

St. John's Good News



**April
2023**

From Rev. John...

Cycling Pilgrimage

As I have mentioned in our annual meeting, it is my intention to bike across the U.S. from May-August of this year. This is to be a pilgrimage during which time I will be praying for our country. I have been planning on doing this for many years now, and I am grateful for the opportunity to do this. My original thought was to wait until I retire in 2025 but I have discovered that physical limitations which may make it prudent for me to do this sooner rather than later. As Bette Davis once pronounced, "growing old is not for sissies."

My route will be taking me from Seattle, Washington through Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and Massachusetts. I will be maintaining a blog describing my trip and invite all of your prayers.

I will be visiting churches along the way who strive to proclaim the Gospel in a variety of contexts. It is my hope to understand the values, hopes, and visions articulated by people I would never meet if I remained in New England. In so doing, perhaps I will gain an understanding of how we can communicate across our ideological divide. Over the course of the past three years, I have been having book discussions at the Saugus Library (and the Taunton Library before my arrival here) which I hope will inform my search. These books include:

The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion by Jonathan Haidt

Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt by Arthur C. Brooks

The Relevance of Religion: How Faithful People Can Change Politics by John Danforth (who is both a U.S. Senator and Episcopal Priest)

Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right by Arlie Russell Hochschild

Sunday worship remains at 10am, in-person and virtually: All are welcome to participate, and seating capacity is now at 75. The service also continues to broadcast via Zoom, with link options shared by email.

Phone: 781-233-1242

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@StJohnsSaugus

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Beyond Contempt: How Liberals Can Communicate Across the Great Divide By Erica Etelson
The Irony of American History By Reinhold Neibuhr

Denise will join me for biking for a few weeks in Washington State and will then be returning to Saugus. She will be joining me again in Wyoming and in Chicago. The Rev. Dr. Paul Dalzell is looking forward to joining you for most of this time and will be travelling from Alexandra, Australia with his wife Robyn Ellis to minister among you. The schedule of celebrants and preachers can be found below.

I will be submitting periodic reports on my trip which will be available for any who would like to participate in this journey. I am grateful for the opportunity to do this and looking forward to returning at the end of August.

Celebrants during Sabbatical

May 7 th -July 23 rd	The Rev. Dr. Paul Dalzell
July 30 th	The Rev. Dr. Bob Davidson
August 6-20 th	The Rev. Dr. Harry Coverston
August 27 th	The Rev. Dr. Bob Davidson

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The Diocese will offer a Palm Sunday Eve Multicultural Celebration on Saturday, April 1, 2023 at 6pm on Zoom - see details at diomass.org

Holy Week Services

April 2nd – 9th

Palm Sunday ~ 10am
Saugus Community Faith Ecumenical Service at
New Hope Assembly Church ~ 6pm

Maundy Thursday ~ Agape meal followed by Eucharist
Meal ~ 6pm Worship ~ 7pm

Good Friday - Contemplation of the Cross ~ Noon
Evening Worship (w/ music) ~ 7pm

Easter Day
Sunrise Eucharist ~ 6am
Festal Eucharist & Baptism ~ 10am



To be Children of the Resurrection

In wading through the many and varied books which have been pulled together into the Hebrew Scriptures, it is helpful to remember that every sentence is a testimony to the exodus. The book of Genesis speaks of the spiritual forces at work within the psychological, political, economic, and social structures which set the stage for the enforced slavery in Egypt. Exodus and Deuteronomy speak with moving eloquence of the pathos of slavery and the scars which it produces. God speaks with a powerful gentleness to those who still have the toxins of slavery flowing through their veins.

“I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live.”

One can almost hear this coming out muffled for the lump in God’s throat. We see a people who have become so afraid of the uncertainty of freedom, that even the shackles of Pharaoh seem preferable in comparison

The prophets speak about both the joys of this liberation, and the agony of witnessing new bonds of economic and social oppression. The Wisdom literature reminds us that we must continually seek deliverance from the hardness of heart which renders us deaf to the outcast. The book of Wisdom also calls us to seek ways in which our intellectual gifts can be used to make known the liberating voice of God.

The historical books remind us of some of the unsettling similarities between Pharaoh and the Kings of Israel (who are appointed against God’s protests). Throughout these fascinating stories we see that no one is immune to the addictive allure of power.

The entirety of the New Testament is written as a testimony to the resurrection of Jesus. Many souls shackled in a variety of ways experience deliverance from bondage as a result of the ministry of Jesus. The Samaritan woman at the well, the cripple at the pool of Siloam, the woman caught in adultery, are all freed from their particular prison by their encounter with Jesus. The Gospels also describe the fear of those who are beneficiaries of oppression, and the tenacity with which they cling to power

The Epistles unpack what it means to live out our common life as a liberated people. The authors of these works give encouragement to embody that love which casts out all fear. We celebrate this Easter the liberating and transforming good news of Jesus’ victory over death. The powers and principalities of this world cannot forever hold us hostage to our fear of death.

In his essay *Easter: The Festal Protest against Death* The German theologian Jürgen Moltman speaks of the power of death in contemporary culture:

“...death is an evil power now, in life’s very midst. It is the economic death of the person we allow to starve; the political death of the people who are oppressed; the social death of the handicapped; the noisy death that strikes through napalm bombs and torture; and the soundless death of the apathetic soul.”

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Death is not the last word which speaks to us. In this Easter season we are given the strength to respond to the invitation extended in the book of Deuteronomy to choose life over death.

Anyone who makes a person laugh
Opens heaven to him.
Anyone who is patient with another
Gives him future.
Anyone who accepts a person
As he himself is accepted by Christ
Loosens his tongue for life's hymn of praise
Let us go out from our customs and our habits
And learn to hope from the Bible.
Let us go out
And cross the frontiers
So that we may infect life with hope.
Let us ignore the barriers,
And look only to the One who breaks them down.
He is risen.
Jesus is risen indeed.
Blessed be the Lord for ever and ever. ~ Jürgen Moltman

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From the Sr. Warden

Over the past few months your discernment committee has spent many hours preparing an interview to address 'where we are,' 'where are we going' and 'how will we get there' with our parish members.

The members of the committee are -

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| Julia Aston | Rev. John Beach |
| Brenda Caggiano | Dan Casey |
| Donna Manoogian | T.J. Martin |

Committee members will be reaching out to you to schedule a meeting. The meeting may be in person, Zoom or a phone call. We are flexible and will work with your schedules but we do have a tight time line.

To review -

A discernment committee of 5 parishioners has been commissioned by the vestry to work with the diocese as we reach out to as many St. John's parishioners as possible to both inform them and solicit their input regarding the future of St. John's. Rev. John's current contract as

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Priest-in-Charge is ending in October, 2023. He has indicated that he would like to stay at St. John's through May 2025 when he will retire.

Once the interview process has been completed the Discernment Committee will make an informed recommendation to the Vestry. The team's goal is to meet with as many parishioners between now and mid-April to hear your thoughts. We will be focusing on the following areas but if there are topics that are on you mind, we are here to listen.

- St. John's Sunday Service
- Our priest's in charge ministry
- Outreach
- Welcome/Engagement
- Future

We are a church of leaders—every member of the parish needs to step into a leadership role to get done those things that need doing.

Grace and Peace,
Your Warden, Brenda Caggiano

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Every Child Deserves to Smile



Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to the snacks, candy & Easter treats collection!

Save the date: Join us on **April 2nd** (Palm Sunday) during coffee hour as we create 30 Easter baskets for the children at the motel!



Fun Fact: *Every Child Deserves to Smile* began with a breakfast hosted by St. John's youth in April 2011. The youth asked for a donation of a book in lieu of a monetary donation and chose to put the books in the hands of children who might not have access to fun reading materials.

In keeping with the early beginnings of *Every Child Deserves to Smile*, we will be collecting:

April 1-30: Books, magazines, and activities for the children. Some activity suggestions are coloring books & crayons, drawing paper, craft kits, play-doh, games & puzzles.

April 15-30: Hand cream, body lotion, lip balm, disposable razors, shampoo & conditioner to remember the Mom's on Mother's Day will be gratefully accepted.

Donations of non-perishable food items, every day needs (paper goods, storage baggies, cutlery) and in-season clothing are always gratefully accepted. Donations may be left in the vestibule. Please direct any questions to Jeanne Seaboyer.

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Lobster Roll Sale!

Friday April 28th, from 7am—Noon ~ Order deadline is **Tuesday, April 25th** ~ \$15 Each — includes one lobster roll, condiments, chips, and a brownie. Free local delivery for orders of 5 or more. Contact our office by email or phone. *We appreciate your continued support!*

Word Search

Can you find these books from the Bible?

O F W L O N K I Y Z N A Z D R Q J G
 S E V K X I A P N H D J L T N A O A
 E A V K Y M C P O A T C X F B L Z P
 L Z W C Q U G J L E V I T I C U S A
 X C R F L F F Q M O V E Y I M A R R
 R R H A D P U R X B B P E W S G I I
 M G O Z Q L B Z E C H A R I A H P A
 V A P P E H A U A H A T D V B U K R
 X L R G H T K M E R Z H M I J V B Z
 G A E K A I Z V E J T R M B A U L T
 N T L W N E L T E N N J Q S R H D U
 D I C U U U E E B T T J O S H U A E
 D A Q G M P I J M K S A M U E L T B
 H N C Y H Z L O R O H L T X B O Z H
 B S D A N I E L Q B N G M I N Z Y L
 U D K H Y I V L S D R T I M O T H Y
 P H R H E B R E W S V Q F T D N D P
 G C Z O A C P R O V E R B S X T S Y

Ezra ~ Daniel ~ Galatians ~ Hebrews ~ John ~ Joshua ~ Jude
 Lamentations ~ Leviticus ~ Mark ~ Obadiah ~ Peter ~ Philemon
 Proverbs ~ Ruth ~ Samuel ~ Timothy ~ Zechariah

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*We wish you a very blessed and happy Easter!*

**Officers:** The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge, Brenda Caggiano, Sr. Warden, Daniel Casey, Jr., Jr. Warden, Phil Littlehale, Treasurer, Paul Felci, Assistant Treasurer, and Kristina Palazzo, Clerk of the Vestry & Sexton

**Vestry:** Bill Bidmead, Sr. (2026), Dibby LeBlanc (2026), Duana 'Dee' LeMay (2024), Sandy Mears (2025), and Donna Manoogian (2024)