

AUGUST 2025

THE MESSENGER



NEWS & STORIES FOR THIS ISSUE:

- Pg. 2 School Supply Drive
- Pg. 3 Yard Give
- Pg. 4 August Adult Forum
- Pg. 5 Food Pantry News
- Pg. 6 Church Picnic
- Pg. 7 Musings from the Organ Bench
- Pg. 8 Musings from the Organ Bench
- Pg. 8 Foyer Groups
- Pg. 9 Global Partnership Challenge
- Pg. 10 Financials from Charles Wear
- Pg. 11 Financials from Charles Wear
- Pg. 12 Birthdays & Anniversaries

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

BACK TO SCHOOL

This call to return is not just for kids. Teachers are just as anxious as they are. Each late August, St. John's has a tradition of honoring the staff from Robert Fulton School with a luncheon, a pat on the back, a prayer, and donated supplies. It can be amazing to know what some teachers purchase from their own pockets. Our donation time starts August 1st, and you are asked to support this "cause". Suggestions are tissues, wipes, markers, post-its, stickers, masking or other tape, snacks, games, batteries, etc. Gift cards are helpful as well.

In order to keep donations separate from the Yard Give, teacher supplies will be stored in Sherman Study, next to the Nursery. Drop off in the Atrium as well.

The event date is Monday, August 19, the last day of their preparation time, so this is an exciting time for them. We can help make it better. Questions? Ask Sue Martin or email her at mdsmartinduncan@aol.com.

HINT! Walmart has a special section with great prices and quantities. Oh, and Yes, cash donations are accepted to do the shopping.



YARD GIVE

AUGUST 8 / 9

7:00 AM - 11:00 AM

PARISH HALL AND UPPER LEVEL

Donation Collection

July 13 - August 7

Mondays 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM & Sundays after church

(Choir Room and Undercroft area)

Items Needed: clothing (especially children's clothes), toys, linens, household items

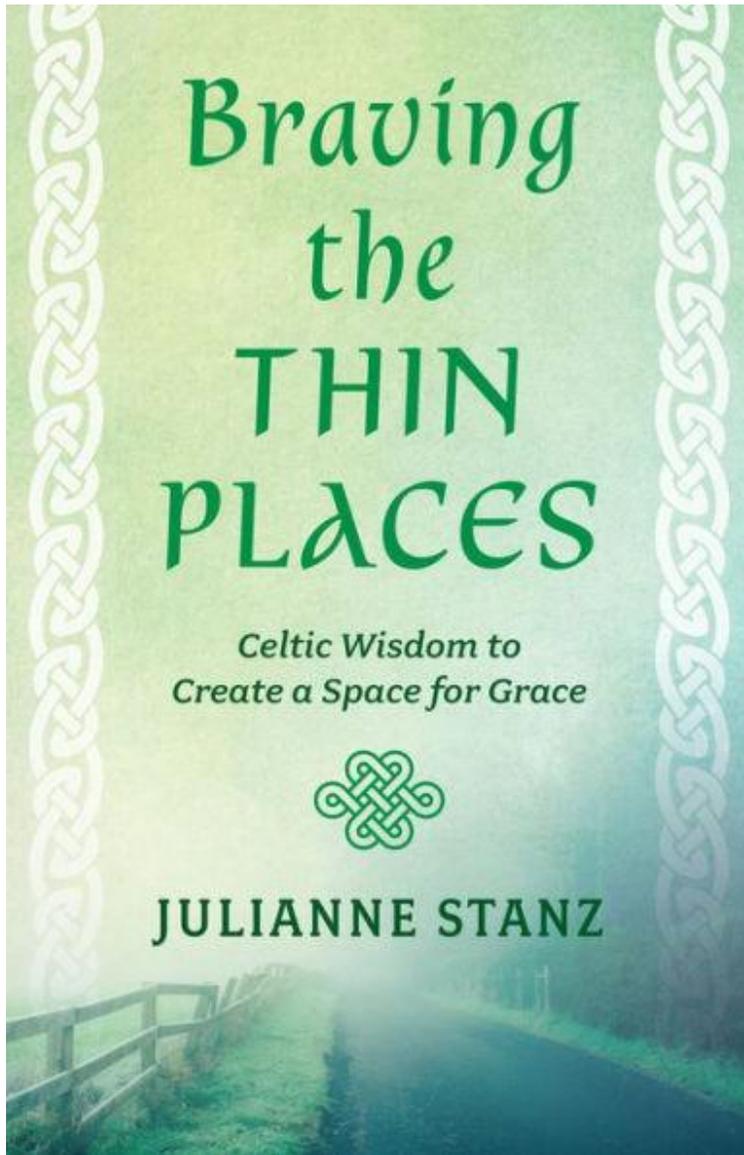


Please do not donate damaged items.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED! CONTACT
PAM LOOSE TO HELP!**

**Our guests are
greeted with,
"Take what
you need,
Give what
you can."**

AUGUST ADULT FORUM



BRAVING THE THIN PLACES

As we read in the rector's letter, while Amanda+ is on sabbatical she will be reading *Braving the Thin Places* by Julianne Stanz. The vestry hopes many among us will read along with her. Our Assistant Rector, Joe Pritchett, will also be leading a book study on each of four consecutive Sundays, following the 9:00 AM service, beginning on July 27. If you are interested in joining a small discussion group, please email Sarah Jones at selizabethjones@gmail.com. **A number of books are available in the office for purchase.**

Braving the Thin Places explores the concept of "thin places" in Celtic spirituality, where the veil between the earthly and spiritual realms thins, allowing for deeper encounters with God and oneself. It offers practical guidance on identifying & experiencing these moments, drawing from Celtic traditions and faith practices. The book emphasizes the transformative power of these encounters,

leading to a more authentic and meaningful life."

Books are also available for purchase on Amazon or at Barnes and Noble."

FOOD PANTRY NEWS



Six Month Report from Your St. John's Food Pantry

Dear Friends,

We would like to share the status of the St. John's Food Pantry for the period of January 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025, as well as some unique concerns for the 2025 calendar year.

Financial Picture:

Thanks to the bulk buying team headed by Liz and Paul West, we have been incredibly fortunate to realize big savings in our bulk purchases from the Central PA Food Bank, the Blessings of Hope purchasing team of Karen DiPace and Deb Smith, and a unique direct gift-in-kind from a generous church member.

Gifts to Food Pantry - 1/1/2025-6/30/2025:

\$23,779.96 Financial Gifts-to-date (Budget is \$35,000)
\$4,200 in Direct Purchase Gift-in-Kind

Expenses to Food Pantry:

\$10,877.17 Financial Payments
\$4,200 in Direct Purchase Gift-in-Kind

Food Demand at St. John's -- Individuals Served:

Dates	Children	Adults	Seniors	Total
2025: Jan-June	2801	3858	1024	7683
2024: Jan-June	1397	2059	607	4063

Central PA Food Bank Report:

We received a very helpful updated report from the Central PA Food Bank with six month-to-date numbers regarding Food Insecurity in Pennsylvania, changes in the 2025 Federal Budget impacting Central PA Food Bank, and changes in the 2025 state of PA support to try to cover some of these losses. We are placing a copy of the update on our Food Pantry display table in the Parish Hall if you would like to learn more.

Summary:

Concerns: Food costs continue to rise. Demand continues to increase likely more in the next six months. Items we purchased at low costs from Central PA Food Bank have already disappeared from the inventory lists of items to purchase. Items we obtain from Blessings of Hope (rice and pasta) are scarce and frequently unavailable.

Blessings: We have the amazing support of our church members. We have hard working volunteers (almost 60 total in every part of the ministry) doing an incredible job. We continue to seek support from interested individuals and groups outside of St. John's.

We thank you, St. John's, and our Father in Heaven, for helping make this ministry possible!



SAINT JOHN'S CHURCH PICNIC

Everyone is invited to join us for our annual St. John's Parish Picnic on Sunday August 24th, at 11:00 a.m. We will be at Pavillion #32 in Buchmiller Park, just south of town on Willow Street Pike. We will provide Hot dogs, Hamburgers and paper goods.

Please use the sign up to RSVP and let us know if you plan to bring anything to share. Please contact Karen DiPace at karen.dipace@gmail.com if you have any questions. We hope you can join us!!

Please sign up using this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0A4EA8AB29A3FC1-57631170-stjohns>

MUSINGS FROM THE ORGAN BENCH....



“Sing a New Song Unto the Lord” are the words to a song that was composed by Dan Schutte (check out: [Sing a New Song](#) on YouTube). It has remained a favorite of mine since the days when I co-directed a summer camp for junior high youth (roughly 90 very active boys and girls). By the end of the week, I had those 90 youth singing this song at full voice and even with smiles on their faces! Yes, even the ‘rough and tough’ boys from the Bronx and Queens (who introduced me to break dancing when it was popular)...sang with gusto and lots of energy!!!

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over and we begin again with our two worship services, which include the return of the Chancel Choir leading us with the music accompanied by our wonderful sanctuary organ and piano. And not forgetting the sound of bells, which is another wonderful addition to our worship music remind me of the song “Ring the Bells of Heaven”. The Chancel Choir will begin to rehearse again on Wednesdays, beginning on September 3rd in preparation for our return to singing for the first time on “Homecoming Sunday”, September 7th. The Bell choir will begin the next evening, September 4th at 7 p.m. I know that there are those who have indicated a desire to join the chancel choir or the bell choir! Those are dates for you to mark on your calendar. There is space for more as we begin working with some of the wonderful music in our choral and bell choir libraries as well as some new pieces that I will introduce, one of which is the Song of St. Cecilia, which we will sing in November, hopefully at an Evensong service along with a setting for Evensong by Ralph Vaughn Williams (in our library). Another is one that I just heard today by Stephen Paulus (YouTube clip: https://youtu.be/Z_ond8aVhHA) entitled “The Road Home”, based on an 1830's shaped note hymn, which I plan to use on All Saints Sunday.

When the choir sings (or the bells play) and when the congregation sings with full voices, the hymns that are well known and loved, we are experiencing just a foretaste of heaven. In a blog entitled “The Choir, A Reflection of Heaven” by Genia Holder-Cozart, has written (rightly in my opinion and philosophy of church music) “when we see our friends and family in the choir, singing in harmony of voice and spirit, I believe we are momentarily transported to the throne room of Heaven”.

(<https://www.waypointdu.com/post/2018/11/07/the-choir-a-reflection-of-heaven>). In German churches, the choir is usually in the rear balcony, not just because the sound coming from behind a congregation helps lead the congregation singing, but also to

MUSIC CONTINUED



remind us aurally, of the congregation of the angels in heaven. In the Wieskirche in Bavaria, one finds painted in the ceiling of the church, above the organ, the doors of heaven opening surrounded by angels singing. Keep that In mind when it comes to what we do with the music in worship. Finally, read the Hallel Psalms (the praise psalms...Psalm 146-150...which all begin with the words.... "Praise the Lord"!

Soli deo Gloria,

Mark



FOYER GROUPS ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

WHAT IS A FOYER GROUP, ANYWAY? It's a small, random, intergenerational group of adult parishioners that gather informally, once a month, during the school year, to share a simple meal and fellowship.

We will have a whole-group kick-off on Wednesday, September 10 at 6 pm in the Parish Hall. On this date you will meet your group for the first time, dine together, and discuss when and where you will meet monthly. It is completely up to your group as to meeting in your homes, at a venue or at church. Meals should be very simple; pot-luck style or even, BYO. And, there is NO agenda except getting to know one another! Sound like fun? SPREAD THE WORD!

HOW DO I SIGN UP? Contact Gretchen Walden at 540-817-9013 or gretchdw@gmail.com if you are interested. There is also a SIGN-UP SHEET on the Parish Hall bulletin board.



GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGE AUGUST 2025

***I Am, We Are.....One World -
Here, There, Everywhere***

August 2025

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. 1 John 3:1

August 3rd

First Sunday in August is International Friendship Day but then, every day is the time to focus on being friendly with ALL our brothers and sisters since we are ALL God's children.

August 10th

Look around where you are sitting this morning in church. Friends, everywhere.

You may not know their names or address, but they smile, they wish you well, you are in each other's prayers, remember, we are ALL brothers and sisters, here, there, everywhere.

August 17th

Need to see some smiles? Know that our brothers and sisters coming to the Food Pantry that you support leave smiling. Also, the brothers and sisters coming to the Community Breakfast say "thank you" over and over and give thanks with their smiles.

No questions about them, only caring.

August 24th

August 26th - Women's Equality Day

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller

August 31st

Too many people think the grass is greener somewhere else; but the grass is **greener** where you water it.

Think of any action you could take that could help in any way in our environment.

TREASURER'S REPORT



- A small deficit was posted for June operations primarily due to over-budget electricity costs. Clergy costs ran lower for the month to correct overpayment in May. Our YTD operating surplus of \$75.6k includes the \$65k Lyet/Summy bequest that will eventually be divided and moved to the endowment and capital accounts as specified by Vestry.
- A \$5.0k donation from Prince of Peace (Gettysburg) was received to defray our costs for hosting the immigration clinic.
- The Music and Instrumental restricted funds were merged as recommended by the Finance Committee and adopted by Vestry. The new fund "Music and Instrumentalists" has a current balance of \$18.0k.
- Value of our investment accounts increased due to reinvested interest and dividend income as well as market gains.
- Capital gifts of \$5.1k were received in June, bringing the total for the project to \$782.0k. Additional one-time bequests and pre-campaign donations bring the grand total to \$898.3k, with an additional \$214.5k in pledges outstanding. The estimated total project cost remains at \$1.24 million, leaving \$128.5k as additional need.
- Capital expenses for the month totaled \$50.2k. Major items included a \$28.2k installment for the Mary window, lift rental for accessing auditorium windows, chimney removal, floor repairs and our monthly Heistand loan service.

TREASURER'S REPORT CONTINUED

St. John's Episcopal Church
Church Operating Income Statement
CONDENSED

June 2025

Cash Basis in \$000's

	June		Year to Date		Annual
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget
Income					
Contributions	\$40.2	\$42.1	\$261.5	\$252.5	\$505.1
Investment Draws	\$0.0	\$6.1	\$0.0	\$36.8	\$73.6
Other Income	\$3.6	\$2.9	\$92.4	\$17.2	\$34.4
Jubilee	\$0.4	\$3.0	\$23.8	\$18.1	\$36.1
Transferred Income	\$0.0	(\$3.3)	\$0.0	(\$20.0)	(\$40.0)
Total Income	\$44.3	\$50.8	\$377.6	\$304.6	\$609.2
Expenses					
Clergy	\$14.7	\$23.1	\$111.4	\$138.7	\$277.5
Lay Staff	\$8.0	\$9.4	\$54.9	\$56.2	\$112.4
Vestry/Finance/Comm	\$2.9	\$2.5	\$14.4	\$15.1	\$30.3
Utilities	\$6.6	\$3.3	\$27.9	\$19.5	\$39.0
Building Repairs & Supplies	\$3.3	\$3.0	\$18.1	\$18.1	\$36.1
Other Property	\$3.4	\$3.1	\$20.3	\$18.3	\$36.6
Worship/Ed/Community	\$1.3	\$1.9	\$10.7	\$11.1	\$22.2
Outreach	\$4.9	\$5.3	\$31.3	\$32.1	\$64.2
Jubilee	\$1.9	\$3.1	\$13.1	\$18.5	\$37.1
Transferred Expenses	\$0.0	(\$3.9)	\$0.0	(\$23.1)	(\$46.3)
Total Expenses	\$47.0	\$50.8	\$302.0	\$304.6	\$609.2
Net Total	(\$2.7)	(\$0.0)	\$75.6	(\$0.0)	\$0.0

BIRTHDAYS

Nancy Houston	8/2
Aidan Cliff	8/3
David Labeda	8/3
Bruce Morgan	8/4
Kendall Morgan	8/4
Otto Williams	8/5
Rich Collier	8/7
Linda Bruce	8/7
Pamela Loose	8/9
Johanna Sweeney	8/9
Thomas Shevock	8/9
Heather Sherman	8/12
Michael Gbur	8/14
Karen Largent	8/22
Edith Kane	8/23
Darlene Pfeiffer	8/24
Nancy Nemith	8/26
Michael Gobel	8/26
Ashley Smith	8/27
Darlene Bentley	8/27
Donald Durand	8/28
Stella Smith	8/30
Stephanie McGovern	8/31
Sherry Qualls	8/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Drew & Paul Dorgan	8/18
Betsy & Chris Hasircoglu	8/18
Ginny & Malcolm Young	8/21
Eleanor & Ken Watts	8/26

OUR FRIENDS AT HOME

Ellen Keller, Nancy Nemith,
Ricky Smith, Joanna Sweeney, Al Kuser,
Mary Sue Farmer, Ellen Sellers,
Edith Kane, Merle Schnee,
Sandy Grove, Peggy Zuke,
Peggy Buscher, Theresa Sullivan

SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Alex Kelly, Brooks Morgan,
Brian Hobbins, Joshua Watkins,
Kirby Kinderwater, Kyle Kinderwater,
David Wolfe

CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Ella, Kevin, Judy Modene,
Andrew Gilpin, Cheryl and Rhoda,
Ted Griswold, Collin, Eileen Waite,
Andrew Wright, Denise Chandler,
Shirley Parmer, Erin Heintzinger,
Phyllis Shearer, Ellen Keller,
Sandy Patrone, Marshall, Bonnie,
Heidi, Danny, Kenneth, Sarah Gordon,
Leslie Tahsler, Shannon and family,
Lainey Jane and family, Sergie,
Eamon Nelson, Pastor Russell, Jeanne,
Paul Hershey, John Kerner, Sr.



Watch over your children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when

they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts, may the peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen