about how the gathered church believes that somehow Jesus is present in the Eucharist, in the readings, the bread, the wine, and in the connections we share as a community in that service. Part of the task of making Eucharist is for

us to "discern" Jesus' presence. Where is Jesus showing up? The ritual acts of Word and Table are forming us into people who can discern Jesus in the world. That teaching finds deep resonance with me as I look back on that shared meal with Naomi and her family. Through the lens of Eucharist, I can now discern Christ present in that meal. Naomi was sharing more than *baozi*; in her vulnerability and abundance she was sharing Christ, broken and given for the world.

Sara Miles writes about her conversion to Christianity in a somewhat unorthodox manner, receiving communion before ever considering "being Christian." She came curious to church one day, where communion was shared person to person, and she found herself inexplicably converted as she reached out to take the bread. The Iesus she came to believe in is the one made known in the bread and wine. Her faith "proclaims against reason that the hungry will be fed, that those cast down will be raised up, and that all things, including my own failures, are being made new. It offers food without exception to the worthy and unworthy, the screwed-up and pious, and then commands everyone to do the same. It doesn't promise to solve or erase suffering but to transform it, pledging that by loving one another, even through pain, we will find more life."

This summer we are given many chances at St. John's to be with one another in Eucharistic community, in a community that is defined by this kind of faith. I encourage you to sign up for a Connect Meal (visit tinyurl.com/SJEmeals19) if you haven't already. These meals provide a place to bring our whole, authentic self, to share our story, and hear others. For our hosts, I am so grateful you are making these moments available. I encourage you to lean into scruffy hospitality, trusting that you too can give abundantly and vulnerably, and in so doing, make Jesus known.

Happy summer one and all! Enjoy eating together and sharing stories! I will see you in worship! Faithfully,

Jud +

# THE STORY OF ONE GOOD THING:

### By Cammie Beattie

Ten years ago, this church made a commitment. Led by Barbara Mraz and Jennifer Kinkead via Give Us Wings, it was our response to a call from the General Convention of the Episcopal Church: to work towards the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. Those ambitious international goals—related to poverty, education, health, and environmental sustainability—initially seemed beyond our reach. And yet, even when making a difference seemed impossible, we resolved to do just "one good thing." We made a commitment to help the people of Kayoro, Uganda build a clinic.

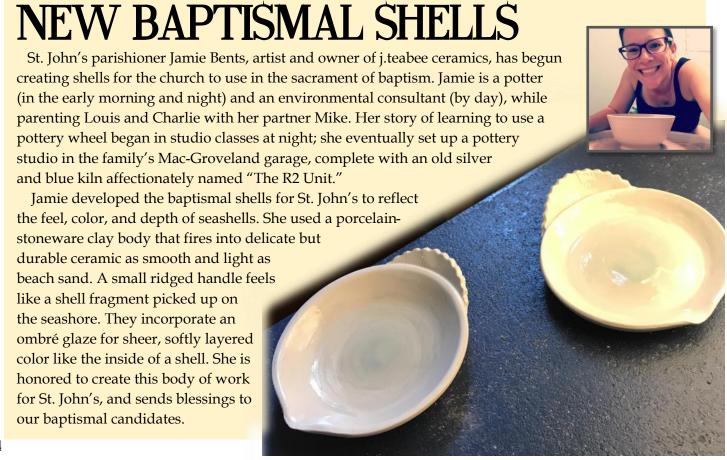
So much has happened in the decade that followed. St. John's Kayoro Health Center II (SJKHCII, as it is known in Uganda) was built in 2011 and a maternity wing was added in 2017. It is now part of a health care compound with a water pump, solar panels, baby warmer, autoclaves, freezer, refrigerator and many other improvements.

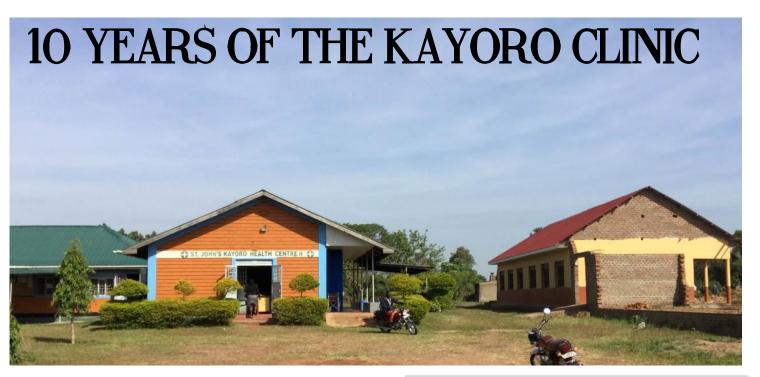
A staff quarters was recently completed, largely

supported by funds from St John's. It can house 3 staff, with modern toilets, a shower and a small kitchen. It allows the clinic to be open 24/7—one of several measures needed to bring the clinic to the level of a Health Center III, which results in more benefits from the Uganda government and greater service to area residents.

Plans are in place to expand the inpatient ward as medical needs are increasingly being met, including a larger maternity ward and an operating room. The clinic is partnering with Health Partners to develop a health care insurance program. And Simba Oil Ltd, located across the road from the clinic, has offered to extend electricity from their plant without cost, because SJKHCII provides "very vital services to the community"!

SJKHCII has increased the number of people that it serves each year. It regularly offers training on immunizations, reproductive health, pre-natal and infant care, and other issues. Overall, more than 18,000 people received care from SJKHCII in 2018!





Clearly, doing "one good thing" has led to more than we could have ever imagined. It was the spark to develop a full-on health care compound that has attracted many other funding sources beyond St. John's. Every day, more people are living healthier lives with dignity and hope. Through God's grace and St. John's generosity, One Good Thing has led to MANY GREAT THINGS in Kayoro Village, and this story has even more chapters to come.

Is God calling you to participate in this ministry? There are many ways to respond!

- Join the St. John's Kayoro Clinic Committee.
   (Contact Sue MacIntosh at suemac94@me.com)
- Help make Days for Girls reusable menstrual kits so that young women don't have to miss school each month. (Contact Patty Byrne Pfalz at pbp2053@gmail.com)
- Help make Mama Kits of medical supplies for pregnant women who live too far from the clinic and will likely deliver at home. (Contact Cammie Beattie at cbeattie96@gmail.com)
- Visit Kayoro! A trip may happen in February/ March 2020, and there may be scholarship funds to help with travel costs. (Contact Therese Anderson at director@giveuswings.org or Sue MacIntosh at suemac94@me.com)

Evolution of the compound: From one building in 2011 (below) to constructing new wings in 2017 (bottom) to a level-3 health center (above).





# LIVING THE CONNECTIONS

## A PROFILE OF THE REV. CYNTHIA BRONSON SWEIGERT

In order for us to truly create and contribute to the world, we have to be able to connect countless dots, to cross-pollinate ideas from a wealth of disciplines, to combine and recombine these pieces and build new castles.

-Maria Popova, entrepreneur

### By the Rev. Barbara Mraz

She has connected many dots and built many coalitions in her 39-year ministry.

The resume, in part: A priest ordained in 1975, only a year after the first ordinations of women; rector of a congregation in the Squirrel Hill area of Pittsburgh for 17 years during an explosive time for that Diocese; dialogue and conference planning work with the National Conference of Christians and Jews; transitional priest associate for eight months at St. Mark's Cathedral in Minneapolis; former staff person at the Minnesota Council of Churches and current organizer of the Taking Heart "Iftar" dinners joining Muslims and Christians (which have grown to 1500 people and 26 mosques during her five-year-leadership); a deep love for animals that permeates her life.

A native of Stillwater and graduate of the U of M and General Seminary in New York, on Sundays now Cynthia occasionally does supply work, or is with us at St. John's and has been since March of 2017. When he is able to do so, her husband of 24 years, Dan, joins her. She also serves on the Liturgy and Adult Formation commissions.

During the week, she travels from her home in South Minneapolis to New Richmond, Wisconsin, home of SoulSpace, an animal sanctuary. Here she feeds the animals and hangs out with characters such as Wally the Pig ("the official face of SoulSpace"). More about Wally in a minute...

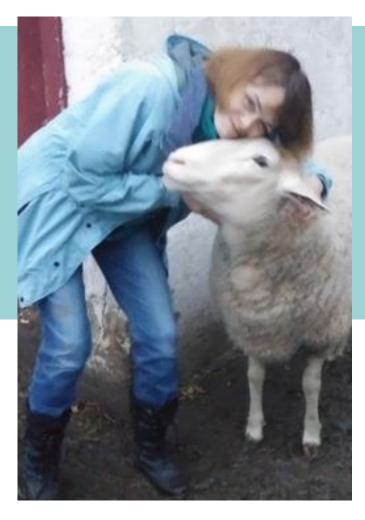


### The Heart of a Vocation

Early on, Cynthia realized that interfaith work was at the heart of her ministry. Even as a student in Minnesota, she remembers being horrified at the anti-Jewishness in ways the New Testament was interpreted, as if all Pharisees were evil, the Jews were responsible for killing Jesus, and Christianity somehow replaced Judaism. Even worse was her realization of the way Christian anti-semitism has treated Jews throughout history.

She set about educating herself at synagogues and later mosques, finding wonderful people wherever she went and noting that "all people feel deeply about their faith." She remembers that "for several years in Pittsburgh, groups of Russian Jewish emigres met at our parish hall to learn more about their Judaism than they'd been able to learn in their home country."

Cynthia explains, "I think that the Trinity, as a Community of Persons, is a foundation for interfaith relationships. Likewise, I initially



assumed that my passion for animal rights was "something else" added to other interests in my life. But for me that love is a completely natural outgrowth of a kind of love that pays more attention to God's creation - and hopefully, will play a part in reconciliation with that Creation, as well as its restoration."

A delightful surprise in her work with Muslims from many different countries has been seeing so many women whom she describes as "gutsy, smart, funny and well-educated," unlike some traditional stereotypes.

However, Cynthia confesses that she could never leave Christianity. "Jesus," she says, "is my way of seeing God. He's my prism."

### **One Smart Pig**

It started with a basset hound named Mady and a cat named Calvin that found their way into Cynthia's life and heart. Mady lived to be 16 and Calvin 11. Later Sebastian the Cat took up

residence. Before each pet died, there was a hospice vet who came to the rectory and Cynthia led a liturgy. Eventually, Cynthia found her way to SoulSpace where many new relationships awaited. Now she volunteers there as often as she can, after first picking up lettuce and "expired" vegetables at Vincent De Paul Warehouse in Cedar/Riverside. She uses it to help feed the five large pigs, two potbelly pigs, two turkeys, a donkey, a goat, three sheep, and an assortment of chickens and ducks who live here. They have found their way to the sanctuary of Soul Space after being abandoned or lost. The hashtag for Soul Space is #compassionchangeseverything.

Cynthia says that her eating habits had been changing gradually over the years and now she is a vegan, eating no meat, fish, dairy or eggs, and wearing no leather, wool or down. "Becoming vegan reflects my abhorrence of factory farming and animal cruelty of all kinds, including animal testing," she explains.

What's the magic of SoulSpace?

"Here I see a glimpse of a recreated order, an almost Biblical vision. It's kind of like getting back to the Garden, and how things should be. When I look into the eyes of these animals, there is really something in there. I once approached a resident sheep on Iona and *he locked me with a look.*"

One dramatic story involves Wally the Pig who, within a few miles of the slaughterhouse, broke out of the truck, jumped down to the highway, and made a break for it. A motorist saw the escape artist at work and called an animal protection group who brought the pig to sanctuary at SoulSpace. Wally recently celebrated his second "jumpaversary."

All of Cynthia's endeavors – the interfaith activities, her work as a priest in the church, and the deep love of animals – are vocational, marked by a call received and answered with deep commitment and respect for all beings, great and small, and a desire to help them know and appreciate each other.

And Wally's jumperversary? There was cake. *Vegan* cake.

STORYCORPS AT ST. JOHN'S

### By Beth Bowman and the Rev. Craig Lemming

Stories are incredibly powerful. They connect us to each other. They surprise us, delight us, and move us.

We all have stories to share. When we share our own reallife experiences with others we come together in new and authentic ways.

In our shared life of faith at St. John's, when we listen to the sacred stories of Holy Scripture, when we liturgically and ritually remember the story of God's radical love for us in Holy Eucharist, and when our own sacred, personal stories of deep joy or harrowing struggle are shared and heard, our spiritual identity unfolds and deepens with authenticity and grace that is palpable, genuine, and inspiring. We recognize profound spiritual truths which connect us to one another and our spiritual ancestors through faith stories that knit us together as beloved children of God who are made in God's image.

We plan to curate, share, and preserve the faith stories of our St. John's community by partnering with American Public Radio's StoryCorps platform. StoryCorps is an independent nonprofit project of recorded audio interviews. Their mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. It is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind. StoryCorps interviews usually take place between two people who know and care about each other. A copy of each interview is archived at the Library of Congress for future generations to hear, and we



would like to make the recorded faith stories of St. John's available on our website as well. In support of St. John's strategic goals and priorities, we hope to engage, curate, share, and preserve the faith stories of our members.

In recent StoryCorps surveys, 81% of listeners were reminded of their shared humanity; 80% helped see the value in everyone's life story and experience; and 71% became interested in thinking about how society could be improved. By participating in this project, we will each have the opportunity to have an extraordinary impact on the lives of one another and the lives of all the people we welcome into our community of faith.

Please join us on this storytelling adventure! Contact Beth Bowman (bethbowman@mac.com) or the Rev. Craig Lemming (craig.lemming@ stjohnsstpaul.org) to find out more information about serving as an interviewer or sharing your faith story.



Beth Bowman

# "OUR TIME HAS BEEN VERY FULL"

## SAYING FAREWELL TO THE ELLIOTT & THE VAN YPEREN/JAMES FAMILIES

### By Ellie Watkins

For the past half-decade, St. John's has been blessed with two families who have enriched us with their presence and the stories they've helped us share as they've presented in our faith forums. They are



both moving away this summer, prompting us to look back and appreciate their time here.

Nate Van Yperen and Elaine James and their children Hank and Forest are relocating back to Princeton, NJ. They came to St. John's in the fall of 2013, shortly after moving here from Princeton. They visited a few other churches, but were drawn to St. John's by the warmth of the community, number of young families, and the farmer's market. "These," they say, "were signs of a vibrant and engaged community of faith."

Elaine's first offerings for Sunday morning faith forums were on women in the Old Testament – she gave a talk on Ruth (while she was pregnant!), and then a series on women in the ancestral narratives. "Each week I was grateful to hear stories about the women in our congregants' lives who modeled strength, insight, and faith." Nate's first talk was about Theology and the Environment; his most memorable forum was a talk on Bayard Rustin. "It was enriching to hear and engage diverse responses to Rustin in his own words."

Elaine and Nate were impressed with the lively, thoughtful conversation that consistently characterized the forums here. "The most interesting moments were when someone would use the material to connect to their experience, which would in turn connect to another's experience," they say. They want the church to know that "it was a privilege to serve as regular forum speakers."



Elaine, Nate, Hank, & Forest (left) and Neil & Mary Ellen (above).

The Rev. Neil and Mary Ellen Elliott are moving to New Mexico. Neil first spoke at an adult forum here in the 90s, and was impressed at how engaged and educated the group was. "This is a smart congregation!" he observes. Then in 2012, Neil and Mary Ellen visited again as parishioners looking for a new church, and were

impressed that St. John's had taken a stand in support of recognizing same-sex marriages. "We knew we'd found a home." Since then, says Mary Ellen, "Our time at St. John's has been very full."

Their house group has been "a real blessing" and a close-knit group of very good friends. Mary Ellen was involved with building and grounds, vestry, and the fellowship committee. Neil has preached and helped with planning faith formation offerings. He observes that people here aren't afraid to bring up controversial things—"not just politically, but to express that they have doubts."

It can be scary to express doubts or to challenge the usual teachings, but, says Mary Ellen, "it hasn't shaken our faith."

Is there anything else they would like to say to the church community? "Keep doing what you're doing," Neil tells us. "Don't be afraid of controversy, or taking a stand, or holding on to your convictions."

"Continue to come together," encourages Mary Ellen. "House groups, summer meals." She recalls many instances where parishioners have gathered and felt a strong spirit of fellowship. "Everything has been a lot of fun."

Knowing these families has indeed been a lot of fun. We wish them well—and hope they'll stay in touch and share stories from their new endeavors!

# WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

On May 5, St. John's celebrated New Member Sunday and welcomed new families into our faith community. Read on to get to know some of them a little better and say hello next time you see them!



### Courtney Veszi & Oszkar

I grew up in Alton, IL in an American Baptist church. After a long stint away from the church, moving abroad, and then moving back again, I settled in Saint Paul for a fresh start. My 4 year old son Oszkar and I moved here at the behest of my oldest friend Erin Weber-Johnson and I've been overjoyed to find a community of welcoming people that challenge me and my faith.

What I enjoy most about St. John's is the intelligent way that faith is viewed. I look forward investigating and deepening my relationship with God and the people here. The things that give me the most joy are, hands down, my son and creating meaningful art that inspires and touches those around me.



### **Beth Rhodes**

I grew up in Ohio and the Philippines, for the most part. I have a daughter in Portland and one in Fargo, a sister in Baltimore, and a sister and brother outside Dayton, Ohio. I love friends and family, traveling, photography, scrapbooking, and many more creative endeavors.

I'm a lifelong Episcopalian. The internet brought me to St. John's and the people keep me coming back.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

## JULY

- 1 Cammie Beattie
- 3 Judy Kinkead Matt Seitz-Paquette
- 5 Brett Gemlo
- 6 Charlie Johnson Thea Bischof
- 9 Kipling Lightner
- 11 Samantha Rosendale
- 14 Amelia Ryan Elaine Eyre
- 15 Jay Debertin
- 17 Ernie Ashcroft Jemma Berry Mark McInroy
- 18 Christopher Parish Meredith Shimek Abby Kelley-Hands
- 19 Anneke Krall
- 20 Rick Olson
- 21 Kathleen Dahl

- 22 Andrew Tessier Gabe Tessier John Docherty
- 23 Nancy Martin Richard Resch
- 24 Alec Smith Sidney McInroy
- 25 Adele DeCoux
- 26 June Owen Peggy Olsen
- 27 Charles Swope Hannah Stengle Pat Collins
- 28 Dorothy MacDonald Megan Kampa
- 29 Henry Van Yperen

#### AUGUST

- 1 Emily BrooksNova WilsonSam ClarkWilliam Rinkoff
- 3 Marty Brown Stephanie Quinn
- 4 Gabriella McCann Gary Hagstrom Helen Docherty
- 5 Caroline Krall
- 6 Allan Klein Piper Wilson
- 7 Caitlyn Parsons
- 8 Luca Brown
  Phillip Stoltenberg
  Jeff Corrow
  Jon Lundberg

- 10 Peter Rosendale Sally Sand Andrew Fox
- 12 Brian Chatt Cameron Norman Michael Brooks
- 13 Erika Sullivan
- 15 Henry Olson
- 17 Cheri Wiegand
- 18 Mimie Pollard
- 19 Owen Hansen
- 20 Andrew Krall Jennifer Kinkead
- 21 Larry Ragland
- 23 Gwen Odney
- 25 Rob Beattie
- 27 Kim Arndt Zoe Weber
- 28 Polly O'Brien Rita MacBain
- 30 Tony Clark
- 31 Alyson Westerhaus Brad McCanna Lauren Debertin

Have your address or phone number changed?
Is your birthday missing or incorrect?
Log on to My St. John's (<u>tinyurl.com/mysaintjohns</u>)
to update your records.

# SERVICE SCHEDULES

**USHERS:** *Jeff Olsen, Head Usher (jolsen4338@gmail.com)* 

July 7: Patty Byrne Pfalz, Jeff & Peggy Olsen

July 14: Alden Drew & Mimie Pollard, Sally Sand

July 21: Tom Eyre, Julia Ferguson & Rick Rinkoff

July 28: Lynn Hertz, Barbara Lindeke, Shirley Sailors

August 4 (Parish Picnic): Gary & Paige Hagstrom, Jennifer Frost Rosendale, Sally Sand

August 11: Patty Byrne Pfalz, Mary Gilbertson, Shirley Sailors

August 18: Alden Drew & Mimie Pollard, Tom Eyre

August 25: Julia Ferguson & Rick Rinkoff, Peter Rosendale

Most current schedule at www.stjohnsstpaul.org/worship-music/ushers

**GREETERS:** Tom Eyre, Head Greeter (tweyresr@gmail.com)

July 7: Cindy Bertheau, Beth Bowman, Josh Colton

July 14: Alice Johnson, Jennifer Kinkead, John Lawyer

July 21: Barbara Lindeke, Eric Odney, Diane Wallace-Reid

July 28: Jeff & Peggy Olsen, Otto Paier

August 4 (Parish Picnic): Brad Parsons, Peter Rosendale

**August 11**: Cindy Bertheau, Otto Paier **August 18**: Don & Holly Weinkauf

August 25: Tom Evre, Jennifer Frost Rosendale

Most current schedule at www.stjohnsstpaul.org/worship-music/greeters

**READERS:** Bob Linehan, Coordinator (rlinehan@gmail.com)

July 7: 8am Brad McCanna; 10am Terry Dinovo, Sabine Krall

July 14: 8am Joan McCanna; 10am Shirley Sailors, John Graham

July 21: 8am Sr. Julian Smith-Boyer; 10am Kevin Seitz-Paquette, Paige Hagstrom

July 28: 8am Jay Debertin; 10am Judy Sothwick, Don Postema

August 4 (Parish Picnic): 8am Dave Borton; 10am Keith Davis, Tony Clark

August 11: 8am Colleen Swope; 10am Bob Linehan, Alden Drew

August 18: 8am Mary Johnson; 10am Chris Matter, Jill Thompson

August 25: 8am Brad McCanna; 10am Mark McInroy, Jeff Olsen

Most current schedule at www.stjohnsstpaul.org/worship-music/lay-readers

VERGERS:

Bob Linehan, Coordinator (rlinehan@gmail.com)

July 7: Bob Linehan

July 14: Linnea Krall

**July 21:** Pyne Neepaye

July 28: Bill Sherfey

August 4 (Parish Picnic):

Bob Linehan

August 11: Linnea Krall

**August 18:** Keith Davis

**August 25:** Pyne Neepaye *Most current schedule at* 

www.stjohnsstpaul.org/

worship-music/vergers

#### **ALTAR GUILD:**

Diane Power, Coordinator (powerdianep@gmail.com)

July 7: Colleen's team

July 14: Terri's team

July 21: Dusty's team

July 28: Diane's team

August 4 (Parish Picnic):

Colleen's team

August 11: Terri's team

August 18: Dusty's team

August 25: Diane's team

Most current schedule at

www.stjohnsstpaul.org/

worship-music/altar-guild

#### **ACOLYTES:**

Ellie Watkins, Coordinator

(elizabeth.watkins@stjohnsstpaul.org)

July 7: Linnea Krall

July 14: Maren Johnson

July 21: Will Rinkoff, Thomas Rinkoff

July 28: Elliot Wall

August 4 (Parish Picnic): Sabine Krall, Mugeegbaykola

& Hawah Sharon Koroma August 11: Maggie Baxter

August 18: Thea Bischof

August 25: Charlie Docherty, Jude Weber-Johnson

Most current schedule at

www.stjohnsstpaul.org/worship-music/acolytes





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## THE EVANGELIST

## JULY/AUGUST 2019

### STORIES IN ART

"Local Talent" is a silk wall hanging created by Sarah Stengle. The format is inspired by the Korean Pojagi tradition, which is pieced, geometric, and intentionally irregular. The text on the hanging describes the positive qualities of those within the congregation, as participants talked about themselves or each other anonymously.

"Local Talent" is currently in the Gathering Space (lower level) and



will hang there during the season of Pentecost. Come see it and experience all the words, ideas, and stories that this community contributed to the project.