

# St. John's Good News



September 2020

## Sunday Worship

10am  
(weather permitting)  
and online via Zoom

All are welcome ~  
please email us for more  
information if you wish  
to worship online.

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:  
[@StJohnsSaugus](#)

Facebook: St. John's  
Episcopal Church  
Saugus

## From Rev. John...

A Journey by Stages, by The Rev. John Beach

Earlier this spring, Bishop Gates issued guidelines as to how we might best be the church during the strange days of this pandemic. Congregations were encouraged to discern how we can best proclaim the Gospel at a time when we have to maintain a physical distance.

Earlier this month, we began to gather for in-person outdoor worship at the entrance of the church. This provided us with an opportunity to demonstrate to our (often confused) neighbors that the light of Christ continues to shine even in the midst of anxiety and confusion.

I am grateful for the creative work of Fritz White, Julia Aston, Dan Casey, Stephen Sikorski, and T. J. Martin who came up with a safe and accessible format in which we continue to gather. It has been a source of great joy to break bread and share in the Eucharist these past two Sundays for the first time in many months.

I have been working with a pastoral care team to insure that the Eucharist is distributed to those who are not able to join us physically. We shall be leaving our worship after the final blessing and bringing communion to those in their homes who would like to receive.

If any among you would like to have the Eucharist brought to you after our Sunday service, I would like very much if you could contact me and we will insure that our Eucharistic visitors pay you visit.

It is a joy and a blessing to serve you as your priest and pastor, and I am looking forward very much to the time in which we can meet face to face.

Sincerely,

**The Rev. John Beach**

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**Officers:** The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge ~ T. J. Martin, Sr. Warden ~ Daniel Casey, Jr. Warden ~ Phil Littlehale, Treasurer ~ Paul Felci, Asst. Treasurer ~ Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

**Vestry:** Dale Coogan (2021) ~ Rose Holt (2022) ~ Samantha Martin (2023) ~ Kristina Palazzo (2023) ~ Sandy St. Clair (2022) ~ William St. Clair (2021) ~ Kenneth Webber (2023) ~ Diana White (2021)

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Dear Friends,

In the next few weeks you will be hearing from me about how we might accept the invitation of our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, to practice *The Way of Love*—an intentional way to live out our common life in an age when the people of our country have become increasingly polarized and fearful. *The Way of Love* is a series of spiritual habits we are invited to embrace to be instruments of peace in midst of a country in turmoil. I invite you to read the letter sent by our Presiding Bishop in preparation for this program.

Peace,

John+

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### **An Invitation from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry to Practice the Way of Love**

I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. – Ephesians 3:17-19

In the first century Jesus of Nazareth inspired a movement. A community of people whose lives were centered on Jesus Christ and committed to living the way of God's unconditional, unselfish, sacrificial, and redemptive love. Before they were called "church" or "Christian," this Jesus Movement was simply called "the way."

Today I believe our vocation is to live as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. But how can we together grow more deeply with Jesus Christ at the center of our lives, so we can bear witness to his way of love in and for the world?

The deep roots of our Christian tradition may offer just such a path. For centuries, monastic communities have shaped their lives around rhythms and disciplines for following Jesus together. Such a pattern is known as a "Rule of Life." The framework you now hold – *The Way of Love: Practices for Jesus-Centered Life* – outlines a Rule for the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.

It is designed to be spare and spacious, so that individuals, ministry groups, congregations, and networks can flesh it out in unique ways and build a church-wide treasure trove of stories and resources. There is no specific order you need to follow. If you already keep a Rule or spiritual disciplines, you might reflect and discover how that path intersects with this one. By entering into reflection, discernment and commitment around the practices of Turn - Learn - Pray - Worship - Bless - Go - Rest, I pray we will grow as communities following the loving, liberating, life-giving way of Jesus. His way has the power to change each of our lives and to change this world.

Your brother in the Way of Jesus,

+Michael

**The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry,  
Primate and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church**

Aug. 19, 2020

*Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord:  
Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
to the melody of your harps  
I will not listen.  
But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

~ Amos 5:16a, 23-24; New Revised Standard Version

This passage from the prophet Amos was the scriptural warrant that girded the Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century. In his time of relative prosperity and stability, Amos was a clarion voice, strongly denouncing corruption, hypocrisy, the enormous gap between wealthy and poor, and systemic injustice. He warned people that for God, religious traditions and worship were unacceptable in light of their continuing participation in oppression, whether direct or indirect, caused by their apathy to the plight of others. God demands justice be provided for all and by all, so that justice is like a river, sustaining life, flowing in and around the people. Justice requires turning around, doing mercy and striving to provide basic needs, access to opportunity and giving respect for all.

God still demands justice flow as a river today; in our present cultural climate, our political climate and our environmental climate. Unfortunately, due to human greed, manipulation of the truth, exploitation for profit and security, and the desire to subjugate and conquer rather than steward and shepherd, the river of justice does not flow freely. It is impeded by our collective pollution of arrogance, injustice and apathy.

From the beginning of European arrival in this hemisphere, warfare on people and the environment has been engaged. The Pilgrims developed a strategy of genocide in purposely introducing small pox and other diseases by presenting blankets laced with infection as gifts to Indigenous People. Thus the first biological weapons unleashed here in Massachusetts were employed in the Caribbean, bringing near extinction of the native populations there also. Disease, pollution and exploitation of land, sea, air and people continued unabated by the exploration, colonization and slavery of the Third World by the First World. Technological advances and methods such as strip mining and fracking have made exploitation more massive, grounded in the lack of care for the planet, for those living now and those coming in the future.

Cleveland, Ohio, is my place of birth and formative years. I remember the major river of the region, the Cuyahoga, catching on fire several times from the industrial pollution dumped in it. Great Lake Erie was closed to fishing and swimming because of pollution; in the 1980's it was deemed as "dead." Moving to Chicago, we lived through the pungent yearly Alewife die-off in Lake Michigan from invasive species being introduced by opening the St. Lawrence Seaway. Ground-level ozone events, burning eyes, throat and lungs, were common in the summer before the Clean Air Act. In several coastal areas where I have been and lived, there is the annual explosion of red algae. Discarded plastic has become a small continent in the ocean; an open coffin taking life from the sea.

Environmental crises due to inaction on pollution, and attacks on wildlife and Earth's resources, such as the Amazon, continue to affect us. Too many refuse to care about personal decisions or policies of business and government that degrade the planet. Blood of Black and

*Contd.*

people is spilled and their homes destroyed for the extraction of minerals and precious stones. Too many do not want to tie stewardship of this planet to justice demanded by God. Some would rather care only for today, or regard this planet and all life on it only as something to dominate for their benefit.

Environmental justice calls us to reckon with our past, present and future. People of color and their home areas are regarded as toxic and nuclear waste dumping grounds. Infrastructures of resources are not provided equally. In the majority Black city, Flint, Michigan, the crisis of lead in the water has yet to be fully addressed. Hurricanes have increased in number and strength because of global warming. In the aftermath of hurricanes news coverage has exposed how little of resources and relief are distributed to neighborhoods and areas where people of color are the majority within the United States and its territories.

Changing the courses of rivers and elimination of wetlands have increased the effects of hurricanes, such as Katrina. We have seen at Standing Rock, North Dakota, that White entitlement and economic expediency trumps the care of environment and the rights of Native Peoples; the construction an oil pipeline has leeched oil on sacred land and water. Here in Massachusetts the lack of maintenance and monitoring led to the gas pipeline explosions and fires in Lawrence and Andover in 2018. The health, culture and survival of the G'wich'in and other Alaskan Indigenous People are now being threatened by the opening of the ANWAR area to oil/gas extraction and by the increasing of commercial and tourist fishing and gaming which decreases their food supply.

As Christians, we stand on the shoulders of our forebears; on their faith and their doubts, on their good and their evil, on their compassion and their cruelty. We live benefiting from and having to deal with all that they did and did not do. We cannot escape this heritage, nor separate ourselves from the past. We are also the ones that those who come after us will look to for inspiration and, I hope, thanksgiving for our efforts toward justice in all its forms.

We are Easter people, resurrection people. We are God's people, called to justice, who can and must turn our attention and efforts for today and tomorrow. We have already done much: the air in some areas and many lakes and rivers are cleaner than 20 years ago. But there is much more to be done. Justice, for people and this planet in which all life is interdependent, requires vigilance, accountability and commitment. Let it be said by the next generations that we strove for justice, removing the pollution of greed and indifference that destroys life, that justice can flow freely now and in the future, as a pristine river, replenishing all life on this beautiful and awesome planet, created by, as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry proclaims, a "loving, liberating and life-giving God."

Holding onto the Resilience of People of Justice Seeking Justice for 500+ Years in the Americas,

**The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris**

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Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you all well.

We continue to navigate our way through this most challenging year. The pandemic has seen many changes to our day-to-day lives, and at St. John's it has altered our normal yearly cycle of activities. But despite the challenges, it has created opportunity and, with Rev. John leading the way, we have jumped into the realm of online services.

*Contd.*

Rev. John has been a ray of light and hope in these uncertain times and has been warmly welcomed by all at St. John's. As our Bridge Priest he has jumped in and embraced using technology to lead remote services and bible study, as well as organizing a book club. His efforts to reach out to parishioners has been greatly welcomed, and I am happy to let everyone know that Vestry has voted to ask him to be our Priest-in-Charge. We look forward to having him with us on our journey with Christ.

It has been nice to see familiar faces each week on our Zoom services, and as we move to broadcasting services from St. John's it will be nice to see each other again in person. Rev. John and the re-opening committee is continuing to work with our diocesan appointed re-gathering shepherd on the next steps of the process, which will be in-person worship in the sanctuary. Of course, no parishioner should ever feel that they have to return to services; one should only return when you feel completely safe.

Perhaps the biggest impact of the pandemic has been on our many fund-raising activities – yard sale, plant sale, lobster roll sales. And now our fall fair. The planners for these events have decided that it is best to step back from these activities this year. We know how much everyone loves the many fall events, and that not holding them will greatly impact our budget, but in the interest of public health and the community it is the best decision to make. These events will return with new life next year!

Stay safe!

**T.J. Martin, Senior Warden**

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Dear St. John's Families,

I wish I was writing to tell you that we'll see each other in a few weeks, but that's not quite the case.

Since the Saugus school system is going fully remote and reassessing mid-October, I feel it would be best to do the same for St. John's Church School and Youth Group. Father John Beach and I are meeting the first week of September and will brainstorm some ideas for the upcoming year.

I don't know about any of you, but our family has had their ups and downs during the pandemic and on occasion can have emotional roller-coaster days. Having faith in God and trusting where he takes us, always remains. We trust that what challenges we're facing is for a reason. The church school teachers have said more than once (if u we're paying attention in class ;) that we don't always get our prayers answered right away, and sometimes we don't even get the answers "we wanted." We, mostly, find out later why God took us down that path, even if the situation made us sad or mad.

In the end, we count our blessings and trust God, because no one on Earth knows us like he does. It's up to us on how we handle the situation. I'm hopeful for a time of normalcy and our regular crazy busy lives, it just might not be when 'we want' it to be. It will be in God's time – we'll just handle the situation(s) for now.

I'll keep you updated in the next newsletter. I miss all of you!

God Bless, **Alison Coppola**

**Every Child Deserves to Smile – Sept. Back-to-School Supplies Project**



School will be starting again soon, and whether the children are studying in-person or remotely, the students that we assist at the motel will be in need of school supplies. During the month of September we will collect pens, pencils, markers, highlighters, crayons, erasers, notebooks, binders, folders and paper, and deliver them to the motel. Any excess items will be donated to the Operation Christmas Child collection and the Saugus Supt. of Schools Office. Donations of supplies may be left in the donation container available at **Sunday services on Sept. 13, 20, & 27** or contact Jeanne Seaboyer with any questions: 781-662-4342 or [jmseaboyer\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:jmseaboyer@gmail.com).



Please support **Operation Christmas Child Project** (aka Shoebox Project) we are hoping to send 50 boxes out by November.

Items needed:

Toys for all age groups (must fit in shoeboxes), 20 Shoeboxes, 40 Toothbrushes, 30pk color pencils/ crayon and some help to wrap shoeboxes. Please feel free to contact Diana White through the parish office for any questions or concerns. Thank you, Diana

C R J L R E X E R C I S E Y  
 C V P Y F G B A L M Y A T M  
 S Q U I N R G T P J F Y D B  
 L J N M Z Z I T G V E Z X A  
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**WORD SEARCH**

- Attentiveness
- Backpack
- Bookmarks
- Exercise
- Friends
- Guidance
- Homework
- Lockers
- Lunchtime
- Instruct
- Notetaking
- Punctual
- Testing